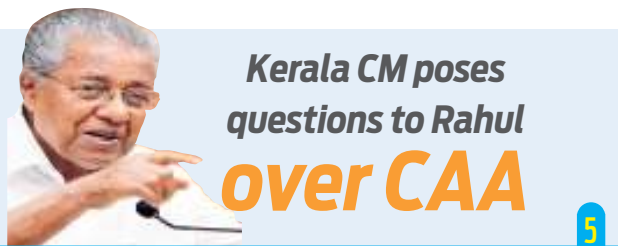


An August crisis will arise in Telangana if the Supreme Court punishes Revanth Reddy in the vote-for-note case. The Supreme Court will deliver its verdict on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's vote-for-note case on July 24. That is why Revanth said on Sunday that Komatireddy Venkat Reddy is fully eligible to become the Chief Minister. Revanth has been saying 'You are the next CM' to Congress leaders wherever he goes.

- Alleti Maheshwar Reddy, BJLP Leader

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Kerala CM poses questions to Rahul over CAA



VIKING SOUL EVOKING A TRIBAL TULUM VIBE



Satyabhama in cinemas ON MAY 17

DON'T MISS...

Watch out for expired..

Next time when you buy something from a posh or branded hotel, do check the expiry date of the products. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Task Force, constituted recently by the Commissioner of Food Safety, has conducted several surprise inspections in Hyderabad city and surrounding areas. Even in eateries at Banjara Hills and Jubilee Hills violations were found. For instance in Chutney's Banjara Hills, 40 misbranded kaju packets worth...

-PAGE: 3

'Father's diet can affect anxiety...

The father's diet can affect the anxiety levels in their sons and the metabolism of their daughters before they are even conceived, according to new research conducted in mice. While a mouse father's diet is known to impact his and his children's reproductive health, it was not yet known if differing its macronutrient composition of proteins, fats and carbohydrates could have differing impacts on children's health, researchers said. The team of...

-PAGE: 5

'Most Indian travellers...

Even as 95 per cent of Indian travellers interviewed said sustainable travel is important to them, more than half feel the irreversible damage has already been done, a report said on Monday. Online travel agency Booking.com's ninth 'Sustainable Travel Report 2024' revealed that almost two-thirds (62 per cent) of Indian travellers stated they would feel guilty when they make less sustainable travel choices and 20 per cent of them want to travel more sustainably...

-PAGE: 8

Revenge on CSK mind as...

Revenge will be on defending champions Chennai Super Kings' minds when they host an unpredictable Lucknow Super Giants here in their reverse IPL fixture on Tuesday with both the teams desperate to break out of the mid-table logjam. The last time the two teams faced off in Lucknow last week, KL Rahul and Quinton de Kock put up a record opening partnership which proved to be the difference as LSG joined CSK at eight points in the IPL standing. The Super Kings have been...

-SPORTS

'Fear of defeat gripping Modi'

INDIA alliance will come to power: Revanth asserts in Nizamabad rally

- Congress gave what is due to Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs
- 'How long you will deceive the country with such false comments, Modi ji'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Taking exception to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comments that if the Congress comes to power, it would redistribute the wealth of the people to Muslims, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday said that Modi is speaking out of fear of defeat.

Addressing an election rally in Nizamabad, Reddy said that whenever the Congress has been in power, it gave what is due to Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs, and not by taking away the property of someone else.

"If the Prime Minister, who took oath on the Constitution, is speaking in a manner of triggering animosities between two religions, (it means) defeat is haunting Narendra Modi. Out of fear (of defeat), Narendra Modi wants to create trouble between religions," he said.

Even if the property is to be divided between two brothers, it should be as per law, he said. "Modi, who was CM for 13 years and PM for 10

years, does not even know this?" he asked. "How long you will deceive the country with such false comments, Modi ji. This is not the way," he added. The country would suffer irreparable loss if unrest grows and differences crop up among people, he said. In a sharp attack on the BJP, Revanth Reddy said devotion to god should be in the hearts and "not in the boxes in polling booths".

BJP leaders should not think that people don't understand their "political business", Reddy said.



CM Revanth speaking at an election rally in support of Jeevan Reddy on Monday

Govt to execute Pranahita-Chevella project: CM



The Congress government will construct the Pranahita-Chevella project at Thummidihatti after getting the permission of the Maharashtra government, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said. The CM said that his government had already started discussions with the Maharashtra government regarding the submergence of lands belonging to that state. "We will name the Pranahita-Chevella project at Thummidihatti after Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar," the CM said. Addressing the Adilabad Jana Jatar public meeting held at the Diet College

Grounds on Monday after the nomination filing of Adilabad Congress candidate Atram Suguna, Revanth said that the Congress government will execute the Kupti project in Boath and develop Adilabad district. The CM also said that maintenance work is going on at the Kadem project as the government has released funds for it. The CM assured that the government would establish a university in Adilabad and added that Prime Minister Modi and KCR kept the cement factory as it was.

Healthcare affected in TG due to denial of funds by Centre

NHM workers' salaries pending since November

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Providing quality healthcare and paying salaries to National Health Mission (NHM) workers including ASHA workers has become a tough task for the Telangana government.

The Centre has not released the third and fourth instalments for FY 2023-24 to NHM Telangana. About Rs 550 crore NHM funds have been delayed by the Centre because of which the state is not able to pay salaries to ASHA workers since November. The Telangana government wrote a letter to the Centre asking them to give funds of the previous financial year, let alone the new fiscal. What's worrying is that all the flagship programmes under NHM have come to a halt in providing access and quality healthcare to the people of Telangana.

An amount of Rs 323.73 crore has not been released to the state despite fulfilling all the prescribed conditions of the Centre. In some conditions like the Ayushman Arogya Mandir, Telangana is among the top. NHM Telangana received Rs 564.40 crore against the allocation of Rs 888.13 crore during FY 2023-24. Sources said that the financial year

Sources said that due to the non-release of funds from the Centre, it is becoming very difficult for the state to fund approved health activities under NHM.

has been closed and that payments have not been made to Telangana. Sources smell discrimination towards Telangana from the Centre as other states reportedly got funds like Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

The Telangana government wrote a letter to the Centre requesting to release funds. Sources said that due to the non-release of funds from the Centre, it is becoming very difficult for the state to fund approved health activities under NHM.

With the Centre showing a deaf ear to the Telangana government's request, the State released Rs 100 crore to pay salaries to employees and meet their needs despite Central laxity.

Continued on Page 2



BRS working president KTR addressing an urban cluster-level meeting of Sirisilla at the Telangana Bhavan on Monday

People have lost faith in Congress govt: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The people have lost faith in the Congress government, BRS Working President KTR said.

"In the last Assembly elections, the Congress won many seats with a narrow margin. However, after 100 days in power, the Congress has failed to fulfil its promises leading to strong resentment among the people. The people have lost confidence in the Congress government," KTR said.

He criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the Congress for threatening the people of Telangana by saying that if they don't get votes they will cancel social welfare schemes like the free bus travel facility for women.

He emphasised that addressing public issues should be the primary agenda of the BRS and that they should contest the Parliament elections by exposing the frauds of the Congress and the BJP.

KTR criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the Congress for threatening the people of Telangana by saying that if they don't get votes they will cancel social welfare schemes like the free bus travel facility for women.

KTR held an urban cluster-level meeting of Sirisilla at the Telangana Bhavan on Monday and discussed Parliament elections with party activists.

"The BRS has a good chance of victory in the Parliament elections. People are reviewing their support for the Congress and its fraudulent promises," KTR said.

KTR also criticised BJP leader Bandi Sanjay Kumar who served as an MP for five years for doing nothing for Karimnagar.

Konda declares assets worth Rs 4,568 crore

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Konda Vishweshwar Reddy declared that he has assets worth Rs 4,568 crore.

While assets worth Rs 1,240 crore are in

Vishweshwar's name, assets worth Rs 3,208 crore are in the name of his wife, Sangeeta Reddy. Vishweshwar's son owns assets worth Rs 108 crore.

Konda Vishweshwar Reddy is most probably the richest

politician in India.

Most of the Konda couple's assets are movable ones like shares in Apollo Hospital Enterprises Limited, PCR Investments, Citadel Research etc.



Suspense continues for three MP seats

Cong fails to name candidates for Karimnagar, Khammam, Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Just three days are left to file nominations for LS polls as April 25 is the last date for filing nominations. However, the Congress has not finalised candidates for Karimnagar, Khammam and Hyderabad so far.

Congress leader Velichala Rajender Rao filed his nomination papers for Karimnagar on Monday before the party announced his name.

Interestingly, Transport Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar attended the nomination filing programme of Velichala Rajender Rao along with party MLAs Adi Srinivas, Medipalli



Congress leader Velichala Rajender Rao filing papers for Karimnagar seat nomination on Monday

Sathyam and Kavvampally Sathanarayana.

Speaking on the occasion, Ponnamp said that they filed

Velichala's nomination as per the direction of the high command. Velichala is a highly educated person and people must give him a

chance as he has a good understanding of the constituency, he said.

However, Aligireddy Praveen Reddy, who gave up his Husnabad MLA constituency to Ponnamp Prabhakar, did not attend the programme. It is learnt that Ponnamp Prabhakar has been supporting Velichala Rajender Rao.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageshwar Rao who was trying to get the Khammam ticket for his son Yogender met AICC President Mallikarjuna Kharge on Monday and informed him about his wish.

BJLP leader Maheshwar predicts 'August crisis'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharatiya Janata Legislature Party (BJLP) leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy predicted an 'August crisis' in Telangana politics. He said that the Supreme Court will deliver its verdict on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's vote-for-note case on July 24.



Revanth might have announced Komatireddy Venkat Reddy's name as the CM thinking that Venkat is his man. Revanth might have said that Venkat is fully eligible to be the CM thinking that Venkat will become the Chief Minister after he goes to jail.

However, the Congress leadership will decide who will be the Chief Minister. I don't know how many leaders Revanth has said is eligible to become the Chief Minister.

President Murmu presents Padma Awards

• Venkaiah, Mithun, Usha Uthup receive awards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former vice president M Venkaiah Naidu, founder of Sulabh International Bindeshwar Pathak and a host of other prominent persons were conferred with Padma awards by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here on Monday.

Renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Padma Subrahmanyam was conferred with the Padma Vibhushan. Pathak's wife Amola received the award from the President.

Actor Mithun Chakraborty, singer Usha Uthup, former Uttar Pradesh governor Ram Naik and industrialist Sitaram Jindal were conferred with the Padma Bhushan.



Venkaiah Naidu



Mithun

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, among others, were present at the function.

Gujarat-based cardiologist Tejas Madhusudan Patel, veteran

Marathi film director Dattatray Ambadas Mayaloo alias Rajdutt and Chandreshwar Prasad Thakur, a distinguished Physician known globally for his contribution to research and policy on Kala Azar, were given the Padma Bhushan.

Padma Shri awardees include master carpet weaver from Uttar

Pradesh Khalil Ahmad, Madhya Pradesh's folk singer Kaluram Bamaniya, Bangladeshi singer Rezwana Choudhury Bannya and Chikankari embroidery artist from Uttar Pradesh Naseem Bano.

Rajbongshi folk singer from West Bengal's Cooch Behar Gita Roy Barman, tennis player Rohan Bopanna, spiritual figure from Tripura Chitta Ranjan Debbarma, banker Kalpana Morparia, philanthropist Kiran Nadar, social worker from Haryana Gurvinder Singh and folk singer from Uttar Pradesh Urmila Srivastava were also given the Padma Shri.

The Padma Awards ceremony also witnessed some heartwarming moments.

ASI suspended for hugging BJP LS candidate Madhavi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police Kothakota Sreenivas Reddy has suspended an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of the Saidabad police for violating Model Code of Conduct.

The ASI identified as Umadevi was suspended after a video of her shaking hands with and hugging Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Lok Sabha candidate Kompella Madhavi Latha went viral.

The ASI was on bandobast duty during the campaign of Madhavi Latha.

In a video, the woman ASI is seen approaching the BJP candidate and hugging her after shaking hands.

It is to be noted that the BJP candidate was booked by the Begum Bazaar police on April 20 after a video of her aiming an imaginary arrow at a mosque during Ram Navami yatra went viral.

Continued on Page 2



BY NOT OBLIGING TO CONTEST

Top Congress, BJP leaders disappoint cadre in TG

SNCN ACHARYULU
HYDERABAD

Now, it is clear, no Modi, no Sonia or Rahul from Telangana. The Congress and BJP leaders of Telangana tried to make their top leaders contest from Telangana. The leaders of both parties thought if their top leaders will contest from Telangana it will have an impact on other constituencies also and it will help win more seats in the Lok Sabha elections. At one stage, the Telangana BJP leaders have created the impression that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will contest from Telangana. In the same way the Telangana Congress leaders also created the impression that Sonia or Rahul will contest from Telangana. The

Telangana BJP leaders, including State president and Union Minister G Kishan Reddy, who is representing from Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency, directly met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and requested him to contest from Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency. The TPCC has passed a resolution requesting Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi to contest from Telangana. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and others

met Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi and requested them to contest from Telangana. They also told them that in the past, late prime minister Indira Gandhi contested from Medak Lok Sabha constituency and won. As a prime minister, Indira Gandhi represented Medak Lok Sabha constituency. The Telangana Congress leaders have identified Mahabubnagar and Khammam Lok Sabha seats for Sonia or Rahul to contest. Some Congress leaders campaigned that AICC General

Secretary Priyanka Gandhi will contest from Mahabubnagar Lok Sabha seat. But finally no one from these leaders are contesting from Telangana as expected by the Congress leaders. Meanwhile, the BJP leaders thought if Prime Minister Narendra Modi will contest from Secunderabad, it will have an impact not only in Telangana but also in the southern states where their party is in a weak position. This will help the BJP to win more number of seats in the southern states. The political circles thought that with the contest of Modi, Sonia or Rahul, Telangana will become central point in national politics. But, the efforts of the Congress and BJP leaders have gone in vain finally.



Raja Singh booked again over unauthorised rally
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Sultan Bazaar police on Monday registered an FIR against Bharatiya Janata Party MLA Raja Singh for carrying out an unauthorised rally on the occasion of Ram Navami. On April 17, Singh and his accomplice Joginder Singh Bittu, along with others, carried out a Shobha Yatra, which continued beyond stipulated time. Singh was booked under Sections 188, 290 and 34 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). "He had to finish the meeting by 10 pm, but at around 11.15 pm, MLA Raja Singh and other organisers created nuisance using loud DJ sounds and giving speeches beyond the allotted hours. This is a violation of the rules of Lok Sabha-2024 Election Model Code of Conduct (MCC)", read the FIR. The Goshamahal MLA was previously booked over the unauthorised rally under Sections 341, 188, 290, 171/c and 34 of the IPC by the Afzalgunj police.

KCR will ensure BJP's victory in 5 LS constituencies: Revanth
Alleges BRS boss has struck a secret deal
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS supremo K. Chandrababu Naidu has struck a secret deal with the BJP promising that he would ensure the victory of the BJP in five Lok Sabha constituencies in Telangana, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said. He said that the BRS is supporting the BJP wherever the Congress is strong. Addressing the Jana Jatra public meeting in Malkajgiri on Monday for Congress candidate Patnam Sunitha Mahender Reddy, the CM asked the BJP candidate in Malkajgiri, Eatala Rajender, to explain why the people of Huzurabad defeated him. "Why didn't Eatala appeal to Union Home Minister Amit Shah to probe the corruption of KCR and KTR? Why is Eatala not speaking about KTR's corruption and the phone-tap-



ping episode? Is Eatala ready for an open debate on the assurances given by the Prime Minister Modi?" he asked. "Eatala says Modi and Amit Shah are in his hands. Why didn't Eatala ask Amit Shah to probe the corruption that took place in the Kaleshwaram Project, Hyderabad lands and the corrupt deals of KCR and KTR? Why didn't Eatala complain about KCR's corruption as a BJP MLA? What is the understanding between Eatala and

KCR? Why is Eatala not speaking about KCR's corruption and the phone-tapping incident? I will send Mynampally Hanumantha Rao for a debate on Modi's assurances if Eatala is ready," the CM said. Revanth said that Modi did nothing for Telangana in the last 10 years. The Congress fought against Modi till he withdrew the anti-farmer laws. The farmers and the Congress forced Modi to apologise, the CM said.

BJP will win most LS seats in Telangana: Piyush

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP is going to win most of the LS seats in Telangana including Hyderabad, the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goel, said. Attending the nomination filing of Konda Vishweshwar Reddy in the Chevella Lok Sabha constituency on Monday, Piyush said that the victory of Modi looks certain as conscientious voters committed to upholding India's progress is backing the BJP. He said that the groundswell of support for the BJP promises a resounding victory for the BJP across the board even in hotly contested Hyderabad where Owaisi will be defeated.



By rallying behind Modi, voters are aiming to accelerate India's progress and to safeguard its future. Support and strengthen Modi's hands to speed up the progress of India and fulfil Modi's guarantee of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, he said. "I am delighted at my friend Konda Vishweshwar Reddy contesting in Chevella. This election holds the potential to

reshape the nation's destiny profoundly. With a third term, Modi's vision aims to make India the world's third-largest economy and to effectively tackle poverty. The outcome of this election stands as a pivotal moment in charting India's course towards prosperity and inclusivity under Modi's leadership," Piyush Goel said. He said that the INDIA alliance led by Rahul Gandhi is fragmented with its members struggling to find common ground on key issues and internal disagreements surfacing publicly. In Kerala, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan criticised Rahul Gandhi and the Congress. Mamata also has done the same.

'TDP plotted to kill RGV'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Actor-politician Posani Krishna Murali stirred controversy on Monday by alleging a conspiracy within the TDP leadership to harm renowned director Ram Gopal Varma. "I have received credible information about a plot to kill Ram Gopal Varma, which I've learned from sources close to the TDP," he claimed. Posani asserted that Anil (from Maha TV) had shared this plan with Rajesh Kilaru (a close associate of Lokesh), who then discussed it with Lokesh, son of Naidu. Allegedly, Lokesh approved of the plan, but upon Naidu's intervention, it was halted. "Naidu thought there was no threat from RGV and the plan was abandoned. I appreciate his decision to spare Varma," Posani stated. However, Posani didn't hold



back in his criticism of Naidu, suggesting he had a dangerous mindset. "I fear his intentions, evident from the attempted harm on CM Jagan," he remarked. "I'm not afraid for myself, but I implore, do not target CM Jagan. His safety is paramount for the well-being of millions," he pleaded. Posani also aimed Pawan Kalyan for his remarks about CM Jagan's reference to his multiple marriages. "Pawan Kalyan was upset when CM Jagan mentioned his marital status.

President Murmu presents...

Continued from page 1

One such moment was when noted folk dancer from Assam Drona Bhuyan made Ojapali and Deodhani dance form gestures to express his gratitude as he walked on the red carpet to receive the Padma Shri from the President. While returning to his seat, he went to Modi and touched his feet, a gesture the prime minister reciprocated. Bhuyan is a prominent Ojapali and Deodhani dancer from Darrang district in Assam, where he has been working to preserve a thousand-year-old tradition, performing stories from epics and Puranas. The prime minister was also seen interacting with Tripura's spiritual leader Chitta Ranjan Debbarma, who was wearing a saffron attire. Tribal farmer from Assam Sarbeswar Basumatary sat on his knees to express his gratitude before coming to accept the award from the President. Padma Awards, one of the highest civilian honours of the country, are conferred in three categories -- Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

'Panic in BJP camp after sensing defeat'

PNS ■ RAIGANJ

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said the BJP is in panic mode after sensing defeat in the first phase of polling last week and asserted that the rout of the saffron camp across the country is imminent. Addressing two back-to-back rallies in Raiganj and Kumarganj, Banerjee described the controversy surrounding Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district, where women have accused TMC leaders of sexual abuse, as a "pre-planned ploy" by the BJP to malign the state government during the ongoing Lok Sabha polls. "Fear and panic have gripped the BJP. After the first phase of polling in nearly 100 seats across the country, they have sensed defeat. That is why they are making baseless statements. The rout of the saffron camp is only a matter of time," she said. Speaking about the incidents in Sandeshkhali, the TMC leader said, "It is a ploy to



malign us ahead of the elections." Dubbing the BJP a 'jumla' party, the TMC supremo accused it of "peddling lies" regarding the CAA. "The CAA is a trap to turn legal citizens into foreigners. Once you implement CAA, NRC will follow. We will allow neither CAA nor NRC in West Bengal. If you apply, you will be designated as a foreigner," Banerjee said. The Chief Minister also criticised Defence Minister Rajnath Singh over his comments during a rally in North Bengal on Sunday, stating, "His comments are not taken seriously by anyone in his own party."

'Fear of defeat... Govt to execute...

Continued from page 1

The BJP is trying to use the country's culture and traditions for politics, he alleged. Expressing confidence that the INDIA alliance would come to power, he said he would make efforts to get Congress party's Lok Sabha candidate from Nizamabad T Jeevan Reddy appointed as a union minister. Jeevan Reddy, currently an MLC, is a senior Congress leader in Telangana.

Continued from page 1

He said the Congress government will reopen the cement factory after speaking to private individuals. The CM said that the Congress government will help the families of Indravelli Martyrs. He said that the statue of Indravelli would be made a tourist spot and that the government had allotted more funds for the Nagoba Jatara to honour Adivasi traditions. The CM said that his government has been doing many things for the people, however, Modi and KCR are asking people to defeat the Congress. He said that KCR deceived people by promising that he would give them houses but

did not give them. "The Congress government decided to give Rs 5 lakh to those who construct Indiramma houses. However, that will stop if the Congress government is toppled or defeated. Modi and KCR are conspiring to defeat the Congress. They want to overthrow our 100-day government. KCR did not give jobs for 10 years but the Congress government gave 30,000 jobs in three months. Will the unemployed sit back and watch as our government is overthrown? Modi and KCR are thieves. In December, KCR was hit by a rock. Tomorrow Modi should also be hit by a wall. The BJP should be defeated. Modi took funds to Gujarat due to his narrow-mindedness. Ensure the victory of Atram Suguna in Adilabad," the CM said.

Healthcare affected in...

Continued from page 1

Currently, the incentives for ASHA workers, immunisation programmes and free health check-ups are being conducted with the state share amount. The NHM and ASHA workers' unions are reportedly planning to stage a protest at the BJP office in Nampally demanding the Centre release funds. Sources said the fund crunch will make it very difficult for the state to take forward approved health schemes under NHM. Even the motive of the mission "to provide accessible, affordable and quality healthcare to the rural population, especially vulnerable groups like women and children" is being defeated.

BJLP leader Maheshwar predicts...

Continued from page 1

He has been saying 'you are the next CM' to Congress leaders wherever he goes," Maheshwar said. He said that Revanth has lost the confidence of the people and that is why he said that he will implement the loan waiver scheme by August 15 and took a pledge before gods. People would have believed Revanth if had said that he would waive loans in

June. But people are getting doubts about Revanth as he said that he will implement the loan waiver scheme in August, Maheshwar pointed out. He said that Komatireddy Venkat Reddy could be in touch with KCR as KCR had said that he is in touch with 20 Congress MLAs. Maheshwar said that many scams are taking place under Congress rule. Farmers are facing severe problems. They are facing water scarcity on

the one side and on the other side they are facing problems as the government is not procuring paddy. The government is not procuring rain-soaked paddy and it is not giving bonuses to paddy farmers, he said. He said that he is sending a letter to the CM regarding the assurances given to farmers. The government needs Rs 1 lakh crore to fulfil the assurances it gave to farmers. How will the government raise that

money? Women are postponing marriages thinking that they will get 10 grams of gold and Kalyana Laxmi, he said. "What happened to scooters for girl students? We will expose all the false assurances of the Congress. Will Revanth fulfil all these assurances by August or will he quit? Revanth is making use of gods for politics. Nobody knows whether Revanth will be the CM till August or not," Maheshwar said.

TODAY
ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Purnima: Apr 23 03:26 AM to Apr 24 05:18 AM
Krishna Paksha Prati-pada: Apr 24 05:18 AM to Apr 25 06:46 AM
Nakshatram: Chitra: Apr 22 07:59 PM to Apr 23 10:32 PM
Swati: Apr 23 10:32 PM to Apr 25 12:41 AM
Rahukalam: 3:22 PM to 4:56 PM
Yamagandam: 9:06 AM to 10:40 AM
Varjyam: 04:38 AM to 06:22 AM
Gulika: 12:14 PM to 1:48 PM
Amritakalam: 03:27 PM to 05:13 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:49 AM to 12:39 PM
HYDERABAD WEATHER
Forecast: Mostly Sunny
Temp: 38°
Humidity: 36%
Sunrise: 5:55 AM
Sunset: 6:34 PM
Updated: April 22, 2024 5:00 PM

People have lost faith in...

Continued from page 1

"Has he established even a single school or college in the last five years? Has he built any temples or brought any industries? Sanjay, who hasn't done anything worthwhile for Karimnagar has no right to seek votes," KTR said. He said that the prices of essentials have skyrocketed during Modi's tenure and there should be a public debate about why the people

should vote for the BJP which has not done anything for Telangana. KTR said that he was confident that the BRS would win a majority of the LS seats in TG and cited surveys suggesting that the BRS has a chance of winning 8 to 10 seats. He also said that the victory of BRS candidate Vinod Kumar can help develop Karimnagar. KTR said that BRS President KCR's roadshow will be held in Sirisilla on

May 10. "Some leaders are leaving the BRS due to their selfishness," he said. KTR said that the party will stand by those who stood by the party in difficult times. He pledged to work diligently for the victory of BRS leaders in future local body elections and said that he would stand by BRS leaders who refuse to join the Congress despite harassment by the Congress government.

ASI suspended...

Continued from page 1

The Begum Bazaar police have registered a case under IPC Section 295(A) and 125 of the RP Act (deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations) against Madhavi Latha and taken up investigation. Notice will be issued to her and further legal course of action will follow, police said.

Suspense continues...

Continued from page 1

He also made it clear to Kharge that he would obey the AICC decision along with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He also informed Kharge that he would work hard for the victory of the party candidate. The other two Ministers from Khammam, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, are trying hard to get the Khammam ticket for their relatives. Ponguleti is seeking the Khammam ticket for his

brother Prasada Reddy or his relative Ramasahayam Raghurami Reddy. Bhatti is trying for his wife Nandini. It is learnt that Ponguleti and Bhatti went to Bengaluru as per the directions of the high command. It is learnt that Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Siva Kumar held discussions with Ponguleti and Bhatti. Meanwhile, Renuka Choudhary commented on Monday that she is ready to contest to the Lok Sabha from Khammam if the high command wants.

Konda...

Continued from page 1

They own diamonds and gold worth Rs 11 crore, two villas in the Aparna Elixir Puppulaguda complex and agricultural lands in Chevella, Rajendranagar and Chittoor. Interestingly, Vishweshwar doesn't own a car. He faces four criminal cases including a cheating case in Dwaraka in New Delhi. He is contesting against Congress's Ranjith Reddy and the BRS candidate, Kasani Gnaneshwar Mudiraj.

BIG EATERIES FAILING TO FOLLOW NORMS: FSSAI

Watch out for expired food items in posh hotels

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Next time when you buy something from a posh or branded hotel, do check the expiry date of the products. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Task Force, constituted recently by the Commissioner of Food Safety, has conducted several surprise inspections in Hyderabad city and surrounding areas.

Even in eateries at Banjara Hills and Jubilee Hills violations were found. For instance in Chutney's Banjara Hills, 40 misbranded kaju packets worth Rs 25,200 were seized. Moreover, they were storing detergents and edible items together.

Notices were issued. In another famous Shabbagh hotel in Banjara Hills, the Task



Force team identified unhygienic conditions in food processing and storage areas. They found that several other violations identified under FSSAI Act issued notices.

In Jubilee Hills at Aura Cafe & Infusion Bar, frozen chicken past use by date worth Rs 3,840 was discarded by the

authorities. They even seized unlabelled kaju worth Rs 8,600. In Jubilee Hills, Naomi Patisserie and Bistro, the authorities identified certain pest control-related violations and served a notice. Moreover, the eatery was identified past history of not possessing valid licence for 4 months.

In Jubilee Hills, at Gaurang, expired spices worth Rs 6,285 were identified. In Babylon Bar & Kitchen of Jubilee Hills, stock worth Rs 42,660 of premium alkaline water - with no proper labelling, BIS Certificate, FSSAI Licence - has been seized. In the same location, British English Sponge Fingers packs worth Rs 1,797 have been seized and expired items worth Rs 7,748 have been discarded.

Commissioner of Food Safety RV Karnan said, "All the eating establishments are instructed to maintain hygiene conditions and to provide wholesome food to the consumers and follow the norms of the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006 every time, failing which stringent action will be taken under the FSSAI Act".

Inter results to be declared tomorrow

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) has announced on Monday that the results of both first year and second year intermediate students will be declared on April 24 at 11 am on its premises by Burra Venkatesham, Principal Secretary of Government School Education Department and Shruthi Ojha, Secretary of TSBIE.

A total of 9,80,978 candidates including 4,78,718 first year and 5,02,260 second year students appeared for exams that were held in March-April.

Following the declaration of results, the marks secured by the candidates will be made available in official websites of TSBIE - <https://tsbie.cgg.gov.in>, <http://results.cgg.gov.in> and newspapers for the convenience of students, parents and general public.

PHONE-TAPPING CASE

Bail petition of 3 accused to be heard today at sessions court

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nampally Metropolitan Sessions Court is going to hear the arguments over the bail petitions of accused Praneeth Rao, Bhujanga Rao and Thirupathanna on Wednesday.

Special Public Prosecutor Sambasiva Reddy has submitted a counter file against the bail petition of three accused on Monday to the 1st Metropolitan Sessions Judge.

Initially, the bail petitions were filed at Chief Metropolitan Magistrate but due to the various sections included in the case, the case has been transferred to Metropolitan Sessions Judge.

There is an uncertainty over another accused ex-Task force DCP Radha Kishan Rao's bail petition as he has reportedly not filed a



There is an uncertainty over another accused ex-Task force DCP Radha Kishan Rao's bail petition as he has reportedly not filed a bail petition yet. Except Radha Kishan, all other accused have filed bail petitions

bail petition yet. Except Radha Kishan, all other accused have filed bail petitions. According to sources, Radha Kishan Rao may file petition on showing the rea-

sons that he is pursuing a professional course. At present, all accused have been sent to the Chanchalguda jail after being investigated by the police.

OU VC felicitates students who cracked UPSC exam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University Vice Chancellor Acharya Dandeboina Ravinder Yadav felicitated the students who were selected for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) in the recently announced UPSC results on Monday.

Acharya Ravinder said that in the 2024 Civils results, Merugu Kaushik, who secured 82nd rank at the national level, and Chittapuli Narendra Padal, who secured 545th rank, further enhanced the reputation of the varsity.

To show their own mark in providing necessary services to the society, the students were advised to give their valuable suggestions and advice. He wished them to be a partner in the development of Osmania in the future.

Narendra Padal from Arts



OU VC Acharya Dandeboina Ravinder Yadav felicitates Merugu Kaushik and Narendra Padal for cracking UPSC exam.

College and Merugu Kaushik from Engineering College said that achieving this feat is a matter of pride for the OU as well.

OU Civil Surveyor Academy Director Dr Konda Nageshwar introduced both the Civils graduates to the authorities. He

requested them to share their success stories with the students who are preparing for competitive exams. Kaushik and Narendra Padal made it clear that they are always ready to guide OU students preparing for other competitive exams, including civils.

Prohibited cotton seeds racket busted; seeds seized

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Medchal Special Operations Team (SOT) team, Shamirpet Police, along with the officials of Agricultural department conducted a joint operation on Monday and arrested two persons for transporting prohibited cotton seeds at Shamirpet.

Police have seized 1.2 tons of prohibited (BG-III/HT) cotton seeds worth Rs 35 lakh and 1,560 kgs of onion bags to conceal the cotton seeds. Along with the seeds, police seized a vehicle and two cell phones. The seeds were banned by the Telangana government.

Gaddam Srikanth and Goshika Naveen Kumar were arrested. Other three accused are absconding, who are Shivaiah, Pindi Suresh, and an unknown person.

The arrests were made under the guidance of Cyberabad Commissioner of Police Avinash Mohanty, under the supervision of DCP, SOT, Cyberabad, D Srinivas, ADPC Shoban Kumar and Medchal SOT Inspector R Shyamsunder Reddy.

Commercial Court penalises ICICI Bank to pay Rs 72,00,000 to LMIL

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Commercial Court penalised the ICICI Bank, Hyderabad to pay Rs 72,00,000 along with six per cent interest for refusing or delaying to encash Bank Guarantee (BG) to Luharuka Media and Infra Limited again on Monday.

ICICI bank dared to refuse to encash the BG by giving frivolous reasons which made LMIL approach the Ombudsman. In spite of the Ombudsman giving the order for reconsideration, ICICI had not honoured the BG. This

made LMIL to approach the High Court of Telangana. The High Court then ordered the bank to pay as per the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) circular dated July 1, 2015. But, the bank is still finding a way to not honour it. Luharuka Media and Infra Limited again approached the Ombudsman for the implementation of the order of the High Court.

The RBI instructed ICICI to honour the BG along with the compensation, but ICICI paid only the principal amount and did not honour the regulatory order.

Thereafter, LMIL approached the Commercial Court, Hyderabad on March 18, 2024, which ruled in the favour of the firm.

The judgment mandates ICICI Bank to pay Rs 72,00,000 towards interest at 12 per cent per annum on the BG amount of Rs 2.00 crore for the period from June 30, 2017 to June 30, 2020, for its delayed payment, alongwith further interest at six per cent per annum on Rs 72,00,000 from the date of filing of the Suit i.e. April 16, 2021 till the date of realisation.

ECI seizes 20,000 litres of illegal liquor since March 16

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

District Election Officer (DEO) Ronald Rose said that since the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force on March 16, the ECI seized 20,955 litres of illegal liquor. On Sunday, 6 am to Monday 6 am, the excise department has seized 34 liters of illegal liquor, two cases were registered and four persons have been arrested.

Since the MCC came into force, the enforcement departments seized Rs 14.66 crore and Rs 6.91 crore worth of material.

In 24 hours of time, Rs 3.11 lakh and Rs 23,473 worth of materials have been seized by the police, 2,922 licenced arms have been deposited in the police stations and three FIRs filed in Hyderabad.



Case booked against sub-registrar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) has filed a case of disproportionate assets against Mahabab sub-registrar (Grade I) Taslim Mohammed.

The accused has been under suspension on the allegations of taking bribes. She was caught red-handed while accepting a bribe amount of Rs 19,200 on November 22.

On Monday, the ACB released a press release where it is mentioned that ACB searches were conducted at five places belonging to her and relatives.

During the searches, property documents of houses, open plots and agricultural land documents were found.

The total assets are estimated to be about Rs 2,94,84,547.

The press note mentioned that as this is an offence punishable under the Sections of 13 (1) (b) r/w 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018).



TEMPERATURES SOAR TO 43.3°

Heatwave prevails in Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad recorded a maximum temperature of 43.3 degrees on Monday. The Indian Meteorological Department-Hyderabad (IMD-H) predicted thunderstorms accompanied with lightning till April 26.

On April 22 parts of Telangana received light to moderate rains. On April 23 districts including Adilabad, KomaramBheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtial, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, kamareddy, Sangareddy, Medak and Vikarabad would experience showers. The maximum temperature is likely to rise by 2-3 degrees Celsius in the next five days. Similar conditions are expected to

prevail in the aforementioned districts till April 26.

The Telangana State planning and Development Society (TSDDS) predicted light to moderate rainfall across the State till April 25. In Telangana, the maximum temperature is expected to remain between 38-43 degrees Celsius and minimum temperature is expected to remain 25-28 degrees Celsius.

While Hyderabad recorded 43.3 degrees Celsius, in Telangana, Khamam recorded the highest temperature (44.9), Jagtial (44.8), Nalgoda (44.7), Jogulamba Gadwal (43.8) Mahabubabad (43.6), Suryapet (43.5), Rajanna Sircilla (42.9), Wanaparthy (42.8), Nagarkurnool (42.7), Kamareddy (41.8) and Rangareddy(41.6).

Closure of the Red Hills bridge cuts access to Public Gardens

RASHMI BHUMIREDDY ■ HYDERABAD

The tranquil pathways leading from Red Hills to Public Gardens, Nampally, have long been cherished by walkers and joggers seeking a respite from the city's hustle and bustle. However, a significant obstacle has emerged, disrupting this serene journey - the closure of the foot-over iron bridge that connects these two areas.

Being a vital link for pedestrians, the foot-over-bridge has been neglected for years thereby increasing the flow of traffic between Red Hills and Public Gardens. Due to neglect and lack of renovation, the bridge now stands as a ruined and still path lying between Red hills and Nampally.

The condition of the bridge dampens the spirit of outdoor enthusiasts. The closure of the



Closure of the Red Hills foot-over bridge a hindrance to Public Gardens

bridge aroused frustration and substantial inconvenience among residents and visitors alike, especially the senior citizens who find it challenging to reach Public Gardens from Red Hills. Also, the closure of the bridge has led to increased congestion on alternative routes, adding to the traffic woes in the area. This not only impacts visitors to the Public Gardens who use this route for walking and recreation. It is

such as air pollution and noise levels.

Despite appeals from the community and calls for action, the bridge remains closed, highlighting a need for urgent intervention and restoration. The restoration of this vital link is essential not just for the convenience of pedestrians but also for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the preservation of public spaces like Public Gardens.

Mohammad Abid Ali, a social activist said, "The closure of the Red Hills foot-over iron bridge has caused a disruption in access to the Public Gardens. People travelling from Red Hills to Public Gardens are facing difficulties due to the unavailability of the route. This has particularly impacted visitors to the Public Gardens who use this route for walking and recreation. It is

Training for technicians on installation of RWHS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

For conserving water for the future generations, the government has started a training programme for plumbing technicians on installation and maintenance of rain water harvesting structures (RWHS) on April 22. The programme will be continued on April 24 and 25.

As part of the programme, under the direction of GHMC Commissioner Ronald Rose, plumbing workers and masons were trained on Monday at GHMC headquarters, on preventing water problems in the city, appropriate solutions, rainwater conservation and precautions to be taken to increase ground-

water levels.

This is a collaborative effort involving various departments of Telangana, including EFS&T, HMWSSB, GHMC, MAUD, CDM, Irrigation, PR&RD, Horticulture, and Groundwater and TSPCB

being undertaken to address water conservation as one of the verticals of Climate Action for Summer 2024.

Water board Managing Director (MD) Sudarshan Reddy said that the construction of RWHS are very important for water conservation. Those who want to participate in the training programme on April 24 and 25, can register through phone number 8639619366 or mail to eprienviro@gmail.com.

TG Punjabi Sabha organises Baisakhi Mela

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Punjabi Sabha (TPS) on Sunday organised Baisakhi Mela at Hitex Exhibition Centre which attracted enthusiastic crowds with vibrant music, dance and sumptuous food. The weekend timing provided the perfect opportunity for people to spend quality time, adding to the event's allure.

Kicking off with energetic Bhangra performances at the venue's entrance, the rhythmic beats and traditional Punjabi dance steps entertained the guests.

TPS president S Ravinder

Singh Sarna said, "The highlight of the evening was the star-studded concert. Renowned singer Kushboo mesmerised the audience with her soulful renditions, paving the way for the acclaimed duo, Meet Bros - Manmeet Singh and Harmeet Singh who grabbed the stage with their rocking performance. Starting with the hit song "Boss," they once again captivated the audience's hearts. From five-year-old to 60-year-old danced to the tunes of Meet Bros at the specially designed dance arena."

A wide array of food and beverage options awaited attendees, ranging from authentic



Audience enjoying the musical performances by Meet Brothers

Hyderabadi biryani to delectable fancies, momos, fries and ice-creams. The food stalls proved to be a saving grace, satisfying appetites throughout the evening. There was a colourful 'Gidda' dance and

dhol. Attendees were treated to dance performances and zumba sessions, where they enthusiastically grooved to the music. Following this, the renowned band Capriccio took

the stage by storm, serenading the audience with a mix of Bollywood and Hollywood hits. Their renditions of songs by AR Rahman and Ilaiyaraaja sent the audience into a frenzy. During the event, the Telangana Punjabi Sabha also unveiled their annual magazine, "Rooh Punjab Dee," showcasing their upcoming events and initiatives.

TPS President S Ravinder Singh Sarna said that a large number of Punjabi families turned up to the Baisakhi Mela celebrations and expressed gratitude to the people for making the programme a grand success.

DALIT BANDHU SCHEME More than Rs 1,000 crore expenditure is less than actual releases in 3 years

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The prestigious Dalit Bandhu scheme has witnessed Rs 1,007 crore less expenditure than the actual budget released from the 2021-22 to 2023-24. Hyderabad-based RTI activist Kareem Ansari asked the Telangana SC Corporative Development Corporation (TSCCDC) via Right to Information Act (RTI) about the Dalit Bandhu scheme expenditure and the budget released. In reply, TSCCDC

said that a total of Rs 4,891 crore has been released for three years but Rs 3,884.52 crore has been spent.

The scheme was launched on August 16, 2021 in Huzurabad Assembly constituency for the uplift of Scheduled Caste (SC) people. It envisages granting a financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh to each Dalit family.

For the 2021-22 and 2023-23 financial years, the government released Rs 4,191.8 crore but spent Rs 3,860.95 crore for

the two consecutive years. In 2023-24, the government released Rs 700 crore but spent Rs 23.56 crore.

Karim Ansari said that the information revealed that it was a failure of government and bureaucracy. Some of the people have not been selected for this scheme and though some of them were selected they have not got the money. "Since the government changed there is a dilemma over the implementation of the scheme," he said.

The day-dreaming Opposition fails to see BJP's growth

There is not even an iota of truth in the Opposition propaganda against the BJP branding it as a purely north Indian party and would not be able to succeed in South India. Recently, at a rally, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy levelled a meaningless allegation against the BJP accusing it as a party of North India and would give priority only to north Indians. In fact, in Telangana, Revanth Reddy is in for trouble.

The impact of the BJP could be seen even in rural areas and urban intelligentsia to the extent of it is likely to capture not only the BRS seats but also the Congress seats too. The BJP has made significant inroads into the former seat held by Revanth in Lok Sabha - Malkajgiri - and it is barging ahead in majority of the LS seats in Telangana. The way the BJP is expanding in AP is surprising.

The BJP's strength can be gauged by the way its leaders

are vying with one another to secure nomination in each constituency. Wherever the BJP leaders go, the people have been extending a grand welcome. The alliance of BJP, TDP and Janasena is sending shivers down the spine of Jagannathan Reddy's followers. The BCs, Dalits, Adivasis and the down-trodden sections in Telangana and AP are getting veered towards the BJP. How can anyone believe that the Congress, which failed to open its account in 13 states - AP, Gujarat, Rajasthan, HP, Delhi, J and K, Uttarakhanda, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura - is going to lock horns with the BJP?

Is there any substance in the Opposition criticism that the BJP, which secured more than 50% of the total 224 seats in 21 states, confined to only some areas? Noted economist Surjeet Bhalla commented that the BJP is spreading in Tamil Nadu and Kerala and is going to post surprising results.

Is there any substance in the Opposition criticism that the BJP, which secured more than 50% of the total 224 seats in 21 states, confined to only some areas? Noted economist Surjeet Bhalla commented that the BJP is spreading in Tamil Nadu and Kerala and is going to post surprising results.



Y SATYA KUMAR
BJP National Secretary

According to him, there is no surprise if the BJP were to get at least 5 seats in Tamil Nadu. It is clearly seen that the main contest in Tamil Nadu is between the DMK and the BJP. The BJP, which failed to open its account in 2019 LS polls, is giving a tight contest to the rival DMK in at least 10 seats. The strength of BJP is increasing with each passing day in Kanyakumari-Nagarcoil-Tirunelveli belt and in Ramanadhapuram and Coimbatore. There is no sur-

prise even if the BJP were to secure a vote share of 25% and Madi becoming familiar with the people of Tamil Nadu by virtue of his extensive visits to the State.

He built a bridge between the North and the South right from installing the Sengol of Chola period in new Parliament building to Kasi-Tamil Sangamam and other series of measures Modi had initiated. He assailed the Congress government style of functioning for its fault of handing over

Kachchaitivu islands to Sri Lanka without any justification. Using the application of Artificial Intelligence, Modi ensured that his speech reached the people translated into Tamil touched their hearts. Because of these factors, the ploy of the opposition to alienate the BJP from the people of South India by promoting the North-South divide does not appear to pay dividends.

Modi was at his confident best when he said that the success of the BJP in the

South would surprise everyone. In the South, people in all constituencies know about the weaker section housing programme, free LPG cylinders for the poor, health insurance, free good grains supply and so on. Majority of the youth from AP, Telangana, TN and Karnataka are veering towards the BJP. Perhaps the Opposition parties have ignored it.

The people of Kerala vexed with the decades of the rule of the Left Democratic Front and United Democratic Front are gradually gravitating towards the BJP. They have been comparing the extent of corruption that had taken place under these regimes with the development achieved under Modi regime. The support of Catholic Christians is increasing with each passing day to the BJP. The dejection of the people with the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu and BRS in Telangana

TRULY SPEAKING

is helping the BJP gain deep roots.

Surjeet Bhalla predicted that the BJP on its own is likely to get 330-350 seats. He said that the number of seats to the Modi-led BJP will increase by 5-7 per cent this time, compared to the previous tally.

Anyone who notices the development and construction of infrastructural amenities that are under way in the country, implementation of welfare programmes, cash transfer direct into bank accounts of beneficiaries will never believe that the country economy is very weak. Economists feel that Modi is going to get the highest number of LS seats in elections because of the development of the country's economy. Roads, airports, ports and the largest sea bridge Atal Setu, the largest cable suspension bridge

Sudarsansetu, the highest bridge in world on River Chenab, the longest tunnel in world Atal tunnel were built to create infrastructure worth Rs 33 lakh crore. The per capita income doubled and expressed increased by 400% to cross \$ 750 billion.

The political pundits feels that the welfare measures, Modi's leadership qualities, Ram temple construction in Ayodhya, scrapping of Art 370 regarding special status for J and K, global reputation of India, safeguarding the interests of the Hindus will contribute to the Modi's series of successes.

The CSDS-Lok Neeti survey indicates that 57% of the people are satisfied with the Modi's rule and 50% of the population of the country want Modi is returned to power. Because of this, if anyone is day dreaming of Modi-led NDA would not come to power, they should be included under the list of fools defined by the 5th century linguistic philosopher Bhartruhari.

Jagdish takes Revanth to task for 'unsavoury comments' on him

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Former minister and Suryapeta MLA G Jagdish Reddy on Monday criticised Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for making "unsavoury comments" on him. He felt that such comments were disgusting.

Addressing the media here, he said that the remarks made by Revanth Reddy were painful. He expressed the feeling that the Chief Minister could have resorted to making such comment because of fear of defeat in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections. Revanth

Reddy could have also perceived a threat to his post. The 160-day rule of the Congress was characterised by drought, withering of standing crops in lakhs of acres and women hitting the streets armed with pitchers to get drinking water.

He alleged that Revanth Reddy has been sending money bags to PM Modi from Telangana thinking that the latter would save his CM post. Revanth by praising Komatireddy Brothers became the laughing stock not only among the people but also the Congress leaders, he alleged.



Harish Rao dares Revanth to resign if he fails to waive farm loans by Aug 15

if he fails to waive farm loans by Aug 15

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Former minister T Harish Rao on Monday appealed to the people to reject both the Congress and BJP candidates in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections. He said that he has good reasons to say that there are 100 factors to ensure that the Congress and BJP are rejected.

Speaking to media persons after an internal meeting with BRS key leaders in the Sangareddy Assembly segment on Monday, Harish Rao said that the people of Telangana would not vote for Congress because the party failed to keep its election promises even four and half months after it came to power.

He asked Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy whether he would resign from his post if

he failed to implement a 100 per cent farm loan waiver by August 15. The loan waiver is expected to cost the exchequer around Rs 39000 crore.

Harish Rao said that the Congress failed to deliver on its promise of an increase in input subsidy for farmers, Rs 500 bonus per quintal of

paddy, enhanced Aasara pensions, one tola gold as part of Kalyana Lakshmi to eligible brides.

He regretted that an increasing number of farmers are committing suicides due to distress, but the Congress government failed to come to their rescue.



Former minister T Harish Rao along with BRS leaders addressing a media conference in Sangareddy

Bandi urges govt to come to rescue of toddy tappers

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

BJP general secretary Bandi Sanjay Kumar has alleged that the Congress government has failed to come to the rescue of the toddy tappers.

He inspected a palm garden destroyed by fire in Taduru village in Sircilla district on Monday. He interacted with local toddy tappers and locals. He consoled the toddy tappers who sustained significant loss.

Later talking to media, he came down like a ton of bricks on Congress government. What happened to the promise made by Congress to grow toddy trees in five acres and give 90 per cent subsidy on plants and drip equipment.

He found fault with the Congress government for not keeping up its promise of naming Janagaon district after

Sardar Sarvai Papanna, an iconic figure for toddy tapper community.

In the four months after the Congress come to power, it did not allot land at least in one village for growing toddy trees, he queried.

The Congress conveniently ignored the promises made by it after coming to power. Naming the Jangaon district after Sardar Sarvai Papanna would not incur any expenditure at all.

The toddy tappers, moreover, appreciate the gesture. Who stopped the Congress from doing all this, he wondered.

He alleged that the police has been preventing people gathering near toddy gardens to savour on fresh toddy, he alleged.

It was high time the government came to the rescue of the toddy tappers.



Meet 34-year-old architect who contested every election

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

A 34-year-old youth, who hitherto contested elections to various legislative bodies at least for 10 elections, is now girding up his loins to contest the Lok Saba elections.

He is identified as Kota Shyam Kumar who holds a master's degree in architecture. Irrespective of victory chances, his only objective is to contest the elections.

Shyam Kumar, who has progressive ideas from childhood, developed interest in politics. But, he says that the condition do not favour the youth to enter the politics.

Therefore, to sensitise people on the importance of the right to vote, he started contesting the elections since 2018. That is why, the residents of Karimnagar call him as "Karimnagar

Bharatiyudu." Besides filing his nomination papers, he will campaign in the elections in the attire of popular leaders. He contested six times as MLA and four times as MP unsuccessfully. His only objective is to create awareness among the people on the right to vote.

He appealed to the people to sing the national anthem prior to exercising their right to vote and do so honestly. He appeals to the youth not to sell their vote and wanted them to elect good candidates and pave the way for their golden future.

In his characteristic style, he would display placards at places where there are problems in the constituency. In the previous elections, he attired in the garb of Ambedkar, Alluri sitarama Raju, Bhagat Singh and some other eminent persons and campaigned for voter support.



Tender leaves of tamarind sell at Rs 700 a kg in Hyd market

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A kg of tamarind tenders leaves sells at Rs 700 and competing with the price of mutton. Though tender tamarind leaves are available freely in country side, but the green leaves fetch a handsome price in urban areas.

The price of tender tamarind leaves equals the price of three kg of fish, two kg of chicken and one kg of mutton.

In the wholesale vegetable market at Gudimalkapur, in retail markets and in Rytu Bazar the tender leaves of tamarind sales have picked up for over the past one week.

In Gudimalkapur market, a kg of tender leaves of tamarind were sold between Rs 500 and Rs 600 on Sunday, while the



climbing up to the last branches. Farmers would be able to collect significant quantity of the tender leaves by putting a lot of efforts, hence the commodity commands higher price in the market, they said.

The tender leaves of tamarind has many medicinal values, according to nutritionists. Each 100 grams of the leaves contain 5.8 grams of protein, 10.6 grams of fibre, 100 mg of calcium, 140 mg of phosphorus, 26 mg of magnesium, and 3 mg of vitamin-C. It is helpful in reducing the impact of various infections on body and also be beneficial to diabetics.

Couple killed as car rams into container carrier

PNS ■ SURYAPET

A couple was crushed to death when the car in which they were travelling rammmed into the rear of a stationary container vehicle near Mukundapuram under Munagalmandal of Suryapet district on Monday.

The deceased were identified as Naveen Raja (29) and his wife Bhargavi (24). Navin Raju was an employee of Sri Chaitanya College at Vijayawada.

The accident took place when the couple was on its way to Vijayawada from Hyderabad.



Ill-fated car got stuck beneath the container after it smashed into rear of the lorry at Mukundapuram in Suryapet district on Monday

The rescue workers had a tough time extricating bodies from the mangled remains of the car.

The car got stuck beneath the container. The local people tried to extricate the couple but in vain.

The police have released CCTV footage related to the accident. The footage was captured in the CCTV cameras installed near a petrol station near the accident spot.

The car was travelling over and above the speed limit.

The police took steps to send bodies to Government Hospital at Kodad.

Two Telangana students die in US road accident

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two people were killed and two others were hospitalised in a head-on collision in Peoria, near Lake Pleasant, on Saturday night.

The two men killed in the crash, Nivesh Mukka and Goutham Parsi, were both from Telangana and were both 19-years-old, according to Peoria police.

While Nivesh hailed from Huzurabad town in Karimnagar district, Goutham was from Station Ghanpur in Jangaon district.

Peoria police officers, along with the Peoria Fire and Medical Department, responded to the collision on Castle Hot Springs Road, just north of State Route 74, around 6:18 p.m. on Saturday, according to the media in Arizona.

A red Ford F-150 was going south on Castle Hot Springs Road while a white Kia Forte was travelling north when the



Peoria police released the photo of the accident in which two Telangana students died in Peoria on Saturday. (Inset) Nivesh and Goutham

two cars collided head-on, according to police.

Nivesh and Goutham were both passengers in the Forte. The driver of the Forte was rushed to a local hospital with serious injuries but was later released. The driver of the F-150 was also taken to a local hospital but was also later

released. It is yet to be known whether it was speed or impairment that were factors for the crash.

The roadway was closed for several hours during the preliminary investigation but was re-opened around 5:30 a.m. on Sunday morning.

Naidu 'controlling' Oppn alliance: Sajjala

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

General secretary of YSRCP, Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, has accused the TDP-BJP-JSP alliance of plunging the State into darkness in 2014.

Speaking to the media on Monday, Sajjala asserted that the political machinations of the Chandrababu Naidu-led TDP involved not only sending its leaders to other parties like the BJP and Jana Sena Party but also exerting influence to secure seats for them. He highlighted this strat-

egy's implementation in the Bhimavaram, Avanigadda, and Anaparthi constituencies.

Sajjala underscored the disappointment of Janasainiks who had envisioned their leader, Pawan Kalyan, as the potential chief minister under the opposition's victory. However, Naidu dashed these hopes by restricting the alliance to two Lok Sabha and 21 Assembly seats according to the seat-sharing agreement.

Moreover, considering the TDP's manoeuvres, there's speculation

that Pawan Kalyan might be substituted by the TDP's ticket aspirant SVSN Varma at the eleventh hour. Sajjala noted that Naidu is well aware of his party's diminishing popularity and thus formed alliances with the BJP while maintaining a tacit understanding with the Congress for the elections.

Addressing Chiranjeevi's support for the TDP-BJP-Jana Sena alliance, Sajjala asserted that it wouldn't significantly bolster the opposition's electoral prospects. While acknowl-



INDIA CORNER

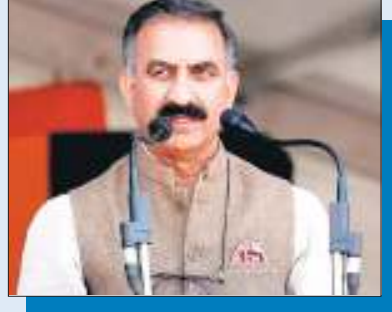
NIA raids 9 locations in Kashmir in terror conspiracy case

The National Investigation Agency on Monday carried out raids at nine locations in Kashmir, including Srinagar, in a terror conspiracy case, officials said here. The case relates to a terror conspiracy involving plans by terrorist organisations and their newly floated offshoots to unleash violence in Jammu and Kashmir by using sticky bombs, improvised explosive devices and small arms, they said. "In a massive crackdown in the Jammu and Kashmir terror conspiracy case involving Pakistan-backed banned terrorist organisations and their offshoots, the NIA raided nine locations across Kashmir," a spokesman of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said. He said digital devices containing large volumes of incriminating data and documents were seized during the raids conducted on the premises of hybrid terrorists and Overground Workers (OGWs) linked to the newly formed offshoots and affiliates of proscribed outfits.



Defection by MLAs major poll issue in Himachal Pradesh: Sukhu

The Congress is contesting elections to save democracy in Himachal Pradesh, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said on Monday, stressing that the defection by its six MLAs will be a major issue in the polls. Six Congress rebels, who were later disqualified and are now contesting on BJP ticket in the assembly bypolls, and three independents had voted in favour of the BJP nominee Harsh Mahajan in the Rajya Sabha elections held on February 27. "Elections are being held, it is a festival of democracy and in Himachal Pradesh, we are contesting elections to save democracy. We are appealing to the general public why the leaders they elected for five years voted in favour of the BJP candidate in Rajya Sabha polls in 14 months and then got disqualified," Sukhu said in Kangra district. The six Congress MLAs -- Rajinder Rana (Sujaipur), Sudhir Sharma (Dharamshala), Ravi Thakur (Lahaul and Spiti).



Chithirai fest: Thousands take part in car festival with fanfare

Thousands of devotees took part in the car festival here on Monday, the 11th day of the popular, annual Chithirai fest. With devotees raising spiritual slogans, the chariots of Goddess Meenakshi and Lord Sundareswarar (Lord Shiva) were taken around the Masi streets as per tradition and were taken back to the temple premises. A highlight of the annual Chithirai festival, Lord Kallazhagar (Lord Vishnu) entering the Vaigai river is scheduled to be held on the morning of April 23. On Sunday, the celestial wedding of Lord Sundareswarar and Goddess Meenakshi was held amid fanfare, the 10th day of the annual 13-day long festival. As per practice, women who took part in the event replaced their Thaali (Mangalsutra) with a new one. The Chithirai festival, one of the identities of this ancient southern city of Tamil Nadu, began on April 12 with hoisting of the traditional flag on the premises of Meenakshi temple.



SHAH WARNS NAXALS

Surrender or will be rooted out

PNS ■ RAIPUR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday asserted the Narendra Modi government has eliminated terrorism from the country as he issued a stern warning to Naxalites in Chhattisgarh, asking them to surrender or else they will be rooted out from the state in two years.



He said in the last four months alone, 90 Naxalites were neutralised in Chhattisgarh under the BJP government, comments coming after 29 Maoists were gunned down by security forces in an encounter in Kanker, which is part of the Bastar region, on April 16.

Addressing an election rally in Kanker town, around 150km away from the encounter site, four days ahead of the second round of Lok Sabha polls, Shah took on the Congress and asked party MP Rahul Gandhi to explain what four generations of his family have done for the poor in Chhattisgarh when they were in power. The BJP stalwart maintained Congress leaders did not attend the January 22 consecration of Lord Ram idol at the Ayodhya temple due to vote bank politics and referred to then-PM Manmohan Singh's statement that "minorities have first right to India's resources" to hit out at the rival party.

The Union minister hailed PM Narendra Modi, saying he has brought a huge trans-

formation in the country in the last two years and has outlined an "agenda for the next 25 years".

"Narendra Modi ji has eliminated terrorism from the country, while Naxalism is on the verge of eradication. Mahadev app brand Bhopush Baghel government did not take action against Naxalites," Shah said. He was referring to the previous Congress rule and the alleged involvement of former CM Baghel in the Mahadev betting app scam.

Highlighting the state BJP government's success in tacking Naxal insurgency after assuming office in December, Shah pointed out that in the last four months, 90 Naxalites were neutralised in the state.

While 123 Naxalites were arrested, 250 others surrendered (during this period), he added.

Under Modi's leadership, Naxalism has been eliminated from states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Bihar, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, the Home Minister said.

"Elect Modi ji for a third term and the menace (of Naxalism) will be rooted out from Chhattisgarh in two years," he asserted. "As long as there is Naxalism, tribal brothers and sisters will not have access to electricity, schools, ration shops and hospitals. I would like to tell them (Naxalites) to surrender, otherwise the result of the fight is certain. We will finish them. We will root out them from Chhattisgarh," he said.

The Home Minister hit out at the Congress, saying the grand old party believes minorities have the first right over the country's resources, while the BJP firmly feels this right belongs to the poor, adivasi, Dalits and backward.

Recently, the Congress party got offended when the PM spoke about its manifesto and asked why it wanted to conduct a survey of properties of all citizens, the senior BJP leader said.

"I want to ask the Congress whether its manifesto mentions a survey or not? Rahul baba should make it clear. Their PM Manmohan Singh had said (in 2006) the minority has first right over the resources not adivasi and Dalits. But we say the poor, adivasi, Dalit and backward have first right to over the resources of the country."

Constitute medical board to examine Kejrival: Court

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday directed the AIIMS to constitute a medical board to examine Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to determine whether he needs insulin to control his blood sugar levels and said the home-cooked food that the politician was consuming was different from the diet chart prepared by his doctor.

Special Judge for CBI and ED cases Kavari Baweja passed the order while declining Kejriwal's plea for video consultation with his doctor in the presence of his wife.

Kejriwal had alleged he was not being administered insulin in jail leading to "alarming" rise in his blood sugar levels.

The ED had claimed on Friday the AAP leader was consuming sugar-laden food like mangoes and sweets on a regular basis to create grounds for medical bail.

2G spectrum: Centre moves SC seeking change in verdict

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 12 years after it was delivered, the Centre on Monday moved the Supreme Court seeking modification of its verdict in the 2G spectrum case which said the State was duty bound to adopt the auction route while transferring or alienating the country's natural resources.

In its judgement delivered on February 2, 2012, the apex court had quashed 2G spectrum licences given to various firms during the tenure of A Raja as the telecom minister in January 2008.

On Monday, Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre, mentioned an interim application before a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice J B Pardiwala.

While seeking urgent listing of the application, the top law officer told the bench that the plea seeks modification of the 2012 verdict as the Centre wanted to grant 2G spectrum



licences in some cases. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, who appeared for NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation which was one of the petitioners on whose plea the February 2012 verdict was delivered, opposed the application and said the issue has been well-settled by the apex court in its judgement that auction is the only mode for granting licences for natural resources like spectrum, the radio frequencies allocated to the mobile phone industry for communication over the airwaves.

"We will see, you please move an e-mail," the CJI told Venkataramani.

In its 2012 judgement, the apex court had said, "When it comes to alienation of scarce natural resources like spectrum etc, it is the burden of the State to ensure that a non-discriminatory method is adopted for distribution and alienation, which would necessarily result in protection of national/public interest".

The top court had said in its view, a duly publicised auction conducted fairly and impartially was perhaps the best method for discharging this burden. "In other words, while transferring or alienating the natural resources, the State is duty bound to adopt the method of auction by giving wide publicity so that all eligible persons can participate in the process," it had said. On March 22 this year, the Delhi High Court had admitted a CBI appeal against the acquittal of Raja and 16 others in the 2G spectrum allocation case, paving the way for hearing the matter six years after the plea was filed by the agency.

QUADRUPLE MURDER CRACKED

Son gave Rs 65 lakh 'supari' to eliminate parents, brother

PNS ■ GADAG (KARNATAKA)

The Gadag police have cracked the mystery behind four murders that took place on April 19, with the arrest of eight people, including kingpin Vinayak Bakale, who allegedly gave a contract Rs 65 lakh contract to assassins to eliminate his parents and brother Karthik Bakale.



The plot went awry and the parents survived. However, Karthik Bakale and the family's close relatives were hacked to death in the early hours of April 19.

Karthik (27), Parashuram Hadimani (55), Lakshmi Hadimani (45) and Akanksha Hadimani (16) were found murdered at Dasara Oni in Gadag, police said.

Karthik was the son of BJP leader Prakash Bakale and Sunanda Bakale, who is the vice-president of Gadag-Betageri City Municipal Council.

Police sources said Karthik's

marriage had been fixed, which the Hadimanis had come to attend.

Since the jewellery, valuables and cash were intact in the house, police doubted that the motive was not robbery but something else, police sources said.

They said that a property dispute among the siblings was suspected to be the reason behind the murder as Prakash was to give all his properties to Karthik, which irked Vinayak, who allegedly decided to wipe out his parents and brother.

On Monday, Inspector

General of Police (North Zone) Vikas Kumar told reporters that they had arrested Vinayak Prakash Bakale (35), Fairouz Khazi (29), Jishan Khazi (24), all from Gadag; twin brothers Sahil Ashfaq Khazi (19), Sohail Ashfaq Khazi (23), Sultan Jilani Sheikh (23), Mahesh Jagannath Salunke (21) and Waheed Liyaqat Bepari (21), all from Miraj in Sangli district of Maharashtra.

Vinayak had given a Rs 65 lakh contract to Fairouz, who arranged vehicles and weapons and carried out surveillance, Kumar said.

The assailants broke into the house thinking that only three people were present, the IGP said, adding that the targets were Vinayak's parents and brother.

The agreement between Vinayak and the contract killers was such that the proceeds of the loot after killing the trio would belong to the contract killers.

Kerala CM poses questions to Rahul over CAA

PNS ■ KANNUR (KERALA)

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday continued to accuse the Congress of not being part of anti-CAA agitations in the country and sought to know from senior leader Rahul Gandhi whether the national leadership had barred its state unit from participating in the protests.

He alleged that the party's top brass had asked the state unit to withdraw from the anti-CAA agitations.

"This is just our guess. It may be right or wrong. If we are wrong, they (Congress) can tell that. Rahul Gandhi is touring Kerala...He can tell that what you (CM) have said is not fact," Vijayan said.

Gandhi was not saying anything against it, as it is a fact, the chief minister alleged.

As Lok Sabha polls are just four days away in the state, Vijayan was addressing an election meeting in Mattannur, in this northern district.

Targeting Gandhi, the Left veteran further said the Congress leader was carrying out a tour across the country when the CAA came out.

Though he had reacted to all the problems being faced by the country and the world, he did not respond to the contentious law, Vijayan alleged.

The CM also claimed that Gandhi could not raise his voice on such issues because of the presence of leaders with a Sangh-



Parivar mindset with him.

Lashing out at the BJP government at the Centre, he said no civilised nation in the world has made religion the basis of citizenship.

He alleged that when everyone came forward protesting against the CAA and to safe-

guard secularism, the Congress did not raise any significant protests against the BJP government's move.

"No civilised nation has decided citizenship on the basis of religion. No country divides refugees on the lines of their religion," Vijayan said.

India is making religion the basis for deciding citizenship. It is destroying secular values, he charged.

While several national leaders, including those from Communist parties, were arrested for protesting against the CAA in New Delhi years ago, no Congress leaders were among them, Vijayan alleged.

The CM accused the 18 Congress-led UDF MPs from

the state of attending a feast hosted by the party president on the day when the national capital witnessed the fiercest agitation against the CAA.

Vijayan further asked why the Congress, which is claimed to be a secular party, cannot oppose the RSS agenda being implemented in the country.

The LDF government in the state has been adopting a strong stand against dividing people on the lines of religion, he said.

The Marxist veteran also claimed that the southern state is witnessing a pro-LDF wave during the election campaign and that the ruling front would achieve a remarkable success in the Lok Sabha elections to be held on April 26.

Constantly attacking Congress not a wise decision: Pawar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Monday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constant attack on the Congress was not a "wise decision" as that party is not in power.

Speaking to Marathi news channel Zee 24 Taas in Amravati, he further said the PM keeps criticising opposition parties but does not discuss plans of his government or the BJP for the future.

"The Congress party has not been in power for some time. But Modi keeps attacking it and calling it a wall



obstructing the development of the country. It is not a wise decision. Just because some parties are in the opposition it does not mean they should not be taken into confidence on key issues," Pawar said.

Asked about Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister

Devendra Fadnavis' recent statement that he returned to power after splitting two parties, a reference to the splits in the Nationalist Congress Party and the Shiv Sena, Pawar said he was thankful that the senior BJP leader had himself revealed the truth.

"It is not a decent strategy to lure people, create a situation that would split a party, then describe it as revenge, or influence some people to make certain decisions. These cannot be called civil political moves. We had an image of Fadnavis as a decent politician, but now his true face has emerged," Pawar asserted.

No major concern regarding heat wave for 2nd phase of LS polls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There is "no major concern" regarding heat wave for the second phase of Lok Sabha polls to be held on April 26, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) told the Election Commission on Monday.

Director General, IMD, Mrutunjay Mohapatra also told the poll panel that the weather forecast is "normal" for the 13 states and Union Territories going to polls in phase two, according to an official statement.

Amid concerns over rising temperature, the commission on Monday held a meeting with the agencies concerned to understand the developing

weather situation and discuss measures to mitigate any risk due to hot weather conditions during the Lok Sabha polling period.

The elections are being held in seven phases beginning April 19 and ending June 1.

The meeting also comes amid concerns that heat wave could affect voter turnout.

It was decided at the meeting that a task force comprising officials from EC, IMD, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Union health ministry will review the impact of heat wave and humidity five days before each polling phase for any "concerning developments" and mitigation measures required, the statement said.

'Father's diet can affect anxiety, metabolism of kin'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The father's diet can affect the anxiety levels in their sons and the metabolism of their daughters before they are even conceived, according to new research conducted in mice.

While a mouse father's diet is known to impact his and his children's reproductive health, it was not yet known if differing its macronutrient composition of proteins, fats and carbohydrates could have differing impacts on children's health, researchers said.

The team of scientists, co-led by the University of Sydney, Australia, found that male mice fed with diets low on proteins and high on carbohydrates are more likely to have male offspring with higher levels of anxiety.

They also found that male mice fed with high-fat diets are more likely to have daughters with higher body fat and more biological indicators of metabolic disease.

The findings, published in the Nature Communications journal, showed that in mice,



the father can shape their children's health through their diets.

"It is extraordinary that by (adjusting proportions) of pro-

tein, fat and carbs in the father's diet we could influence specific features of his sons and daughters health and behaviour. There is some important biology at play here," said Stephen Simpson from the University of Sydney and the study's co-senior author.

For the study, the researchers fed male mice one of 10 diets differing in the amount of protein, fats and carbohydrates, and then allowed them to mate with females reared on a standard diet. They then analysed the behaviour and physiology

of the resulting offspring. The team also found that males consuming a low-protein diet also ate more food overall. However, macronutrient composition, along with calories, were found to influence the mice's offspring's health.

"Our study shows that it's not just eating too much or too little, but the composition of the diet that can have an impact on future children," said Romain Barrès, from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, and the study's co-senior author.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Cold comfort

All parties must own responsibility for the low voter turnout and work to reverse it

In the ongoing elections, a significant cause for concern has emerged with the low voter turnout, particularly in the Hindi heartland. This trend has set off alarm bells among political parties, forcing them to delve deeper into understanding the root causes of this apathy and strategise effectively to boost participation in the remaining phases. The Hindi heartland holds immense electoral significance. However, the voter turnout here was dishearteningly low on April 19. The polling of over 62 per cent, as per the Election Commission of India's figure, is lower compared to the first phase of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, when it stood at 69.43 per cent. The trend is not localised as voting was held in 102 Lok Sabha seats across 21 States and UTs. Was it the summer heat or other pressing engagements? If it is about the weather, it is understandable but if it is political disillusionment, then it is a matter of grave concern. It could well also be logistical challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, long queues at polling booths and difficulties in accessing polling stations. Despite several efforts by the EC, voters in large numbers chose not to go out to cast their vote. We have had several elections during summers where voters were voting at polling stations; so maybe, and it is yet to be validated, voters are losing interest in the political system. Many voters do feel disconnected from the political process, perceiving that their votes do not significantly impact policymaking or address their concerns. This disenchantment often stems from the failure of political parties to fulfil their promises, leading to a sense of betrayal among the electorate. Traditionally, voting in the urban areas has always been low but now even voters in rural areas are giving it a pass. In such areas, where transportation facilities may be limited, reaching the polling booths becomes a daunting task for many individuals, particularly the elderly and physically challenged. Another aspect of voting in the first phase was zero voting in six districts of Nagaland. It is unprecedented and shocking, to say the least. It might have been a reaction of voters to what happened in Manipur or a call by disrupting elements; either way, it does not augur well for the country. We can agree on a few things which could have resulted in the voter's cold shoulder. Social and economic factors play a significant role in voter apathy. A large section of the population, especially in rural areas, faces issues like poverty, illiteracy and unemployment, which overshadow their engagement with the electoral process. Furthermore, the prevalence of identity politics and polarisation in the Hindi heartland may have contributed to a sense of disillusionment among voters. Divisive narratives propagated by certain political entities often sow seeds of distrust and alienation among communities, discouraging them from participating in the electoral process. Political parties must prioritise engaging with the electorate beyond election cycles, fostering dialogue and building trust through consistent communication and transparent governance.



The next phase of polling is scheduled for April 26, when the constituencies of Amroha, Meerut, Baghpat, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Bulandshahr (reserved), Aligarh, Meerut and Mathura would go to the hustings. On these seats, Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) leader and former Chief Minister Mayawati has trumpeted the old issue of a separate State for West UP, probably to remain electorally relevant in the times to come. Choosing the birth anniversary day of the man credited with the drafting of the Constitution, Dr BR Ambedkar, Mayawati made a major announcement at a rally in Muzaffarnagar of according Statehood to western UP and also establishing a bench of the Allahabad High Court in the region, if voted to power at the Centre. This has once again brought the issue of Harit Pradesh, the name envisioned for western UP by late Chowdhary Ajit Singh, the erstwhile leader of the Rashtriya Lok Dal and heir of Chowdhary Charan Singh, the tallest leader of West UP.

Maya sees political grass greener in Harit Pradesh



SIDHARTH MISHRA

BSP leader and former Chief Minister Mayawati has once again broached the issue of statehood for western UP, probably to remain electorally relevant in the days ahead



The supporters of the formation of Harit Pradesh claim that it was Dr Ambedkar who had proposed the division of Uttar Pradesh into three separate States — Western, Central and Eastern — for better governance. In 1955, Dr Ambedkar proposed the idea of splitting Uttar Pradesh into three States through his book, 'Thoughts on Linguistic States'. He suggested the creation of three States, with Meerut as the capital of the Western Region, Allahabad as the capital of the Eastern Region and Kanpur as the capital of the Central region. This is what the BSP had in mind while proposing the split in 2011. During her reign as the Chief Minister, Mayawati had backed a resolution which got passed in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly for breaking the State into four smaller States — West, Central, East and Bundelkhand. One part of the undivided Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, consisting of hill districts, had already been carved out in 2000. However, unlike Dr Ambedkar's thought, Mayawati's push is based on the arithmetic of electoral politics. When she proposes a separate State for western Uttar Pradesh, she has in mind the

substantial Dalit and Muslim population inhabiting the region. It was Mayawati's D-M (Dalit-Muslim) combination which had defeated the Samajwadi Party's M-Y (Muslim-Yadav) formation to wrest power in Uttar Pradesh in 2007. Working as a reporter for this publication in the early part of this century, one still remembers how the dominating community of the Jats and other upper castes, by the way of landholding rights, managed to keep the Dalits at bay from electoral process. The late Editor of the paper, Dr Chandan Mitra, had once given a headline to this reporter's story which said, 'Fair polls, free of Dalits'. It was only after the rise of the BSP, especially from the 2004 Lok Sabha election onwards, that the Dalit population of western UP got involved in the process not just in word but also in spirit. This is the time which also saw the emergence of D-M, which changed the electoral calculus of the State. This area has also seen the rise in the Muslim population. As per the 2011 Census, the total population of western Uttar Pradesh is 71,217,132, out of which 72.29 per cent is Hindu and 26.21 per cent is Muslim. The population in the Khadiaboli region is 29,669,035 (Hindus 59.19 per cent and Muslims 39.17 per cent) and the population of the Braj region is 29,754,755 (Hindus 82.78 per cent and Muslims 16 per cent). The districts speaking Khadiaboli, a slightly colloquial version of the Hindi language, include Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Shamli, Baghpat, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Hapur, Amroha, Bijnor, some parts of Moradabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Bulandshahr. The Braj-speaking districts include Mathura, Hathras, Agra, Aligarh, Etah and some parts of Gautam Buddha Nagar, Bulandshahr, Etawah and Mainpuri. The Muslim population share in the eight districts of Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Moradabad, Rampur, Jyotiba Phule Nagar, Meerut and Bareilly has increased from 29.93 per cent in 1951 to 40.43 per cent in 2011. This has made the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) raise the demand for the population control Bill, fearing a loss for space for the Hindu groups. No wonder there is a lot more than meets the eye than the mere explanation behind the demand for a separate State for good governance. It has more to do with politics than people. (The writer is a political analyst and president, Centre for Reforms, Development & Justice; views are personal.)



IN 1955, DR AMBEDKAR PROPOSED THE IDEA OF SPLITTING UTTAR PRADESH INTO THREE STATES. HE SUGGESTED MEERUT AS THE CAPITAL OF THE WESTERN REGION, ALLAHABAD AS THE CAPITAL OF THE EASTERN REGION AND KANPUR AS THE CAPITAL OF THE CENTRAL REGION

PICTALK



People purchase clay pots from a roadside shop during the summer season, in Agra

PTI

From tears to laughter: Navigating life's punchlines



SANJAY CHANDRA

From childhood taunts to adult jests, the journey of one man's relationship with humour is a winding road filled with laughter and tears

I turned into an overweight boy very early in my life. I still remember an incident from my childhood. My younger brother called me 'Fatsy' in front of a couple of house helps, who burst out laughing. I rushed inside the house in tears. Even now, at a more mature age, I still seethe at one-liners directed at me. More recently, my daughters attended a show by a famous stand-up comedian. My ignorance led me to find out more about the term. A stand-up comedian is a person, standing or sitting on stage, delivering tongue-in-cheek one-liners to an appreciative audience. Over a century, it has evolved into taking a punch at whatever the actor considers is wrong in the community - religion, beliefs, taboos and yes, the politician — that eternal punching bag. There are so many anecdotes that one would lose count of politicians trading barbs at others of their ilk. We have heard of Disraeli insulting a rival politician. If Gladstone fell into the Thames, that would be a misfortune and if anybody



pulled him out, that, I suppose, would be a calamity. This one is beautiful when Lady Astor said to Churchill, If you were my husband, I'd poison your tea; to which Churchill's reply was a classic, Madam, if you were my wife, I'd drink it. Or the other one about Churchill, who quipped when berated by Bessie Braddock for being drunk, My dear, you are ugly, but tomorrow I shall be sober and you will still be ugly. Or this one about one of our politicians who wanted to make the roads in his

State as smooth as the cheeks of a heyday film star — though he was probably only trying to pay a compliment. Many of these might be considered sexist at the very least. Recently, I sat with a few other authors addressing a group of young students during a literature festival. An erudite lady had an immediate connection with the appreciative audience as she spoke about her love for the Korean TV series — particularly her mention of the term Oppa. The students burst into loud laughter when one of their fellow authors wanted to know the meaning of the term. I only smiled knowingly, as if I understood the joke, not wanting to display my ignorance in public. We tend to lose our funny bone when humorous barbs, at least from the viewpoint of the narrator, are directed at us. At the same time, we do not hesitate to laugh, or smile, or even smirk — as I did, at someone else's discomfiture, when it suits us. Life would be far simpler if only we make as much effort in developing our funny bones, as we do in discussing international affairs, politics, religion and much more. Viktor Frankl, Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, summed it up almost a century earlier, The attempt to develop a sense of humour and to see things in a humorous light is some kind of a trick learned while mastering the art of living. (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Celebrating literary legacies



They embody the essence of our collective wisdom, offering insights into bygone eras while inspiring us to chart new territories of imagination. In today's digital age, they face both unprecedented opportunities and challenges. While e-books and digital formats enrich reading experiences, they also test the boundaries of copyright protection. World Book and Copyright Day, observed on April 23rd, prompts reflection on the enduring value of literature and the necessity of upholding intellectual property rights. This year's theme, "Read Your Way," underscores the joy of reading while advocating for respect towards authors and publishers. As we commemorate this day, let's renew our dedication to safeguarding literary legacies, ensuring that the flame of creativity continues to illuminate our collective path forward. Sangeeta Reddy | Hyderabad

propos the news article, "Celebrating World Book and Copyright Day", published on April 22, this is my response. Books serve as timeless vessels of human thought, bridging generations and cultures. Scheduled Tribes. Education emerges as a beacon of change, empowering youth to navigate bureaucratic hurdles and advocate for their rights. However, gaps in access to essential services persist, as seen in Mangi Lal and Tulsiram's plight. Loyara's narrative embodies the complex tapestry of rural India, where strides in education and awareness intersect with enduring economic constraints. As the village evolves, bridging these gaps remains imperative for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Pooja Khanna | Bengaluru

NAVIGATING FOMO

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Understanding the impact of FOMO", published on April 22, this is my response. In a world fueled by constant connectivity, the fear of missing out (FOMO) has become a prevalent concern, particularly among the younger generation. Social media platforms play a central role, in shaping perceptions and fueling comparisons. It's striking how curated content can

trigger feelings of inadequacy, anxiety and loneliness. To counteract this, fostering digital literacy and promoting healthy social media habits is crucial. Encouraging offline connections and experiences, like sports or art, offers a reprieve from the digital noise. Setting boundaries for screen time and embracing mindfulness practices can cultivate gratitude and positive thinking. Moreover, prioritising quality over quantity in social connections reinforces the importance of genuine interactions. Creating inclusive online communities emphasises authenticity and empathy, countering the superficiality often found on social platforms. Ultimately, combating FOMO requires self-love and the courage to prioritise personal well-being over digital validation. In a hyper-connected world, finding solace in one's thoughts is a brave endeavour worth pursuing. Meera Krishnan | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN A TALE OF HIDDEN WEALTH, REGRET AND LIBERATION

These poignant stories have wisdom of the ages and lessons for all



RAVI VALLURI

Once upon a time there lived a woman. She was struck with an unexpected tragedy as her husband passed away untimely. The lady was now left with only one son and precious jewellery. Since she was hounded by creditors to repay the debts accrued by her husband, she conjured a trick to hide the wealth. In sheer desperation to keep the jewellery safe from creditors, the lady wrapped the precious wealth in a piece of cloth and hid it under a tree. The mother and son lived in an impoverished State. Her mind was always disturbed by the fact that she did not share this piece of vital information with her only son. As it turned out, she carried this secret to the grave.

Consequently, the son inherited plenty of debt, a barren hut and a cot. The son had to work hard for sustenance and to repay the ever-rising liabilities. He toiled hard to survive and regretted his misfortune. 'Property is not the sacred right. When a rich man becomes poor it is a misfortune, it is not a moral evil. When a poor man becomes destitute, it is a moral evil, teeming with consequences and is injurious to society and morality,' opined Lord Acton. Indeed, the impoverishment of the poor is heart-wrenching.

One day while cutting the branches of a tree, he stumbled upon the jewellery. Dumbfounded and stupefied, the strapping youngster hid the bijouterie in a pit he dug in the hut, petrified that the creditors would appropriate the wealth. He too committed the cardinal mistake of not sharing the secret with his wife and carried it to his grave. The mother and son were not mindful and wakeful enough to be in the Present Moment and remained prisoners of their past and future.



Two Buddhist monks were once discussing a flag flapping in the wind. While one felt it was the wind moving, the other conjectured it was the flag fluttering. The imbroglio could not be resolved and they sought the intervention of a Zen Master. The master impassively said, 'It is the MIND that moves, neither the flag nor the wind.'

Humans need freedom from their past and future to be in the present. And being in the NOW or present is true enlightenment and mindfulness. The past is full of sorrows and regrets while the future brims with anxieties and worries and humans are caged in that mindset, thereby postponing their happiness quotient. To appreciate true happiness and joy, the human mind should not vacillate between the past and the future but remain in the present.

A young monk was once travelling in pursuit of happiness and truth. During his travels, he encountered a massive river that he could not cross. A short while later, he saw a senior monk on the other side of the river. He hailed him and sought assistance to cross the river to reach the other side. The senior monk pondered and replied, 'You are already on the other side'. This fact can be appreciated only when the mind is centred. Breathing techniques such as Sudarshan Kriya, Pranayama, Yoga, Meditation and Vipassana all help in dissolving the mind so that it becomes centred. 'True happiness is not possible without freedom. We have to learn the habit of being free. We do not allow our past, the future, our projects, or our fear to get hold of us. We are free. Every step is free. Every step is nourishment. Every step is healing. Every step is joy,' says Thich Nhat Hanh.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

The timeless allure of bookstores



MIKE DOWNEY

In a world of fleeting attachments and transient experiences, one traveller finds solace and sustenance in the enduring sanctuaries of literature



I don't normally do nostalgia. The present is a place where I live and thrive and although thoughts of the past serve as a pleasant escape from reality, I tend to be very much permanently in the here and now in former times, I used to be convinced that if the psyche tends to dwell on past and romanticise it then could it be that the present isn't our current happy place and I want the future to continue to excite me. Complicated. I know.

Theatres, galleries and cinemas have come and gone in my life and as a rule, I have formed no specific sentimental attachment to them, even though much of my professional grown-up existence has been centred on these cultural havens. The one exception to that rule is the venerable bookshop. Of all these great edifices crucial to the health of our society the bookshop is the altar at which I worship — and which holds a timeless allure for me which occasionally translates into a wistful homesickness for the best that I have known in my life.

Having lived mostly a life of exile, first from my native Ireland and with more years in adulthood outside my native land than in it, from Belgrade to Munich and Paris to Istria and add to that the peripatetic life of the international film producer spending six months here in Prague, three months there in Iceland, Brazil and even India — sourcing quality English language literature outside of the Anglosphere has become a lifelong passion and quest. My global peregrinations, whether as a writer, theatre director or film producer have allowed me to cultivate relationships with some of the most amazing bookshops across the earth - I don't mean the Blackwells, the Shakespeare and Co's, the Dussmann's, the Strand's and the Foyle's of this world. I'm talking about havens much more intimate, personal and off the beaten track. Here are just a few of them as



INDIA'S EVER-POPULAR BOOK MARKETS REVEAL A PROFOUND NATIONAL LOVE FOR LITERATURE FROM THE BOI-PARA IN COLLEGE STREET IN KOLKATA TO MOORE MARKET IN CHENNAI AND FLORA FOUNTAIN IN MUMBAI

a taster: How I long for The Book Exchange, Amsterdam. This a canal-side, Dickensian warren on Kloveniers-burghal in the Venice of the North's red-light district, presided over by the idiosyncratic Jeff Stone who took it over in 2005, having been founded in 1978. Its four long, thin, deep floors are home to an extraordinary collection of over 80,000 second-hand English language books sold at bargain prices, in a studios atmosphere marked by a chaotic Bohemian that is the antithesis of the Amazons of this world. The whiff of reefer as it wafts over from the Plug 3 coffeeshop improves greatly the William Burroughs and Paul Bowles sales, so I'm told. Moving on from Paul Bowles and his palace in the Casbah, we arrive at the Luxor Book Palace, Prague. Last week, while prepping my new movie about Franz Kafka I took time out to visit this old friend on the famed Wenceslas Square I have been buying books here for the last 25 years and am always amazed by the laid-back atmosphere, the super helpful and smiling staff and the extraordinary selection of new books often at prices less than in the UK or New York. I don't know how they do it, but the self-styled Palace, which runs over 4 massive floors, manages to feel like a small privately run enterprise, full of nooks, crannies and all manner of Kafka-esque dead ends. I once ended up in the storeroom, looking for the young adult section. I was escorted back to where I belonged. In the foreign adult section. Speaking of being found, The Lost Bookstore, Chiang Mai

is very easy to find in a highly prominent position on the Ratchamanka Road. I came across it when receiving a planned adaptation of an early Anthony Burgess novel and was shocked to come across such a richly sourced treasure trove for book lovers and a selection of 60,000 books, from old to new, from every genre imaginable. It was here found a dog-eared copy of John Griesemer's Nobody Thinks of Greenland, an anti-war novel set in the Arctic which I eventually adapted into a feature film with American Pie's Jason Biggs in the lead.

In addition to these beauties, there are a few others around the globe that once visited always gave me the unique Proustian involuntary memory moments on my return. They are in no particular order: Book and Bed, Kyoto: sleeping inside a bookshelf is all part of the experience at this bookstore/ hostel and it rushes me back to the Japan distribution of my film Deathwatch and a junket I did there with Jamie Bell (Billy Elliot); the superb El Ateneo Grand Splendid, Buenos Aires, was an oasis of high culture at the end of a two-month research odyssey from Valparaiso in Chile around the coast of Patagonia in Darwin's reverse footsteps; Notting Hill Travel, London. I used to live around the corner from that lovely bookshop on Bleinheim Crescent. We all know the scene from the eponymous film in which Julia Roberts slowly pursues Hugh Grant between the shelves, followed by his infamous eye-turn and blushed slew of book recom-

mendations. But it is to India that I return. A five-year-long relationship with a Keralite Malayali, many many years ago, brought me into contact with the wonderful and varied book stalls of Thiruvananthapuram way back in the eighties.

I feel a deep nostalgia now as I write this for the timeless allure of the amazing book emporia of Palayam, next to the State Central Library, which at that time boasted 50-odd book stalls of all shapes sizes, creeds and colours. I could spend hours just sifting through the mazes of books just for the pleasure of discovering something, unique, precious and inspiring - something that no marketing campaign or advertising or critic's review could ever find for me.

It is the iconic book markets from all over India that bear witness to the extraordinarily diverse literary culture and heritage of the nation. India's ever-popular book markets reveal a profound national love for literature from the Boi-Para in College Street in Kolkata to Moore Market in Chennai and Flora Fountain in Mumbai.

Let's hear it for these affordable, yet rich havens for book lovers and seekers of literary gems and bargains. In the context of our theme of nostalgia and sentimentality - the huge success of the online book business may signal their death knell and they may not be with us for much longer.

(The writer is Chair of the European Film Academy and President of the LUX Prize of the European Parliament; view are personal)

Ladakh's path to autonomy: Overcoming adversity

Against the backdrop of historical marginalisation and neglect, Ladakh's journey towards autonomy has been marked by struggle, negotiation and triumph

The accession of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir to India on October 26, 1947, inflicted significant socio-economic and political setbacks on the Buddhist-dominated Leh district in the strategic Trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, renowned as "the roof of the world" and "the land of the Lamas". Likewise, the predominantly Buddhist Zaskar tehsil in the Karil district of Ladakh bore the brunt of these consequences, enduring even greater hardships than its counterpart, Leh.

The genesis of the Muslim-majority Kargil district in 1979 under Sheikh Abdullah's leadership aimed at fostering discord between



HARI OM

his co-religionists and the Buddhists, aiming to thwart the latter's aspirations for autonomy and union territory status for Ladakh. This move exacerbated the plight of the Buddhists, imperilling their religion, culture, societal fabric and demographic integrity due to two primary factors. Firstly, successive Kashmiri-dominated administrations viewed Ladakh as an

appendage to Kashmir, disregarding the political and economic aspirations of its Buddhist populace. Ladakh, akin to Jammu province, was seen as a colony by Kashmiri rulers, perpetuating a sense of marginalisation among the Buddhists. Secondly, the pernicious influence of the Kashmiri elite over New Delhi's corridors of power further marginalised the Buddhists' voices, with central authorities consistently favouring Kashmiri interests and dismissing Ladakh's concerns. In response to this systemic neglect, under the astute leadership of Head Lama Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, the Buddhists initiated protests in 1952, demanding meaningful political repre-

sentation and autonomy. Despite their fervent appeals and warnings, both Srinagar and New Delhi brushed aside their grievances, exacerbating disillusionment among the Buddhist populace. The culmination of discontent erupted in October 1989, with widespread protests and clashes between Buddhists and authorities. The resultant Tripartite Agreement of October 29, 1989, brokered by the central Government, temporarily assuaged tensions by establishing the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) at Leh. However, this resolution faced vehement opposition from Kashmiri leaders,



including Farooq Abdullah, who viewed it as a threat to Kashmiri hegemony. Despite the establishment of LAHDC Leh in 1995, the Buddhists remained dissat-

isfied due to continued interference from Kashmir-centric authorities, rendering the council ineffectual. Consequently, they intensified their agitation, advocat-

ing for Ladakh's Union Territory status and other demands, citing central rule as the sole recourse to address their grievances. The turning point came after June 19, 2018, when the central Government assumed direct control of Jammu and Kashmir, embarking on a series of measures to appease the Buddhist community. These included the establishment of the University of Ladakh, granting divisional status to Ladakh and ultimately, separating Ladakh from Jammu and Kashmir to fulfil the long-standing demand for Union Territory status. Additionally, substantial budgetary allocations were made to bolster Ladakh's development.

These initiatives underscored the efficacy of central rule in addressing the aspirations of the marginalised Buddhist population.

Rather than pursuing Statehood, the Buddhists are urged to strengthen LAHDC Leh and collaborate with the Modi Government to safeguard their cultural heritage and counter demographic challenges. The period between 2018 and 2023 epitomises a transformative phase for Ladakh, wherein central intervention proved instrumental in redressing historical injustices and empowering its Buddhist populace.

(The writer is former Dean of Jammu University's Faculty of Social Science; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

Startup Accacia raises USD 6.5 mn to expand business

Startup Accacia, a decarbonisation platform focusing on real estate and infrastructure sectors, on Monday said it has raised USD 6.5 million (around Rs 54 crore) from investors to expand the business. In a statement, the company said it has 'closed a USD 6.5 million pre-Series A round led by Illuminate Financial'. Southeast Asia-based AC Ventures also participated in this round, alongside continued support from early backers Accel and B Capital. Founded in 2022 by Annu Talreja and co-founders Piyush Chitkara and Jagmohan Garg, Accacia offers an AI-enabled SaaS platform that helps real estate asset managers, owners and developers track their emissions, and design their decarbonisation journey. "We have already deployed our solution to over 25 million square feet of real estate and are poised to leverage this opportunity and scale globally," said Talreja, Founder and CEO at Accacia. Accacia's tech platform integrates with existing property management, energy management and procurement systems to automate real-time data capturing and tracking.



Flipkart Ventures to fund, mentor GenAI-based startups

Flipkart Ventures, the investment arm of e-commerce major Flipkart, on Monday invited applications for its accelerator programme. As part of the Flipkart Leap Ahead (FLA) programme, selected startups will receive equity investments between USD 200,000 and USD 500,000, according to a statement. Announcing the third cohort of FLA, the firm said the programme aims to accelerate the growth journey of early-stage startups. Applications for the programme will be open from April 22 to May 26. "Selected companies leveraging GenAI in their core solutions across sectors will receive equity investments between USD 200,000 and USD 500,000 alongside invaluable mentorship to achieve product-market fit, build scalable architecture, and assemble strong teams," the statement said. It added that these startups will also receive two-month mentorship, wherein industry veterans, operators, and founders will guide these entrepreneurs to prepare them for hyper-growth.



Domestic air traffic touches new single-day high

Domestic air traffic touched a new single-day high of 4,71,751 passengers on Sunday, according to official data. The traffic on Sunday was more than 14 per cent higher than the average pre-Covid count of 3,98,579. On April 21, the total number of domestic air passengers stood at 4,71,751 and the number of flights was 6,128, as per the data from the civil aviation ministry. This is higher than the domestic air traffic of 4,28,389 passengers and 5,899 flights recorded on April 21, 2023. In a post on X, the ministry said India's domestic aviation is 'everyday at a new high'. "Domestic aviation in India is witnessing unprecedented growth, driven by factors such as concrete policies, economic development, and expansion of low-cost carriers. As more people gain access to air travel, the sector is expected to continue its upward trajectory," it said.



Gold, silver retreat from record levels as Iran-Israel tensions ease

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold and silver prices retreated from record high levels in the national capital on Monday, with the precious metal plunging by Rs 450 per 10 grams, due to weak global trends and easing tensions in West Asia.

Gold prices declined by Rs 450 to Rs 73,650 per 10 grams amid weak trends in the overseas markets, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had settled at Rs 74,100 per 10 grams on Friday.

Silver prices also tumbled by Rs 1,100 to Rs 85,500 per kg. In the previous close, it had closed at Rs 86,600 per kg.

"Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 73,650 per 10 grams, down by Rs 450 against the previous close," Saumil

Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,365 per ounce, down by USD 26 from the previous close.

Gold resumed trading on a weaker note on Monday as demand for the safe haven asset decreased after easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Furthermore, a rise in the US dollar and Treasury yields, along with declining expectations from the Federal Reserve's interest rate cuts in 2024, weighed down on precious metal's prices, Gandhi said. Silver was also trading lower at USD 27.95 per ounce. In the previous session, it had finished at USD 28.66 per ounce.

'Sustained growth of 7pc feasible for India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sustaining the economic growth momentum of 7 per cent in 2024-25 and beyond is feasible on the back of favorable monsoon, higher farm productivity and improved global trade, RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) member Shashanka Bhide said on Monday.

During 2023-24, the economy is likely to record a growth rate of near 8 per cent on account of good performance of manufacturing and infrastructure sectors.

"(India's economic) growth in the current year is likely to be supported by agriculture with a favourable monsoon and improved global trade. Sustaining the growth momentum of 7 per cent seems feasible," he said.

Bhide further said that in the long-term, the need for productivity improvements will remain the key factor to achieve food price stability.



"The slow pace of recovery in global demand on one hand and supply chain disruptions on the other hand... if the ongoing geopolitical conflicts are not resolved quickly, (it will) pose significant challenge in terms of demand as well as input prices."

Asked what are some of the headwinds he is wary of, Bhide said one area of concern is the global environment. "The slow pace of recovery in global demand on one hand and supply

chain disruptions on the other hand... if the ongoing geopolitical conflicts are not resolved quickly, (it will) pose significant challenge in terms of demand as well as input prices. "We should also

be prepared for minimising the adverse impact of extreme weather events on output," he said.

Recently, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) raised India's growth projection to 6.8 per cent for 2024 from its January forecast of 6.5 per cent citing bullish domestic demand conditions and a rising working-age population. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) also raised India's GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7 per cent from 6.7 per cent earlier, saying the robust growth will be driven by public and private sector investment demand and gradual improvement in consumer demand. Asked what is the long-term solution for high food prices, Bhide noted that one aspect of high food inflation in the recent years has been the impact of weather conditions on the perishable commodities such as vegetables.

Markets sustain winning streak

Sensex jumps over 560 points, Nifty tops 22,300-level



PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty climbed nearly 1 per cent each on Monday amid a rally in Asian and European markets, decline in Brent crude oil prices and buying by foreign investors.

Extending its previous day's rebound, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 560.29 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at 73,648.62. During the day, it advanced 679.47 points or 0.92 per cent to 73,767.80.

The NSE Nifty went up by 189.40 points or 0.86 per cent to 22,336.40.

From the Sensex basket, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, State Bank of India, UltraTech Cement, Wipro, ICICI Bank, Infosys, HCL Technologies and Asian Paints were the major gainers.

NTPC, JSW Steel and HDFC Bank were the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 1.26 per cent and midcap index rallied 0.93 per cent.

Among the indices, consumer durables advanced 2.53 per cent, industrials (1.93 per cent), capital goods (1.65 per cent), telecommunication (1.17 per cent), financial services (1.04 per cent) and consumer discretionary (1.02 per cent).

Utilities emerged as the only laggard.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Shanghai ended lower.

European markets were trading with gains. Wall Street ended on a mixed note on Friday.

Mutual funds collect Rs 66,364 core through NFOs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asset management companies (AMCs) floated 185 new fund offerings mobilising Rs 66,364 crore in 2023-24, marking a 6.5 per cent increase from the previous year, amidst growing interest of retail investors and significant uptrend in broader markets.

This was higher than Rs 62,342 crore garnered by AMCs through 253 New Fund Offerings (NFOs) in 2022-23.

"The financialisation of savings in India is currently underway, signifying a growing recognition among investors that investing in financial assets is integral to building wealth. With income



and expenditure levels rising constantly, there is a heightened need to channel monthly savings into avenues offering higher returns. The substantial inflow of investments into equities underscores a notable shift in investor attitudes and risk appetites," Fyers Research said in its report.



Small exporters seek continuation of amnesty scheme

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Several small exporters have requested the government to continue the amnesty scheme for one-time settlement of default in export obligation till September, an industry body said on Monday.

Ludhiana-based Hand Tools Association President S C Ralhan said the number of small exporters has not been able to avail of benefits of the scheme due to fulfilling their obligations to make payments to MSMEs within 45 days.

According to Section 43B(h) of the Income Tax Act, introduced through the Finance Act 2023, if a larger company does not pay an MSME on time -- within 45 days in case of written agreements -- it cannot deduct that expense from its taxable income, leading to potentially higher taxes.

"Due to this, we diverted our funds to make payments and several of us were not able to apply for the amnesty scheme. We urge the government to continue the scheme till September," Ralhan said.

MDH, EVEREST MASALA ROW

FSSAI to check quality of spices sold in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Food safety regulator FSSAI has started taking samples of spices in powder form of all brands, including MDH and Everest, from across the country in view of quality concerns flagged by Singapore and Hong Kong, a government source said.

"In view of the current development, FSSAI has taken samples of spices of all brands, including MDH and Everest, from the market to check whether they meet the FSSAI norms," the source told PTL.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) does not regulate quality of exported spices, they said.



FSSAI, which operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, takes samples of spices regularly from the market to check the quality of product sold in the domestic market. Meanwhile, the Spices Board

of India is looking into the ban imposed by Hong Kong and Singapore on the sale of four spices-mix products of Indian brands MDH and Everest, which allegedly contain pesticide 'ethylene oxide' beyond permissible limits.

Wipro shares climb 2 pc post earnings announcement

Mcap advances by Rs 4,756.93 cr



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of IT services company Wipro on Monday climbed 2 per cent as investors remain unfazed by the below market expectations guidance provided by the company.

The stock advanced 2.01 per cent to settle at Rs 461.95 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 2.90 per cent to Rs 466.

On the NSE, it climbed 2 per cent to Rs 461.95 per share. The company's market capitalisation (mcap) climbed Rs 4,756.93 crore to Rs 2,41,377.31 crore.

Wipro on Friday reported a 7.8 per cent year-on-year decline in its consolidated net profit for the March quarter to about Rs 2,834.6 crore, and cautioned that the macroeconomic environment remains "uncertain".

The Bengaluru-headquar-

tered company, which recently saw a change of guard with Srinivas Pallia taking over at the helm as the new Chief Executive Officer, has given IT Services revenue growth guidance in the (-)1.5 per cent to 0.5 per cent band for the June quarter on a constant currency basis.

While the numbers were in line with the analysts' estimates, the guidance of the company was below industry expectations.

Pallia asserted that the immediate priority for the company is to "accelerate growth" as he spelt out clear focus areas for the IT services firm, which has been lagging peers on performance and operational metrics quarter-after-quarter.

For the Q4FY24, Wipro's revenue from operations slipped 4.2 per cent year-on-year to Rs 22,208.3 crore.

Paytm launches Made in India 4G soundboxes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian fintech giant Paytm on Monday launched two Made-in-India soundboxes for UPI and credit card on UPI payments that promise to provide better instant notification when payments are received via QR code.

Founder and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma said the advanced soundboxes provide superior sound quality and battery life, making them better suited to Indian conditions.

Enables credit card-based UPI payments

The launch came as One97 Communications Ltd, which runs Paytm, completed the migration of merchant customer accounts from Paytm to other unified payments interface (UPI) handles.

The company on April 17 started the customer migration to partner payment service provider (PSP) banks Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, SBI and Yes Bank.



A PSP is a bank that helps the UPI app to connect with the banking channel. Only banks

can act as PSPs.

The Paytm UPI customers were until now using Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL), an associate company of One97 Communications Ltd as the PSP bank but its operations were crippled after RBI imposed restrictions.

Sharma said the soundboxes were created to address the high-noise environment in

India. He went on to describe them as "legitimate India innovations".

The launches include new sleek versions of the Paytm soundbox and pocket soundbox.

The waterproof soundboxes are equipped with 4G connectivity, instant audio confirmation, powerful speakers, long-lasting battery life of up to 10 days, and support notifications in 11 languages, the company said in a statement.

'Most Indian travellers interested in sustainable travel'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Even as 95 per cent of Indian travellers interviewed said sustainable travel is important to them, more than half feel the irreversible damage has already been done, a report said on Monday.

Online travel agency Booking.com's ninth Sustainable Travel Report 2024 revealed that almost two-thirds (62 per cent) of Indian travellers stated they would feel guilty when they make less sustainable travel choices and 20 per cent of them

want to travel more sustainably because they believe it's the right thing to do.

Booking.com's ninth Sustainable Travel Report 2024, is based on insights gathered from more than 31,000 travellers across 34 countries and territories, including 1,000 in India.

However, the report found that a sense of disillusion towards making more sustainable travel choices might be counteracting these positive intentions.

For the first time this year, the report revealed that some trav-



ellers don't recognise the importance of being more mindful.

Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of Indian travellers felt travelling

more sustainably is important, but not a primary consideration when planning or booking a trip, it added. More than half (52 per

cent) feel that the damage already done is irreversible and that the travel choices they make are not going to change that, said the report.

In fact, 39 per cent don't believe climate change is as severe as people make it out to be and 47 per cent feel their time spent travelling is too precious to put sustainability at the top of their decision-making list, it noted.

Over 53 per cent of travellers believed that being more sustainable in a destination that is not

implementing sustainability practices itself feels pointless, it added.

"This year's new insights show that a sense of weariness could be emerging among travellers fuelled by the ongoing challenges that they experience to make more sustainable travel choices... we believe working together across the industry, simple changes when taken together can start to make a big difference," Booking.com Country Manager, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Indonesia, Santosh Kumar, added

Hyderabad

VIKING SOUL EVOKING A TRIBAL TULUM VIBE

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Rinaa Shah is a well-known DJ, known as the Viking Soul, and the first female electronic percussionist in India as well. With a remarkable musical career and multiple awards, we had the opportunity to speak with this electronic percussionist in-depth for an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*, where she reveals everything!

"Since I was five years old, music has surrounded me. I finished my Bharatnatyam degree at the age of 14, and my Kathak degree at the age of 19. Although music has always played a significant role in my life, I intended to incorporate classical melodies into contemporary electronic songs when I unintentionally followed this path. I use a variety of instruments to produce a unique and varied sound, including the violin, tabla, sitar, African djembe, and more," says Rinaa. "I was aware that I was a little late to the game when I made the decision to pursue a career as a DJ! However I was determined to study under the greatest, so I registered at the DJ School of Amsterdam after reading up on it and getting referrals from friends. Through this experience, I was able to broaden my horizons, connect with amazing DJs, gain insight into their issues, and increase my self-confidence. I kicked things up a level in 2023 by enrolling in an advanced course at the Point Blank Music School in Ibiza, which gave me even more creative inspiration and helped me reach new heights of confidence."

Throughout her musical career, Rinaa Shah has performed on famous stages all around the world. She even achieved a noteworthy feat by ranking among the top 10 DJs at the prestigious DJ Amsterdam School. She has received acclaim for her energetic performances, which effortlessly combine electronic percussion with drums, tabla, sitar, and other instruments. "Because I have a background in classical music, I tried to bring back the old sounds by fusing them with contemporary genres in an original way. I was moved to bring back Indian classical music in a modern style, incorporating Afro and electronic elements to appeal to a younger audience, after witnessing its demise," she says.

With its blend of Afro-house music, intriguing

tribal dances, aerial dancers, fire shows, and real African musicians, Totem Tribe now sounds like a fully immersive experience. We were rather curious about what motivated her to design this one-of-a-kind creation! She remembers travelling to Africa in order to acquire some supplies for her restaurant. She was taken to a completely different world by

the captivating sounds of African and tribal music that she heard along the way. When she realised that Indian audiences had not yet heard this kind of music, she knew exactly which route she needed to take to

expand on it. She has long loved the African vibe, which is now reflected in her music as well as her restaurant. It radiates an infectious, happy energy that evokes beautiful, spiritual emotions that brighten the spirit and encourage movement.

She said, "The idea first sparked at my restaurant, where we embraced a tribal theme," with an irresistible enthusiasm. "In just one and a half years, we welcomed approximately 250 performers to our events, which had this tribal vibe. Thus, the Totem Tribe was founded in November 2023. I combined Afro-house music, which is becoming more and more popular and has brought a new sound to India, with tribal rhythms to create a distinctive musical experience. My objective is to make this musical the best production in India, providing an immersive experience with tribal culture."

Afro-house

music and dance are truly immersing. Eight people work together on this ground-breaking endeavour, providing amazing tribal acts and aerial dancers; a tribal Tulum vibe is created by fire shows and live African musicians playing the Djembe. "With sporadic additions and subtractions, our tribe consists of nine people, but we all have the same goal. What really sets our tribe apart is its cohesiveness. We truly think that we can achieve the pinnacle of achievement if we put our faith in one another and work extremely hard. With the use of tribal fire, compelling acts, and music and dance, we hope to reach as many people as we can and spread joy," she adds.

"I've always thrived on carving out a unique space; that's just how my mind works, and I love challenges," she says in her words. "Afro and tribal house is a new genre that I consistently create new music in by fusing with tech and electronic elements. Using different tribal headresses to enhance the visual experience, I try to take my audience on a journey through my music throughout every performance. Gender differences vanish in those situations; the main focus is on providing individuals with a unique and memorable experience."

A DJ has the ability to change your attitude, your ideas, and much more. "I really think it's important to keep inspiring others with my work. Helping others is always my goal, no matter how big or small. My goal is to inspire the confidence to follow their aspirations and open doors for countless women who want to make a difference in the world. I also stressed in my TED Talk that if I could accomplish my goals later in life, there would be no barriers for anybody else to do the same. My daily goal is to get closer to creating this musical endeavour and using our dancing and music to spread love and joy. One day, I hope to play at places all over the world, starting with India. Whether you're a man or a woman, I believe it's critical to stand out in a competitive environment. Everyone is attempting to get better or earn more money in this fast-paced environment. That's why it's so important to

have a distinct voice that uplifts and makes people happy. To all the women out there: Don't allow anyone to tell you what you can't accomplish, and don't be frightened. You can accomplish amazing things if you put in the effort and are determined!" and with that, the Viking Soul concluded.

DJ Rinaa Shah, popularly known as the Viking Soul, has created a niche for herself by becoming the first female electronic percussionist in India. In this exclusive chat, with *The Pioneer*, the DJ takes us through her journey of DJing, a musical experience called Totem Tribe, & more.



Reuniting sneakerheads and street culture with music in Hyd

SUBODHINI PUROHIT

In a world where fashion meets function and style merges seamlessly with comfort, a cultural phenomenon transcends mere footwear: sneakers. These versatile shoes have evolved from humble athletic gear to coveted symbols of self-expression, rebellion, and individuality! With a rich history rooted in sports, music, and street culture, sneakers have become more than just a fashion statement; they reflect personality, passion, and creativity.

Nestled in the bustling streets of Hyderabad lies Superkicks, a haven for sneaker enthusiasts and fashion aficionados alike. Founded by the visionary Sangeet Paryani, it stands as a beacon of style and innovation, offering a curated selection of the world's leading sneaker brands under one roof. From the iconic swoosh of Nike to the timeless stripes of Adidas and the classic silhouettes of Reebok, Puma, Asics Tiger, New Balance, Vans, and Fila, it boasts a diverse array of footwear that caters to every taste and preference.

Recently, Superkicks made its mark in Hyderabad with the inaugural edition of its beat camp, marking a significant milestone in the city's music scene. Building on the success of previous music sessions, it has established itself as a dynamic force in the realms of fashion and culture.

At the core of the cultural initiatives was a deep appreciation for music and its transformative power, especially in today's musical landscape, where accessibility and inclusivity reign supreme. Gone are the days when aspiring artists needed access to expensive studios or high-profile connections to kickstart their musical journey. Instead, the democratisation of music production has opened doors for anyone with a laptop and a few instruments to realise their creative vision.

Through a blend of online courses and pure passion, individuals can now embark on their musical odyssey, learning the ropes of beat-making, production, and composition from the comfort of their own homes. Superkicks recognised and celebrated this democratization of music, championing the cause of lowkey artists and providing a platform for them to showcase their talent in Hyderabad.

Beginning with the beat-making workshop, it was expertly orchestrated by the Audio and Music Production Club (AMP), a dynamic collective co-founded by Divyansh Choudhary and Anish Devnoor. These visionary leaders are students at the prestigious BITS Pilani Hyderabad campus, where their passion for audio and music production has sparked a vibrant community of like-minded individuals. In their innovative approach, AMP seamlessly integrated musical beats with the ambient sounds of Hyderabad's bustling streets, incorporating elements such as ringing bells and bustling traffic into their compositions. This fusion of urban sounds with musical rhythms added a dynamic dimension to the beat-making workshop, capturing the vibrant essence of the city in each composition.

In an innovative twist, participants were invited to shape the beat-making process by selecting a traditional song from three samples through a live poll. Once the audience made their choice, AMP Club artists worked their magic, transforming the selected track from its traditional roots into a mesmerising masterpiece.



EVENT COVERAGE

sophistication beyond their years. Now, as a smaller group gathered around, they began to explain their technical process. Though the intricacies of their work may seem daunting, the members of the AMP club are dedicated to simplifying complex concepts. While their expertise may initially appear beyond reach, their approach is inclusive."

Attendees were treated to a captivating music-listening session led by none other than Kevin Shaji, also known as Pinacolada Blues, a talented music producer who is a solo electronic indie artist from Kerala. Known for his songs like *Tera Nishaan*, *Raaba* and *Butterfly*, joining him were Damini and Nikitha, gifted singers who brought their unique flair to the performance.

Together, they serenaded the audience with a selection of Malayali tracks and previews from their upcoming album, including the hauntingly beautiful *Medusa*. This track delved into the complexities of toxic relationships, weaving a poignant narrative that resonated with listeners. Additionally, they showcased some of their previously released songs, including the emotive *Red Lights*, which explored the theme of heartbreak and the aftermath of a breakup. Through soulful melodies and heartfelt lyrics, they transported the audience on a journey through the highs and lows of love and loss.

Nikitha shares, "I hail from Kerala. Currently, I'm pursuing my master's degree, but my true passion lies in music. Today, I had the privilege of sharing my love for music with you all by performing a few Malayali songs and a Hindi track, in Hyderabad. One of the highlights of the session was singing *Butterfly*, a beautiful Malayalam song that holds a special place in my heart. Singing alongside Kevin has been an enriching experience as well. Despite juggling a job, he puts his heart and soul into producing songs, giving them depth and texture with his compositions and background work. Together, we strived to create music that resonates with our audience and evokes emotions."

Kevin Shaji, Damini, and Nikitha proved to be a dynamic trio, captivating listeners with their artistry and leaving a lasting impression long after the session came to a close.

The workshop featured a special pop-up by NAIN, a label founded by Naina Bhandary. Known for its exquisite hand-crafted luxury clothing, NAIN has made waves with its spring and summer collections showcased at the prestigious Lakme Fashion Week. Now, these coveted pieces are available at Superkicks Hyderabad.

Following the informative beat-making session and melodic singing and listening sessions, the event transitioned seamlessly into an electrifying after-party starting at 8 p.m. As attendees sipped on cocktails and engaged in lively games, the atmosphere buzzed with excitement and anticipation.

As the night unfolded, guests grooved to the catchy beats and soulful melodies, dancing the night away and revelling in the euphoria of the moment. With each song, the energy soared higher, creating an unforgettable experience for all who attended.

In the heart of Hyderabad, Superkicks' beat camp was more than just a gathering of music enthusiasts; it was a celebration of the transformative power of music to unite, inspire, and elevate.

Brijendra Kala opens up about *Lavaste's* influence on his life

PNS| HYDERABAD

Actor Brijendra Kala has been renowned for his nuanced depictions of realistic characters. His small roles in mainstream films brought him to the attention of the audience. Naturally, despite having less on-screen time, he has made a name for himself in these roles.

Just recently, Zee5 unveiled the trailer for *Lavaste*, which stars Omkar Kapoor alongside Manoj Joshi, Brijendra Kala, Urvashi S Sharma, and Shubhangi Latkar in key roles. *Lavaste*, which was produced and directed by Aditya Verma and Sudeesh Kanaujia, explores the theme of children's treatment of their old parents while also illuminating the hidden side of unclaimed bodies.

To delve a little more into the details of this upcoming film, Brijendra Kala gets candid with *The Pioneer* as he shares, "The takeaway I hope audiences will carry after watching is the importance of being responsible and caring towards the people in our community. It's about looking out for those who may need assistance and support. In my neighbourhood, where I used to stay before, there was always someone who lacked companionship and care. But they were often the ones to step up and help when needed, setting a meaningful example for all of us."

This, he says, underscores the significance of taking initiative and being proactive in lending a helping hand. By showcasing kindness and empathy, one can inspire others to follow suit. Instead of waiting for others to act first, they should take the lead and offer help, and your actions can inspire others to do the same.

Meanwhile, on being a part of *Lavaste's* influence and shaping his perspective on life, he says, "The point is, many parents face situations where they have no one around them in their last moments, especially when their children go away, particularly when they're out of the country. Sometimes, such situations are seen in movies, right? But these aren't just fictional; they happen in real life too. Sometimes, there are instances when their children are around at the moments of their last rights but cannot touch them, as happened during the COVID times, and sometimes their children are away due to work.

There should be organisations that respect individuals and conduct their last rites, even if they are unknown. Everyone deserves a dignified farewell, especially those without close family. Organisations like the one in our film *Lavaste* can provide that support to people who have no one around to take care of them."





● Sravanthi and Amiksha

Ortus HVAC Engineering India Pvt Ltd, unveiled the first Hisense HVAC Experience Centre in India at Banjara Hills road no: 2. Rakesh Chauhan, director of Hisense HVAC India inaugurated the centre, along with Navaneeth Reddy, Managing Director of Ortus HVAC.



● Sonali



On a recent evening at the Stein Auditorium in India Habitat Centre, a remarkable event unfolded, shedding light on a rich cultural legacy often overlooked in history books. *Main Tawaif*, featuring the talented Manjari Chaturvedi, brought to life the captivating stories and artistry of the Tawaifs – highly skilled courtesans who were pioneers in the world of Kathak dance and soulful music.

To commemorate Earth Day 2024 and contribute to a cleaner environment, OneEarth Foundation donated study tables and benches made from segregated low-value plastic waste collected during the 30-day Drive Against Plastic Pollution (DAPP) campaign to an underprivileged school in a slum. The campaign, aimed at combating plastic pollution and promoting sustainable practices, sensitised over 1300 individuals and students, collected 1.4 tonnes of waste, conducted 59 workshops & clean-up drives and paddled 120 km along the Goa coastline.



PARTY



Dr. Mukesh Batra, Padmashri recipient and founder of Dr. Batra's® Healthcare, the largest chain of homeopathy clinics, launched his 10th book *Feel Good, Heal Good. Staying Happy with Homeopathy* published by Bloomsbury at Taj Mahal Hotel. At the launch was a very useful panel discussion on mental and emotional health. Panelists who participated in the discussion were Mandira Bedi, Rajiv Bajaj, Madhoo, Zayed Khan and Dr Aashish Contractor. It was moderated by Tara Deshpande.



Art Diversity 2024 is an effort to present two cultures and sets of people from India and Philippines. The artist from Philippines are part of the collective Angono Ateliers and Indian artists have been brought together under Arth Art International. The event that involved a smaller set of people and not heavily commercialised and without the involvement of large bodies and organisations enabled a focus on the actual people and a genuine exchange.



Embarking on a journey from the stage to the page, Kavea Chavali, a renowned live events anchor, and prime-time television personality, celebrates a milestone in her illustrious career with the launch of her debut book, *Mic Check 123*. Drawing from her extensive experience hosting over 1400 shows across 17 countries and being the voice for more than 800 brands, her book promises to inspire readers with anecdotes, insights, and lessons learned from the world of anchoring and public speaking.

Aalekh Foundation, dedicated to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, successfully hosted the second edition of the Women Achievers Awards at The Leela Palace. The event, held on April 21, 2024, recognised and honoured women who have made remarkable contributions to society across fields and activities. The ceremony was marked by the presence of esteemed guests such as Attorney General of India Shri R Venkataramani, Justice Anil Dave Former Supreme Court Judge, oddsiexponent Sharon Lowen, Ex CBIC member Balesh Kumar, TV Anchor & journalist Manish Awasthi, Former NBCC chairman Anoop Mittal, Former secretary MEA & DG ICCR Amarendra Khatua.



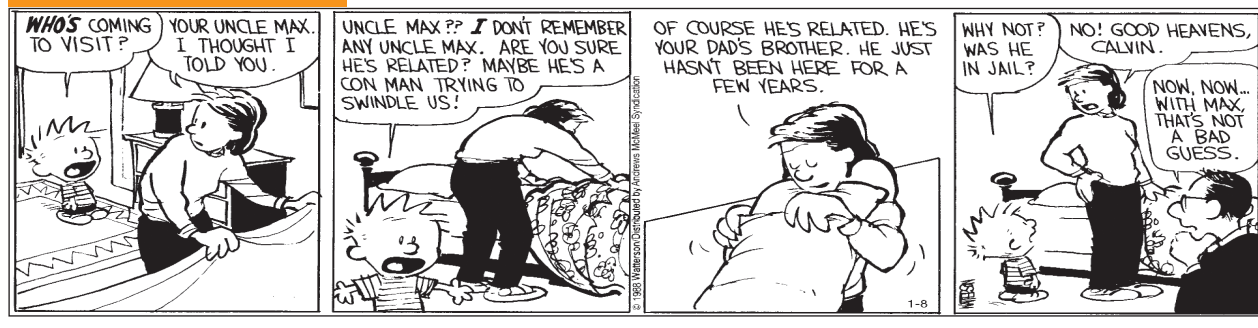
Pallavi Jhavar, author of *Moments to Memories*, launched her books in Hyderabad alongside esteemed guests, Srilakshmi Reddy, Sindhura Indukuri, Dr. Shubha Vilas, Alka Bangur, and Mrs. Anju Poddar.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



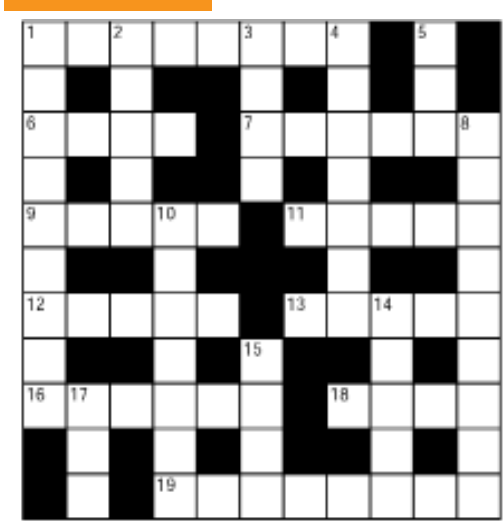
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



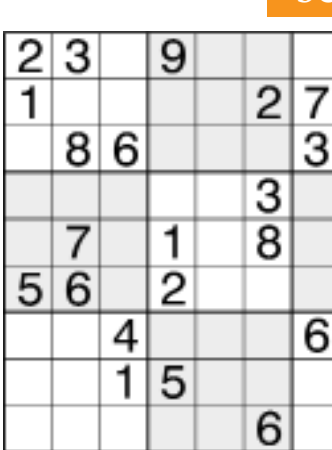
CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Without any bends
- Travel by horse
- Bigger
- A plant's underground parts
- Flying creatures
- Sweeten food with this
- Sit on this
- Be unalike
- Too
- Writer of music
- From Turkey
- Tell a fib
- A large store of water for supplying a town
- The movement of cars and people in the street
- A book of maps of countries
- Wheel a baby about in this
- Liquid in a pen

DOWN

- Startled
- Listen to music on this
- A precious metal

SOLUTION

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

GINGER MEGGS





Treat for Malayalam cinephiles as Mohanlal and Shobhana returns!

The legendary Malayalam film duo Mohanlal and Shobana will return on screen for the former's 360th film, directed by Tharun Moorthy. The movie began shooting yesterday, April 22. Mohanlal posted this information on his X account.

"On the set, joining in prayers as we commence filming the project led by director Tharun Moorthy and produced by M. Renjith under Rejaputhra Visual Media," the actor wrote with photos of herself with

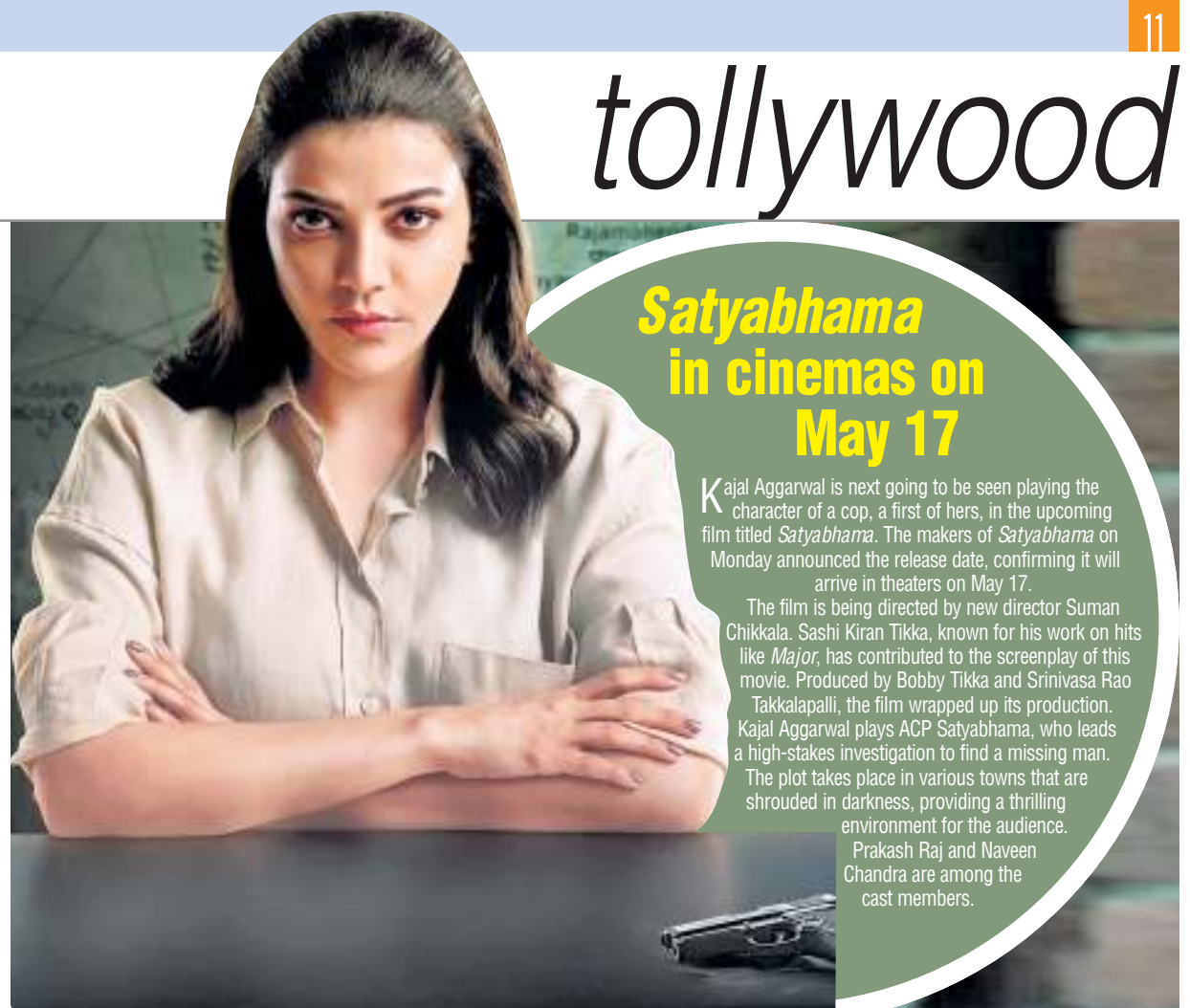
Shobana and the cast and crew of the movie. "With great appreciation, I ask for your blessings as I begin my 360th film project."

For the first time in more than 20 years, Mohanlal and Shobana will be sharing a screen. The pair is responsible for some of the most iconic Malayalam movies ever made, such as *Nirattukal*, *Irupattam Noottandu*, and *Chenkol*.

Expectations are already quite high because Mohanlal, Shobana, and Tharun Moorthy are collaborat-

ing on this movie; details regarding the narrative and title are still being withheld. The movie is expected to be a touching love story that brings back the romance of the Mohanlal-Shobana on-screen duo.

For Malayalam film enthusiasts who have been dying to see Mohanlal and Shobana together once more, this reunion is a dream come true. The movie is expected to cause a lot of excitement in the upcoming months and is certain to be a significant event for the Malayalam cinema industry.



Satyabhama in cinemas on May 17

Kajal Aggarwal is next going to be seen playing the character of a cop, a first of hers, in the upcoming film titled *Satyabhama*. The makers of *Satyabhama* on Monday announced the release date, confirming it will arrive in theaters on May 17.

The film is being directed by new director Suman Chikkala. Sashi Kiran Tikka, known for his work on hits like *Major*, has contributed to the screenplay of this movie. Produced by Bobby Tikka and Srinivasa Rao Takkalapalli, the film wrapped up its production. Kajal Aggarwal plays ACP Satyabhama, who leads a high-stakes investigation to find a missing man. The plot takes place in various towns that are shrouded in darkness, providing a thrilling environment for the audience.

Prakash Raj and Naveen Chandra are among the cast members.



Vishwambhara's 26-day-long schedule comes to an end

The socio-fantasy *Vishwambhara*, which is being directed by Vassisht of *Bimbisara* fame, stars Megastar Chiranjeevi. The film's massive action scene, which was filmed in Hyderabad on a set, has made headlines.

It was reported yesterday by director Vassishta and his team that the 26-day schedule came to an end on Monday. Along with the VFX crew, Chiru, the Ram-Laxman team, and production designer AS Prakash collaborated on the schedule.

They also said that the interval action scene would be unimaginable. The background features a towering statue of Lord Hanuman.

The movie is produced by UV Creations and is presented by Vikram. Sushmita Konidela is the costume designer for the pan-Indian film, which has music by MM Keeravani and cinematography by Chota K. Naidu. The production cost of the January 10th release (in 2025) was Rs 185 crore.

Sarigama Cinemas, a US-based distribution business, reportedly paid Rs. 18 crore last month to purchase the international rights to the pan-Indian film.

Nani launched Allari Naresh and Faria's *Aa Okkati Adakku* trailer



With his latest film, *Aa Okkati Adakku*, due out this summer, Allari Naresh is poised to entertain. There was excitement for the recently released trailer because Naresh hasn't done a full-length entertainer in a while and because the trailer was funny. The trailer was unveiled by Natural Star Nani.

The trailer commences with a delivery boy asking for Naresh's address. The comedy with a sealed cover appeals to young people. The challenges faced by Naresh, who tries everything but is unable to find a partner for a wedding, are then depicted to us. Fortunately, Faria Abdullah's proximity to him gives him fresh hope. Regrettably, they find themselves in a difficult predicament. The entire time, Allari Naresh's mark of entertainment is evident. Malli Ankem portrayed the character in a humorous manner. It appears that the film contains more content than what was revealed in the trailer.

Gopi Sundar composed the soundtrack, while Surya handled the cinematography for the Rajiv Chilaka-produced movie. The release date is set for May 3. The film in both AP and TS will be released by Asian Suresh Entertainment LLP.



Sid Sriram dazzles the Coachella audience with his Tamil tunes

Sid Sriram, the singer of *Srivali*, made Coachella 2024 history by being the first South Indian performer. Due to his performance at the festival, Punjabi singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh grabbed headlines last year. At Coachella, Sriram sang a holy Tamil song called *Thiruppugazh*, which is devoted to Lord Murugan, as he concluded his performance.

The performer posted an explanation of his decision on Instagram, saying, "I probably would have laughed and gone back to daydreaming if you had told 9-year-old me that I'd end my @coachella set with the *Thiruppugazh* my mother had just taught me. In 2024, the festival welcomes its first-ever South Indian performer."

"My name is Sid Sriram; I was born in Chennai, India, and I grew up in the Bay Area, California," the caption of his photo said. "I'm proud of every single aspect of my identity, and I'm from a discipline called Carnatic music. I also assure you that we are headed toward a global revolution in music, love, and healing." During his performance at the event, Sriram, a professional Carnatic singer, mixed R&B with Carnatic music. The artist is also well-known for her playback vocals in the Tamil and Telugu cinema industries. In addition to working with Oscar-winning artists like AR Rahman, he made his feature debut in the film *Vaanam Kottatum*, directed by Mani Ratnam.

NTR Jr pre-b'day kickstarts, fans celebrate like festival in Hyd



Rightly hailed as the Man of Masses, NTR Jr enjoys a dedicated fan base both locally and worldwide. Currently gearing up for his upcoming blockbuster, *Devara: Part 1*, the actor's birthday is nearing on May 20th. To make the most of the special occasion, fans of NTR Jr. organised a grand pre-birthday celebration in Hyderabad to kick off the less-than-a-month countdown ahead of the actor's birthday.

To celebrate, a gigantic poster of NTR Jr was placed outside the Sudarshan Theatre 35MM in Hyderabad. Decorated with a massive garland, fans cheered 'Jai NTR', wearing 'Jai NTR' t-shirts, holding his posters, and dancing joyfully. The atmosphere truly felt like a beautiful, festive-like celebration, showcasing how much fans adore and love the actor as they eagerly await his birthday.

On the work front, Man of Masses NTR Jr will be next seen in *Devara: Part 1*. Directed by Koratala Siva, the magnum opus is produced by Yuvasudha Arts and NTR Arts, and presented by Nandamuri Kalyan Ram. The film's music is orchestrated by Anirudh Ravichander, and the cinematography is handled by R. Rathnavelu.

Devara: Part 1 hits screens on October 10, 2024.

Na Chei Pattukove from *Sabari* out now

Versatile artiste Varalakshmi Sarathkumar in the lead role in the movie *Sabari*, produced by Mahendranath Kundla under Maha Movies banner under recently released the song *Na Chei Pattukove*. The audience knows that *Sabari* is being released pan India. This song was also released in five languages besides Telugu, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam. Gopisunder is composing the music for *Sabari*! Rahman has provided Telugu lyrics for the song composed by him. This song is sung by Amrita Suresh. The song was released by Sabari Music channel.

Varalakshmi Sarath Kumar helmed this song on Niveksha, who played her daughter in the film. The song was shot in beautiful locations in Kodaikanal hills. Seeing the visuals, it is understood that the song comes when both the mother and daughter are going on a vacation. Producer Mahendranath Kundla said on the occasion of the release of the song, *Na Chei Pattukove* Varalakshmi Sarathkumar's performance is the main attraction of the film. "Her acting as a mother and her longing for her daughter moves everyone. She made a female oriented film for the first time. The scenes between mother and daughter will impress everyone. This song comes at a crucial point in the story. It is an emotional psychological thriller. We are making preparations for a pan-India release on May 3," he said.



Kalyan Shankar to direct *Tillu Cube*

Known for his involvement in the writing of films like *Jaathirathalu*, writer-director Kalyan Shankar of *MAD* fame is now busy carving out *MAD2*, while he is also entangled in the writing of some of the upcoming projects of Sithara Entertainment. But then there's another big hint coming from sources in the Sithara compound!

Kalyan Shankar was also involved in the writing of Sithara's recent superhit *Tillu Square* as well and reports are now coming that he will be involved with this franchisee more directly now. They say that after wrapping *MAD2*, Kalyan will be kickstarting the shooting of *Tillu Cube* with Siddhu Jonnalagadda and a new heroine in the lead. Already the writing works of this new film

are in discussions, after Siddhu and Kalyan developed a new idea for the sequel.

It's surprising to see that the three *Tillu* films have three different directors including the first one directed by Vimal Krishna, second one by Mallick Ram and now Kalyan Shankar. However, for now, the details of this third installment are kept under the wraps.





REVENGE ON CSK MIND AS LSG EYE A WIN IN DHONI BASTION

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Revenge will be on defending champions Chennai Super Kings' minds when they host an unpredictable Lucknow Super Giants here in their reverse IPL fixture on Tuesday with both the teams desperate to break out of the mid-table logjam. The last time the two teams faced off in Lucknow last week, KL Rahul and Quinton de Kock put up a record opening partnership which proved to be the difference as LSG joined CSK at eight points in the IPL standing. The Super Kings have been a force to be reckoned with at home and they will look to set the record straight this time. Following the away loss, CSK will be eager to redeem themselves in the three consecutive home ties to march towards the playoffs. For CSK, skipper Rituraj Gaikwad and Shivam Dube have done bulk of the scoring and their failure against LSG meant they didn't get a flying start and also struggled in the middle overs. While opener Rachin Ravindra's form is a concern,

CSK also promoted Ajinkya Rahane as the opener and as a result, Gaikwad pushed himself a spot down to three. Having scored three 50-plus scores as an opener so far, it would once again be a tricky call for Gaikwad to whether stick to the latest shuffle or promote himself back to the top. While Ravindra Jadeja stepped up with a composed fifty, which allowed Moeen Ali and MS Dhoni to produce the late fireworks and give the team a fighting total, CSK would hope their top-order gets their act together before they face LSG again. CSK's bowling unit was at their wits end against the rampaging duo of Rahul and Quinton the other day. Young Matheesha Pathirana was their best bowler but the onus will be on pacers Deepak Chahar, Tushar Deshpande and Mustafizur Rahman to produce a better show when they face the same opposition again. Left-arm spinner Jadeja too struggled and will need to step up on their home turf, having done so in the past. For LSG, batting has been an



issue but they have shown how devastating they can be if their top-order fires. Rahul and Quinton were on a roll and they will once again have to do the heavy lifting at Chepauk. Also Nicholas Pooran has hit top gear when needed and LSG will bank on him a lot. In bowling, LSG will hope for the return of young pace sensation Mayank Yadav, who had to sit out of two games after suffering lower abdominal strain. Pacer Mohsin Khan and Yash Thakur did well to restrict CSK initially but found themselves in the firing line of Dhoni in the final overs, something they need to work on before they walk into his den. Matt Henry had a wicketless debut for LSG and he too will be eager to prove himself. In the spin department, Krunal Pandya's two wickets made a lot of difference in the middle-overs and he will have to take the lead again against CSK, while young Ravi Bishnoi will have to get over the thrashing that he received from Ali to find his mojo back. The visitors would be fancying their chances but LSG would

need consistency to pull off another win at CSK's fortress.

SQUADS:

Chennai Super Kings: Rachin Ravindra, Rituraj Gaikwad (c), Ajinkya Rahane, Daryl Mitchell, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Sameer Rizvi, MS Dhoni (wk), Shardul Thakur, Tushar Deshpande, Mustafizur Rahman, Matheesha Pathirana, Nishant Sindhu, Moeen Ali, Mitchell Santner, Shaik Rasheed, Aravely Avnish, Maheesh Theekshana, RS Hangargekar, Srimarjeet Singh, Mukesh Choudhary, Prashant Solanki, Ajay Jadav Mandal, Richard Gleeson and Deepak Chahar. **Lucknow Super Giants:** Quinton de Kock, KL Rahul (c & wk), Deepak Hooda, Ayush Badoni, Marcus Stoinis, Nicholas Pooran, Krunal Pandya, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohsin Khan, Shamar Joseph, Yash Thakur, Manimaran Siddharth, Prerak Mankad, Arshad Khan, Krishnappa Gowtham, Amit Mishra, Kyle Mayers, Ashton Turner, Matt Henry, Naveen-ul-Haq, Devdutt Padikkal, Yudhvir Singh Charak, Mayank Yadav and Arshin Kulkarni.



Conversation with Virat Kohli really helped me during bad phase: Riyan Parag

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

When Riyan Parag first arrived on the scene, he was known more for his unabashed expression of opinions on social media than for his batting. But then came a "good 10-15 minutes" of advice from the great Virat Kohli, and things changed for the better. From facing criticism for speaking his mind instead of delivering drab cliches in media interaction or on social media, the 22-year-old player from Assam is now staking a claim for India selection with stellar performances this IPL season. On asking Kohli for advice, Parag told JioCinema, "In my second year, I was having a bad phase in the IPL. I was discussing with him on how to get out of that phase and how he used to handle similar situations, so I can learn from his experience as well. "He gave me a good 10-15 minutes of his time and shared a few things with me, I think that really helped me." Rajasthan Royals' Parag has been in top form this season, and is currently third in the list of highest run-scorers with 318 runs in seven

matches. Besides Kohli, Parag has also learned a lot from another cricket legend Rahul Dravid, who was previously associated with the RR franchise. "I learnt a lot. Cricket-wise, we know he's one of the best in the business, one of the greatest cricketers of our time. "Outside cricket, how we should conduct ourselves, get involved with the crowd, social media, and how to generally present ourselves outside of cricket, is something I learnt a lot about, from him." Speaking about his maiden season in the IPL in 2019, Parag said the feeling was surreal when he first went out to bat, in a match against Chennai Super Kings with the legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni standing a few feet from the newcomer. "It was a surreal feeling. I don't really remember how I was exactly feeling but I was nervous for sure. Playing against CSK, going in to bat, with Dhoni behind the wicket, was a surreal moment for sure, I'll never forget that. I was more excited than nervous and enjoyed every bit of it."

Starc is a superstar, do not think of him from investment standpoint: KKR CEO Mysore

+PTI ■ KOLKATA

Under scrutiny for his poor show in the ongoing season, IPL's costliest buy Mitchell Starc on Monday received the backing of Kolkata Knight Riders' managing director and CEO Venky Mysore, who said they don't think of him from an "investment standpoint". KKR had bought Starc for a record Rs 24.75 crore but it always came with a caveat as the Aussie left-arm quick had limited experience in the shortest format and was making a comeback to IPL after nine years. "He's a superstar and he's a quality player," Mysore said on the sideline of Knight Golf event at RCGC here.

"We don't think of it from an investment standpoint, because you go to the auction and things happen in the hands of the player, nor is it in the hands of anybody else. "We just felt that an addition to the team like Mitchell Starc would add a lot of value, which it has. I mean, his presence itself in the lineup adds a different dynamic to the team, and there were specific skills that the support staff were looking for. So, we think we had that." Starc's rustiness in the T20 format came to fore as he conceded 100 runs without taking any wicket from his eight overs in the first two matches. It turned from bad to worse on Sunday when he leaked 54



runs from 16 balls at Eden Gardens, and in the final over, RCB No 9 Karn Sharma with little batting pedigree smashed him for three sixes in four balls. Starc, however, managed to salvage some pride taking a low return catch to dismiss Karn that eventually sealed a dramatic one-run victory.

"There are times when games are up and down. Everybody gets taken to the cleaners at times, and there are other times they come and just do their thing and win games for the team. So we're super happy having him in the setup," Mysore said. With five wins from seven

matches at the halfway mark, the second placed KKR look a transformed side under mentor and two-time title winning former captain Gautam Gambhir. Gambhir, who last represented the side in 2017, returned to his former franchise as a team mentor, relinquishing the same position at Lucknow Super Giants this season. Mysore said Gambhir has added a lot of "weight" to the side. "I think the consistency that is shown, I think we look like a more balanced and settled side this year. Needless to say, Gautam (Gambhir) coming in adds a lot of weight purely from the intensity that he brings, the experience that he brings.



Du Plessis, Curran fined for IPL Code of Conduct breaches

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Royal Challengers Bengaluru skipper Faf du Plessis has copped a Rs 12 lakh fine, while Punjab Kings captain has been penalised 50 per cent of his match fees for their respective offences, the IPL announced on Monday. Du Plessis was fined for maintaining a slow over-rate during RCB's thrilling one-run loss, their seventh of the ongoing season, to Kolkata Knight Riders at the Eden Gardens on Sunday. "Mr Faf du Plessis, Captain, Royal Challengers Bengaluru has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate during Match 36 of the TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Eden Gardens, Kolkata on April 21, 2024," an IPL statement read. It was RCB's first over-rate offence of the season. Curran, on the other hand, was fined half of his match fees for a Level 1 offence under Article 2.8 of the IPL's Code of Conduct which refers to "showing dissent at an umpire's decision" during PBKS' three-wicket loss to Gujarat Titans in Mullanpur on Sunday. "Curran committed a Level 1 offence under Article 2.8 of the IPL's Code of Conduct. He admitted to the offence and accepted the Match Referee's sanction. For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," an IPL media release stated. The loss against GT was Punjab's fourth on the trot, they are now languishing on the ninth place in the points table.

PTI ■ MULLANPUR

Punjab Kings' bowling coach Charl Langeveldt has urged his middle-order batters to step up and "get more runs on the board" following their three-wicket loss to Gujarat Titans in the IPL here. Punjab Kings made brisk start to reach 45 for no loss in five overs but their innings went downhill thereafter as they lost 7 for 47 runs to be all out for 142. GT overhauled the target in 19.1 overs. It was their sixth loss in eight games. "Disappointing. Players are hurt as well as the staff and the fans. We showed a lot of character with the ball. We had a good powerplay with the bat for the first time in three games but in the middle period, their spinners were too quality for our batters and we struggled. "We just need middle order upfront to get more runs. We were probably 20 runs short on that wicket," Langeveldt said at the post-match press conference. While Gujarat Titans used their spinners well with the trio of Sai Kishore, Rashid Khan and Noor Ahmad exposing the opposition with

We need middle order to get more runs: PBKS bowling coach Charl Langeveldt

their guile, PBKS picked Harpreet Singh Bhatia as their Impact Player due to the batting collapse even as Rahul Chahar stayed on the bench. "It was the idea, we could have another spinner [Rahul] Chahar to play in but obviously when you're batting and you've had a collapse like that, it's better to get the runs on board," Langeveldt said. "That's something we want to improve, get more runs on the board. We are going to travel now and we are going to play on better batting wickets and that would give the batters a bit more confidence going into the last few games. We take every game like a semi-final, final but yeah, it's one of those things. "The batters are definitely going to be happy about the next venue (Eden Gardens, Kolkata). The bowlers need to



step up as well when we play at different venues, higher scoring grounds. Hopefully our batters will come good for us."

While PBKS are languishing on the second last position on the points table, Langeveldt tried to look at the positives. "We still have to have that belief. We are a positive side, the boys showed a lot of character in the field. There's a lot to play for, we just need to win." Rahul Tewatia played an unbeaten 18-ball 36-run innings and scored the winning runs for GT and fast bowler, Mohit Sharma was lavish in his praise for the dashing finisher. "For the past three years, he (Rahul Tewatia) has been with the GT team. He's done it several times before (finishing games for his team). All credit goes to him," Mohit Sharma said. "He practices the same scenarios at the nets. It is also a challenge for us when we bowl to him. He played a crucial innings, which was undoubtedly the turning point in the game for us."

We may have got away with Kohli wicket: Phil Salt

PTI ■ KOLKATA

It was a rub of the green call that Virat Kohli was dismissed off a high full toss and Kolkata Knight Riders managed to eke out a narrow one-run win in their high-scoring IPL match against RCB on Sunday, says stumper-batter Phil Salt. The new Hawk-Eye technology to determine no-balls for height was used when TV umpire Michael Gough deemed a waist-high delivery from KKR's Harshit Rana fair. Kohli was in full flow, scoring a brisk 18 runs off just seven balls, before Rana took a return catch to dismiss the star batter, as it became a pivotal moment in RCB's narrow one-run loss while chasing a challenging target of 223 at Eden Gardens. "It's split opinion, we know that. From our point of view, we feel like we may have got away with one there. It's the rub of the greens, one of those calls," said the world No 2 T20I batter at the Knight Golf event here.

The Englishman further said leveraging technology in this manner is ultimately beneficial for the game as he hinted at the possibility of a future review to assess the effectiveness of these technological advancements. "They brought that data in, the no-ball data, for exactly that purpose. I feel like in 12 months' time maybe there'll be some sort of review. Is it working? Is it not working? Is it a new thing to the game? "But personally, from a player's point of view, any time you're using data and technology to be more precise and get the right decisions, that's a good thing for the game," Salt added. Salt and Sunil Narine, the two KKR openers, have scored the bulk of runs (535 runs from seven innings) for the team who have won five from their seven matches to be in the forefront of a playoff spot. "It's great batting with Sunil, he is a very, very low-key chill guy. He's got a very different sort of skill set



when he's opening the batting, as opposed to, up and down the order. "I suppose one of the good things for me is he takes the pressure off, and I don't have to strike at a rate of 200 in my first 10 balls. Some games I might, but I don't have to. "Normally, one of us gets going, and the other one feeds the strike. So, if we get a good start, we get a couple of boundaries away. You know, we can produce really big power plays, which is something that we've done." They have went about their ways with a meticulous approach, picking the right bowler to attack and relied on match-ups, Salt said. "Our conversations are mainly, who's going to take what ball, you know, who likes to match up, left arm spin, right arm pace, all that sort of things. "Normally one of us who wants to put their hand up and take that arm. We keep it very, very simple." Narine has been a revelation with the bat at the top of the order as

the KKR spinner who was known as a pinch-hitter, has batted this time with poise and patience. Narine struck his maiden T20 century, scoring 109 against Rajasthan Royals the other day. **GAUTI INSPIRES CONFIDENCE IN NARINE:** **TENDO:** KKR fielding coach Ryan Ten Doeschate, a member of their 2014 IPL title winning team under Gautam Gambhir, credited Narine's transformation to the former skipper who is now the mentor of the side. "To be dead honest, I think Gauti did convince Sunil to open the batting and that also comes from the chemistry they have. They've worked together. Sunil played under him. I think it was a pretty easy. "We've tried to get that up to order in other competitions as well. And he hasn't done it. But for whatever reason, Gambhir inspires a lot of confidence in Sunil. And he was happy to take the job on and hopefully that can continue," he added.