

'Securing financing was incredibly tough in *Kalki* 2898 AD'



P11

-SPORTS

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Jagan needs to put YSRCP back on track

Andhra Pradesh's former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy needs to take in his stride YSRCP's humiliating defeat in the 2024 Assembly elections, come out of his frustration at not being able to marginalize his bête noire and TDP president Chandrababu Naidu, and, more importantly, put his own party back on track, considering that it won nearly 40 per cent of the vote share, despite securing only 11 seats against the dream target of 175.

In the wake of YSRCP's poll debacle, there is talk that most leaders and cadre of the party consider Jagan to be an eccentric personality disinclined to accept his failure. His complacency about retaining power solely on the strength of his party's welfare programmes



PIN POINT

has made the defeat all the more bitter. For, having bagged 86 per cent of the seats in the AP Legislative Assembly (winning 151 out of 175 seats) in the last Assembly polls, he ruled with an iron hand, creating a wedge between the cadre and party leadership. Things came to such a pass that almost all the contesting candidates were made to believe this time that, regardless of their individual performance, they would win, thanks to their chief minister's track record. This situation was painful at least to those leaders who are otherwise capable of attracting votes on the strength of their own performance. Thus, lack of coordination and unexpected anti-incumbency factor proved costly for YSRCP.

In the wake of YSRCP's poll debacle, there is talk that most leaders and cadre of the party consider Jagan to be an eccentric personality disinclined to accept his failure. His complacency about retaining power solely on the strength of his party's welfare programmes has made the defeat all the more bitter.

Jagan perhaps thought he could retain power in the recent AP Assembly just as his father late Dr.YS Rajasekhara Reddy had expected in the 2009 elections in the combined Andhra Pradesh. But the situation had become very hard for YSR to retain power. The Congress had won 180+ seats in the Assembly (out of 294 seats) in the 2004 elections. Severe anti-incumbency factor made then chief minister

N.Chandrababu Naidu a loser, though he had handed out huge doses just before elections. "It's a rebellion of the common man," was how YSR had summed up the election results. Despite the strong presence of the Grand Alliance, comprising TDP, TRS and Left parties, YSR could retain power, though with slender margin. YSR could get only eight seats above the magic figure of 148.



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

The Congress won only 156 seats out of 294 in the Assembly of combined AP. YSR then commented that the people of AP had given him only 'pass' marks, though he deserved to come out with 'distinction'.

Today, Jagan must be feeling

worse. For, Jagan had dreamed that there won't be opposition for YSRCP in the 2029 polls, should the party return to power with a massive majority in 2024.

Jagan is not able to digest that 90 per cent of the total seats have gone to the NDA combine, leaving just 11 seats to YSRCP. The welfare measures of his government, costing a whopping Rs.2.70 lakh crore rupees, did not prevent Chandrababu Naidu from coming to power. No state in the country has spent such huge money on welfare schemes at the cost of creation of public assets for future generations. Even the Polavaram project could have been completed with just one-fifth of the outlay for welfare schemes.

The worst part of Jagan's predicament is that YSRCP failed to get even the status of

principal opposition party.

There is talk in party circles that Jagan might resign from the Assembly and opt for contesting from the Kadapa Lok Sabha seat for strategic reasons, including proximity to power centres while pursuing criminal cases that CBI and ED have filed against him. Even this may not be a smooth affair for Jagan. For Telangana Chief Minister Anumula Revant Reddy declared at YSR's birth anniversary celebrations in AP that he would strive to make APCC chief and daughter of YSR YS Sharmila victorious by touring every nook and corner of the Kadapa LS seat.

P. Janardhan Reddy, who was leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) during the first stint of Chandrababu Naidu, had then justified his job even without the party's status as principal opposition in the

Tenth House (1994-99) of the AP Legislative Assembly. The construction of the Almatti Dam on the Krishna River by the Government of Karnataka had come to light due to the brave acts of PJR in 1997. He visited the dam site, along with media persons drawn from Hyderabad, braving restrictions imposed by the Karnataka government then headed by J.H.Patel. PJR's exercise highlighted how detrimental the project would be to the interests of AP. YS Rajasekhara Reddy, who took the reins of APCC in 1998, could not up the ante as PJR had already taken up the matter quite successfully.

So, Jagan would do well to make himself more relevant by properly fulfilling his responsibilities as an opposition member in the Assembly, regardless of his party's present status.

Govt Whip Beerla Ilaiah says 25 BRS MLAs to join Cong soon



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Government Whip Beerla Ilaiah has made it clear that 25 more BRS legislators will join the Congress party soon. So, BRSLP will merge in the Congress, he said.

Responding to BRS working president KT Ramarao's remarks in the context of engineered defections, he countered: "Is it 'samsaram' if done by BRS and prostitution if done by others?"

He was speaking to media

persons at CLP Media Hall on Tuesday.

Beerla Ilaiah maintained that BRS MLAs were joining Congress since they liked Revanth Reddy's rule. The Government Whip said that BRS leaders were speaking in Delhi as they had no face to speak in Telangana. The BRS leaders had no moral ground to speak against the Congress party. Beerla Ilaiah said that KTR and Harish Rao went to Delhi seeking to merge BRS party with BJP.

BGL cautions customers against scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bhagyanagar Gas Limited, a gas supplying firm, has alerted its customers regarding a new scam involving the misuse of its name and logo.

In a statement, the BGL stated that fraudsters were deceiving customers via WhatsApp and voice calls, sharing a corrupt APK file designed to steal money and personal information.

The fraudulent activities involve the phone numbers 9940364176 on WhatsApp and 9390958942 (mobile). BGL advised its customers to refrain from downloading any unauthorised APK files and to avoid responding to messages or calls from these numbers. Customers were warned not to share any OTPs, passwords, or personal information with unknown entities. BGL further urges its customers to not respond to any other contacts than those on its official website www.bglgas.com.

KTR calls out Rahul for double standard on defections

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana legislator and Bharat Rashtira Samithi working president KT Rama Rao has called out All India Congress Committee leader Rahul Gandhi's double standard on defections with reference to how the grand old party has been encouraging defections in Telangana.

Speaking to national media in Delhi, KTR slammed Rahul for posing as a defender of the Constitution while undermining its spirit. He recounted Rahul's Panch Nyay' promises, which included steps to strengthen anti-defection laws, and pointed out how in Telangana the Congress was presently engaging in unjust practices.

In a speech at Tukkuguda in Hyderabad before the Assembly elections in Telangana, Rahul Gandhi had stated that the membership of defectors (from his party) would be terminated; yet, in another meeting at the same

place after the elections, Rahul was sitting next to the BRS MLAs who had defected to the Congress. KTR remarked that this duplicitous behavior of Rahul Gandhi could win him an Oscar.

KTR urged people to see through the designs of Rahul, who held a copy of the Constitution in his hand while killing its spirit with the other hand. He claimed that with AICC's approval, some more MLAs were planning to defect in Telangana and sought to know how Rahul Gandhi would respond to the situation.

KTR recalled that present Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had once observed "defectors should be stoned to death" and called them "mad dogs". "Who should be stoned now? Who is the mad dog?" KTR asked. He cited a verdict of the Supreme Court on a defection case involving a Congress MLA in Manipur, and demanded 'explanation' for 'BRS MLA purchases in Telangana',

though the Congress claimed to be fighting against BJP's defections nationwide.

Citing an allegation made by Siddaramaiah in Karnataka that each Congress MLA was offered Rs 50 crore by the BJP, KTR sought to know the 'cost of MLA purchases in Telangana'.

KTR said he had been consulting legal and constitutional experts in Delhi for four days seeking justice in party's defection issues. He pointed out that Danam Nagender, who had won on a BRS ticket, later contested for the Secunderabad LS seat on a Congress B-form. He called for immediate action against such blatant defections. He mentioned filing a petition in the High Court and promised to approach the Supreme Court if justice was not served. He said BRS had plans to meet the President and lodge complaints, while also raising the issue in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. He vowed to strengthen anti-defection.

'There is...

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He refuted the claims of arrogance within their party, asserting that the difference between self-confidence and arrogance is often misunderstood and that those unable to compete in development labelled them as arrogant.

Meanwhile, Harish Rao said that defections have not benefited their party as expected, noting that 10 individuals who joined their party were defeated. According to the Supreme Court's verdict, a decision should be made within three months. Harish Rao confidently stated that the BRS government will come to power again in Telangana, as people are witnessing the difference between the current and previous governments. He criticised Revanth Reddy, saying he lacks governance skills and is more focused on politics. Harish Rao also pointed out the lack of cleanliness in villages, leading to the spread of diseases like dengue and malaria.

TG Cong...

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As a result, the BRS is weakening gradually. The BJP is trying to occupy the place of the BRS in Telangana. Now the TDP in the NDA and its alliance with the BJP, they will become a big force in Telangana, Chandrababu feels. He also thinks if now activates the TDP, some BRS leaders who were in the TDP in the past, may return to the party.

Keeping all this in view, Chandrababu decided to concentrate on Telangana politics too. Like in the past in BRS regime, now the TDP may not face any hurdles in Telangana for its activities because BRS is not in power. In fact, the entry of Chandrababu into Telangana politics will

affect the BRS more than the Congress. But the BRS leadership is silent on this and the Congress leaders are reacting more.

TPCC working president Jagga Reddy, former MP Vijaya Shanthi and others reacted. Jagga Reddy said, "Chandrababu has a residence in Hyderabad. In the last 10 years, he used to come and leave. However, this time he initiated talks at the government level with a hidden agenda." Meanwhile, Vijaya Shanthi said, "Chandrababu's secret agenda is the interests of Telugu Desam party rather than the interests of the people of Telugu states." Political observers feel that the reason for reacting more by the Congress leaders may be the relationship.

SC adjourns..

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Andhra Pradesh submitted that it was ready to hand over its projects if Telangana was prepared to do the same. Senior Counsel C.S. Vaidyanathan, representing Telangana, noted that the Krishna River Management Board had decided to refer the matter to the Apex Council, emphasizing that the allocation issue was still pending before the tribunal. He also argued that the maintainability of the writ petition needed to be heard.

The Supreme Court adjourned the matter to August 20, 2024, to hear the issue on prayer i) of IA No. 81629/2021 and consider the maintainability of the writ petition if necessary.

Participants in the Supreme Court included Senior Counsel C.S.

People's problems will not be resolved through 'planned deadlocks'

PNS ■ INDORE

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday said that "planned deadlocks" or shouting of slogans in legislatures can not solve the people's problems, and dialogue between Opposition and ruling parties is the need of the hour.

Birla was interacting with local public representatives at an event at the Indore Municipal Corporation.

"I want the House of the Indore corporation to become a model for other municipalities, municipal councils and panchayats with high-quality dialogues and innovations, as planned deadlocks or coming near the podium of a House



and shouting slogans will not solve the problems of the people," he said.

Problems of the people can be resolved only by the voicing of agreement and disagreement through a dialogue between the ruling parties and Opposition in any House, he added.

Modi govt's only mission is to 'keep youth jobless', says Kharge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Modi government has only one mission and that is to "keep the youth jobless", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged on Tuesday in a scathing attack against the Centre on the issue of unemployment.

The Modi government may be refuting independent economic reports like the one by Citigroup on unemployment but how will it deny government data, Kharge asked in a lengthy post on X citing various reports. "The truth is that Modi government is solely responsible for shattering the dreams of crores of youth in the last 10 years," he alleged.

Kharge said the latest government data punctures the government's claims.

According to NSSO's (National Sample Survey Office) Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises, in the manufacturing sector, 54 lakh jobs were lost in unincorporated units in the seven years between 2015 and 2023, he said. "In 2010-11, 10.8 crore employees were employed in



unincorporated, non-agricultural enterprises across India, which has become 10.96 crore in 2022-23 - that is, a marginal increase of only 16 lakh in 12 years," he said.

Kharge cited the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), to state that the urban unemployment rate is at 6.7 per cent (Q4, FY24).

"Modi government beats the drum of employment generation in the Formal sector by showing EPFO data, but even if we assume that data to be true, it has seen a 10% decline in new jobs in 2023," he said.

A report by IIM Lucknow, after analysing government data, shows that unemployment growth, high unemployment among the educated, low participation of women in the workforce are prevalent in the country, Kharge said.

Govt owes Rs 20,000....

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ishan Reddy questioned the government to tell when it will give Rs 4,000 pension to the aged people.

Kishan Reddy alleged that Revanth Reddy has been looting Telangana by collecting RR tax forcibly. He alleged that the State government brought thousands of crores of loans in the name of schemes and it seems that it is also following the footsteps of the previous KCR regime in regard to bringing loans.

Kishan Reddy alleged that belt shops increased a lot even as Revanth Reddy assured

that he will control the belt shops, after coming to power. Revanth Reddy government has been sucking the blood of the people in the name of belt shops, he slammed.

The Union Minister questioned the State government to tell why it is not giving white ration cards to the poor. There is a need of white ration cards as the poor need them to receive Central schemes. He said that they will mount pressure on the government till it implements the schemes and made it clear that the BJP will take up movements severely under the leadership of Mahila Morcha.

Peace efforts do not...

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"Whether it is war, conflicts, terror attacks, everyone believing in humanity is deeply affected when there is a loss of lives. But even in that, when innocent children are killed, when we see innocent children dying, then it is heart-wrenching and that pain is very horrible," Modi said.

The Indian prime minister's remarks that appeared to be critical of Russia came hours after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy criticised the Indian prime minister for hugging Putin.

In his remarks, Modi also referred to his extensive discussions on the Ukraine conflict with Putin during a private meeting on Monday evening and said dialogue is

the only way to find a solution.

"For a bright future for the future generations, peace is most essential. No solution is possible on the battlefield. Solutions and peace talks are not successful in the midst of bombs, guns and bullets and we have to find the path to peace through dialogue," he said.

The Indian prime minister assured the world community that India is on the side of peace and the conflict must be resolved through talks.

"For restoration of peace, India is ready to cooperate in all possible ways," Modi said.

The prime minister said he was satisfied that Putin had put across his views very openly at the meeting on Monday and that many "interesting ideas" and a "new thinking" had emerged from

it.

In his comments, Putin appreciated Modi's efforts to find ways to resolve the Ukraine crisis.

"I appreciate the attention you pay to the most pressing issues, including your efforts to find ways to resolve the Ukraine crisis, primarily through peaceful means," he said. The 22nd India-Russia annual summit took place a day after Modi arrived in Moscow on a two-day visit that has been watched closely by the West in view of the Ukraine conflict.

"We would urge India, as we do any country when it engages with Russia, to make clear that any resolution to the conflict in Ukraine needs to be one that respects the UN charter, that respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, Ukraine's

Modi gets Russia's..

Continued on Page 1

"Honoured to receive the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle. I dedicate it to the people of India," Modi said in a post on X after receiving the award at a ceremony here.

Established in 1698 by Tsar Peter the Great in honour of Saint Andrew, the first apostle of Jesus and patron saint of Russia, the Order of St Andrew the Apostle is the highest state decoration of Russia

sovereignty," US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said in Washington ahead of Modi-Putin talks.

CM Revanth seeks...

Continued on Page 1

Officials apprised the Chief Minister of the land acquisition issues and other challenges faced in the construction of the highways by NHAI.

He also mentioned the plan to establish a dry port, considering the lack of a coastal area in Telangana, and to build a high-speed expressway connecting to Bandar Port.

In response, the Chief Minister announced a high-level meeting at the Secretariat on Wednesday to resolve these issues.

District collectors from the road construction areas and forest department officials will participate in the meeting to address and resolve the problems. The Chief Minister instructed NHAI officials to start the construction of the Hyderabad-Manne-guda road

immediately. He urged them to coordinate with the contractor to resolve any issues and to commence the expansion work of the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway without delay.

Revanth Reddy highlighted the efforts of the Andhra Pradesh government to get approval for a greenfield highway between Hyderabad and Vijayawada. The Chief Minister requested NHAI officials to support the construction of the Regional Ring Road (RRR), a prestigious project undertaken by the Telangana government. He reminded them of his recent request to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to include the RRR in the Bharat Mala project. He explained that 12 radial roads will be constructed between the Outer Ring Road and the Regional Ring Road, with sev-

eral clusters and satellite townships planned between them.

Revanth Reddy also urged officials to start the construction of the Hyderabad-Kalvakurthi National Highway. He emphasised the strategic importance of this road, which would reduce the distance to Tirupati by 70 kilometers, benefiting travellers from Maharashtra, Karnataka and those going from Hyderabad to Tirupati. The Chief Minister directed his Secretary Shahnawaz Qasim to provide a weekly report on road construction progress in the State.

The NHAI officials raised issues including land transfer for the construction of the Mancherial-Warangaal-Khammam-Vijayawada (NH-163G) corridor, public opinion collection for land acquisition for the Armour-Jagtial-Mancherial (NH-63) corridor.

JNTUH students protest as live rat found in chutney at mess

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With an alarming rates of unhygienic food served in colleges mess or canteens, it's not surprising to witness a shocking food issue where the Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University-Hyderabad (JNTUH) students claimed that a live rat was found in 'chutney' at the college mess located in Sultanpur, through various posts on Twitter on Tuesday. The students criticised the college authorities for not responding or taking action on the issues, especially food quality issues.

Lakshmi Kanth, a student of JNTUH, tweeted, "Rat in the 'Chutney' in the JNTUH, Sultanpur. What hygiene maintenance by the staff members is in a mess."

Praisyl J, another student said, "It's completely unacceptable and unbelievable.



First, we had insects in our food and now we have found a rat, even after an inspection was conducted. This poses a serious health risk and cannot be ignored. Immediate and thorough action is needed to address these safety violations."

Furthermore, the students staged a protest on the varsity premises demanding the authorities to solve students' issues, especially food safety issues, by serving proper and hygienic meals.

Earlier, a similar incident had occurred where the students claimed to have found

insects in food and the officials from the Food Safety department conducted a raid on the JNTUH mess at Sultanpur in June and found many violations. Through a Twitter post, the officials stated that they have found 15 kilograms of maida flour that was found to be infested with black beetles and were discarded. Twenty-five kilograms of fungus-infested vegetables were also identified and discarded, the department reported.

"The storeroom was found to be unhygienic with rodents

and excessive rat excreta. The kitchen, wash area and dining area were in unhygienic conditions. Food handlers were found without head caps, aprons and medical records. The RO water plant was not working. A notice has been issued, and further action will be taken accordingly," the department stated.

Speaking to the Pioneer correspondent, on the rat in chutney issue, Venkateshwara Rao, Register at JNTUH Sultanpur, said, "It's a wrong news as the incident happened after the food is served for the breakfast (post-breakfast time). The mess staff has put the leftover chutney at one corner of the canteen when a rat had fallen into the vessel. Some students who passed the mess saw the rat in the vessel and uploaded it on social media platforms, thereby spreading fake information."

People complain about lack of proper response; 518 applications received

SAMUEL JOSHUA ■ HYDERABAD

People who attended Prajavani on Tuesday complained about the lack of proper response from the officials, claiming in frustration that all politicians are the same regardless of the government. In all, 618 people submitted their applications at Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Praja Bhavan.

Naresh from Kothagudem, who came for updates on his submitted grievance, said he has been running a restaurant for years and applied for an elite bar licence since there is no elite bar in Kothagudem.

He has paid money to the SHO, DPEO and DC, Khammam, who completed their enquiry. When asked, they mentioned that the file is pending with the Principal Secretary. Naresh stated he submitted the application long



back, but there has been no response even after the change in administration. Naresh said he spent Rs 80 lakh for renovating the restaurant for the licence. At a rent of Rs.1,50,000 per month till date, he has lost about Rs 30 lakh over 20 months.

Meanwhile, Nagireddy, a native of Vanaparthi, said that his father registered a land worth Rs 30 lakh. Another

party, Sandeep Reddy, purchased it for just Rs 10 lakh, with the remaining Rs 20 lakh pending, and a case has been going on.

He said an application has been submitted to the officials in Prajavani, but he got no proper response.

Nagireddy said he went on a padayatra with Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka long back, and when he asked to meet him,

the police did not allow him. He also said he wrote for an appointment to meet the Deputy CM, but no response has been received, even after going to the new camp office in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad city police commissionerate.

Nagireddy vent his frustration that he had done a padayatra beside Bhatti Vikramarka, and upon asking for an appointment to discuss his grievance, the police did not even allow him.

Meanwhile, 2BHK applicants attend the Prajavani regularly with little hope.

According to the officials, over 63 applications were related to revenue issues, 89 to the Civil Supplies department, 56 to the Electricity department, 63 to Housing, 36 to the Panchayati Raj Rural Development department and 211 to other departments have been received.

DSC aspirants protest at OU to defer exam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tension continued to prevail on the Osmania University (OU) campus as the police tried to apprehend the aspirants who were staging a protest on Tuesday demanding the Congress government to defer the District Selection Committee examination.

The protest that commenced late on Monday night at Government City College, Nayapul, spread to the Osmania University on Tuesday. Students planned to take out a rally. However, it was dropped as the police detained some protesters in the landscape garden.

A huge number of police personnel have been deployed on the campus with East Zone DCP Giridhar monitoring the situation on the ground.

The OU students lamented that the Congress, which won Assembly elections with the votes of the unemployed youth, now does not care about the students' demands after forming the government. They have been demanding the government to defer the present DSC exam and issue a mega DSC notification.

Moreover, the members of

BRSV burnt the effigy of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy at the varsity premises. BRSV State general secretary Chatari Dasharath said, "They alleged that the regime of police detention is running in Telangana. On the day of the Telangana movement, the model of detention was seen in the governance. If they ask to implement the guarantees given to the unemployed, they are taking away civil liberties and imposing restrictions. What unemployed people ask for is only what you say, not what they want. Surely, legitimate demands of the unemployed must be fulfilled. DSC should be postponed immediately. Also, Group 2 posts should be increased to 2,000. We also want the State government to declare 1:100 for Group 1. Otherwise, we will continue to protest against the government."

One of the DSC aspirants said, "It will be better if the State government postponed the DSC exam that will be scheduled on July 18 and immediately issue a mega DSC notification."

Meanwhile OU authorities have made strict arrangements to prevent any untoward incidents in the varsity.



Free coaching for Group I mains exam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State BC study circle is seeking applications for a free coaching programme for TGPSG Group I mains exam for a period of 75 days.

Director of TG BC Study Circle D Srinivas Reddy said that eligible candidates who have qualified for Group I (Mains) can submit their application online through www.tobcstudycircle.cgo.oco.vin from July 10 to 19. The applicant's parental income should be below Rs 5 lakh per annum.

The coaching programme will be conducted at TG BC Study Circle at Saidabad, Hyderabad and TG BC Study Circle in Khammam from July 22 for a period of 75 days. The government would pay Rs 5,000 as a stipend per month to every candidate during the coaching period.

CSIR-NGRI scientist selected for National Geoscience Award

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dr B Prasanta K Patro, Chief Scientist at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad, was selected for the National Geoscience Award 2023 on Tuesday. The Ministry of Mines recognised his exceptional contribution to Geophysics and Applied Geophysics.

Dr Patro's academic journey began with a B.Sc from Berhampur University, Odisha, followed by an M.Sc from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. He then joined NGRI, where he pursued his PhD from Osmania University, Hyderabad. His research primarily focuses on the resistivity structure of the Earth's crust and upper mantle using the magnetotelluric (MT) method, which leverages electromagnetic induction.

Resistivity, a key physical



parameter in geophysics, is sensitive to the presence of fluids and minerals. His studies have provided significant insights into seismotectonics and resource exploration (hydrocarbon, geothermal). He has applied advanced MT techniques to address various geophysical and exploration challenges. His work has revealed diverse electrical structures in the crust and lithosphere of South and Central India, with a specific emphasis on the Deccan Volcanic Province and

Southern Granulite Terrain, contributing valuable knowledge to understanding their seismotectonics.

Recently, Dr Patro's research has expanded to focus on the tectonics of the Himalaya, employing the MT method. He has also been developing new 3-D inversion techniques to interpret magnetotelluric response functions better.

He has received several notable recognitions, including the Krishnan Gold Medal and Anni Talwani Memorial Prize from the Indian Geophysical Union, a post-doctoral research fellowship from Oregon State University, USA, the Japan Science Promotion Society (JSPS) fellowship in Tokyo and the Boycsast fellowship from the Government of India.

Dr Patro's contributions continue to advance the field of geophysics, making him a distinguished figure in the scientific community.



Hyderabad CP Kothakota Sreenivas Reddy conducts coordination meeting at Salar Jung Museum

Hyd CP holds coordination meeting ahead of Muharram procession

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police Kothkota Sreenivas Reddy on Tuesday held a coordination meeting ahead of Muharram (Ashura) procession on July 17.

Reddy assured that the police department has taken all necessary measures in coordination with the officers of all departments so that the Moharram and Bibi Ka Alam procession could be held

peacefully.

"Adequate parking facilities will be provided to the devotees participating in the Moharam procession and traffic diversion measures will be taken," the Commissioner said during the meeting at the Salar Jung Museum.

The meeting was attended by All India Majlis-e-Ittehad ul Muslimeen MLA and MLCs, along with representatives of the Waqf Board, GHMC, fire and health departments.

African female lion escapes; brought back to enclosure

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An African female lion, treated for hind limbs paralysis, escaped from Nehru Zoological Park on Monday. According to the Curator, the lioness named Sirisha, which is 8 years old, was undergoing treatment in the Summer House area (Off Display area). The escape occurred due to negligence when the assistant animal keeper, Syed Hussain, failed to properly close the enclosure doors while cleaning. Hussain accidentally left a door between enclosures open, allowing Sirisha to exit her night enclosure. Upon seeing Hussain, the lioness injured him with her paws. Hussain alerted other staff members, who quickly closed the main gates as per



Standard Operating Procedures, despite it being a Zoo Holiday.

Within 10 minutes, the veterinary team, who were equipped with tranquilizing equipment and already on rounds for health checks, responded immediately. They tranquilized the Lioness Sirisha, which was near the

crocodile moat, and returned her to the night house within 20 minutes. The assistant animal keeper, Hussain was immediately taken to Osmania General Hospital for treatment and has been discharged.

An inquiry committee appointed by the Zoo Park Director is investigating the incident. A preliminary report by the Deputy Range Officer indicated that Hussain was careless in following safety protocols and monitoring the animals, as there were only limited staff due to the zoo holiday.

The Curator informed, the committee plans to bring in experts to train staff in handling similar situations and to implement measures to prevent future incidents.

SUCCESSFUL SAILING



Lieutenant General Varshney presenting the gold trophy to Ritika Dangi and Silver trophy to Mahaprabhu at the concluding ceremony of the 38th Hyderabad Sailing Week, a landmark event in India's sailing calendar. The event was held from July 1 to 7 and was jointly organised by the EME Sailing Association, Laser Class Association of India and Secunderabad Sailing Club.

Applications open for Intinta Innovator 2024

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Applications opened for the 6th edition of Telangana State Innovation Centre's flagship programme, Intinta Innovator 2024. Aimed at empowering rural innovators, the programme plays a key role in creating a nurturing environment for innovation across Telangana. Additionally, the programme aims to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the State.

The Telangana State Innovation Centre announced that it is currently accepting applications for the 2024 edition of the Intinta Innovator Programme.

Innovators from all walks of life, especially those living in rural Telangana, are encouraged to submit their ideas and projects. This year's programme is going to be the most comprehensive yet,

reaching a wider audience and providing a strong support system for budding newcomers.

Among all the innovations this year, with an award ceremony on August 15 for all the great innovations.

The programme aims to cover all 33 districts, engage with more than 3,000 gram panchayats and connect with over 1 crore rural people.

New to this year's programme is the appointment of a dedicated team of 33 young professionals - one per district - as Innovation Mithras. This team will serve as on-ground coordinators for three months (July-September 2024), engaging with stakeholders, including district officials, NGOs, civil society organisations, and rural people.

Their aim is to highlight the importance of innovation in even the most remote villages of Telangana.

Man held for job fraud involving Rs 4.71 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyber Crime Police on July 8 arrested a man accused of job fraud worth Rs 4.71 lakh.

The complainant said that the fraudsters approached him on the pretext of providing a job at the Jezan University in Saudi Arabia and tricked him into transferring the amount to the bank accounts provided by the accused. The accused was identified as Nishanth Kumar Rai (31), a resident of Delhi. Based on the complaint, a case was registered against Rai under Sections 66(C), (D) ITA Act-2008 and 419, 420of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS).

Rai planned to cheat job seekers on the pretext of providing a job in the Arab countries. He contacted victims from a call centre in Noida, and four telecallers were hired to obtain fake SIM cards and bank accounts.

TG Commerce PGs meet on July 19, 20

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Department of Commerce at Osmania University, Hyderabad on Tuesday announced that it will organise the Telangana Commerce Post-Graduates Meet, Vanija 2024 on July 19 and 20 at its premises.

The event will see enthusiastic participation from M.Com students from across various universities in Telangana, including those from constituent and affiliated colleges. It aims to uncover and celebrate the hidden talent among the post-graduate students of commerce by providing them with a platform to showcase their skills in a range of formal and informal events.

The meet will feature a variety of events designed to challenge and inspire the participants, encouraging them to push their boundaries and excel in their chosen fields.

This two-day event promises to be a landmark occasion, fostering a spirit of camaraderie and healthy competition among the commerce students of Telangana.

A poster detailing the various individual and group events was unveiled by Registrar of Osmania University, Prof. P Laxminarayana.

The ceremony was attended by OSD to VC Prof. B Reddiya Naik, Dean of the Faculty of Commerce Prof. M Gangadhar, Head of the Department of Commerce Prof. D Chennappa, Chairman of the Board of Studies Prof. Krishna Chaitanya, Convener of the Programme Prof. I Sekhar, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences and others.

For further details and queries, interested parties can reach out via email at dcou-vanijya2024@gmail.com.

7,809 BUILDING PERMITS GIVEN SINCE CONG CAME TO POWER

GHMC, HMDA real estate registrations generate Rs 4,670 crore since Dec '23

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The real estate market in Greater Hyderabad is experiencing a significant upswing, with property registrations generating Rs 4,670.52 crore in revenue from December 2023 to the end of June 2024.

This marks an increase from the Rs 4,429.23 crore recorded in the previous seven months, highlighting the robust growth in the sector. The rise in revenue is attributed to a surge in property registrations, new building constructions and layout approvals.

Comparing the same period last year (December 2022 to June 2023), there is an increase of Rs 270.86 crore in revenue. The total number of registrations in the past seven months was 2,18,160, up from 1,93,962 in the same period last year,



reflecting a 12.5% increase.

This year, 54,111 flat registrations have been recorded so far, compared to 50,535 flats in the same period last year, marking a 7% growth. From December 7 to June 30, 18,077 building permit applications were approved in the GHMC and HMDA jurisdictions, compared to 17,911 permits issued from May to December 6 last year. In the Greater Hyderabad Municipal

Corporation area alone, 7,809 building construction permits were approved in the past seven months, representing a 13.17% increase compared to the previous seven months.

Since the formation of the new government, the number of registrations and revenue from document registrations in the HMDA region has increased, along with a noticeable rise in the number of new building permits issued.

Despite a three-month slowdown in economic transactions due to the election code, the real estate sector has shown remarkable recovery compared to the previous year.

This resurgence is driven by several key infrastructure projects initiated by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, including the prestigious Musi River Front Development Project, Metro Rail expansion and the construction of two elevated corridors connecting Secunderabad to national highways, which are set to transform the city's landscape. The government's focus on expanding the HMDA jurisdiction up to the Regional Ring Road and the ongoing construction of the Regional Ring Road have also created a favourable environment for the real estate sector.

ACB nabs panchayat secretary in Jangaon

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday caught panchayat secretary Pagide Shivaji in Kanchanapalli village panchayat of Jangaon district while taking a bribe of Rs 20,000 for an official favour.

On Tuesday the ACB mentioned that the accused accepted the bribe amount from the complainant Gavani Nageshwar Rao to prepare and resubmit the fuel and other expenses bills incurred by the complainant on behalf of Kanchanapalli village panchayat which were rejected by the STO, Ghanpur.

The bribe amount of Rs 20,000 was recovered from the accused officer. The right hand fingers of the accused and the right side front pocket yielded positive results in the chemical test. Therefore, the accused was arrested and produced before the III Additional Sessions Judge for SPE & ACB Cases, Warangal. The case is under investigation.

GHMC demolishes illegal constructions at Serilingampally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has demolished illegal constructions on Tuesday at Serilingampally zone, Madhapur division in Ayyappa Society.

Under the supervision of the Zonal Town Planning Officers, as per the Commissioner's orders, the illegal structures were completely demolished in morning hours with bulldozers. Officials have made it clear that any construction without permits will result in demolition. Some structures are being demolished when they are in initial stages. From



the last seven days the demolition drive is going on in Ayyappa Society. The officials stopped the

illegal constructions at an open plot in Survey of India land in Khanamet and other constructions in Ayyappa Society.

Even chameleon will be ashamed of CM, says Harish

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Minister and MLA T Harish has sharply criticised Chief Minister Revanth Reddy over his comments regarding the postponement of examinations, calling them immature.

Harish pointed out that Revanth seems to have forgotten his past stance on such issues. "Have you forgotten the past? When candidates asked for the postponement of Group 2 and TET exams, didn't you support them? Back then, you demanded that the government take a positive decision. Why aren't you thinking positively now?" Harish questioned.

He accused Revanth of having one stance while in opposition and another after coming to power. "Even a chameleon would be ashamed of your behavior," he remarked. Harish alleged that Revanth has been playing politics with the hopes and lives of students and the unemployed.

"After coming to power, you have sidelined their aspirations and left them stranded," he said. Harish also criticised the CM for his harsh words against those demanding the postponement of DSC exams. "It is unfortunate for a person of the Chief Minister's stature to make such derogatory comments about candidates and the unemployed," he added.

He further accused Revanth of stirring up students for the sake of political strength and questioned if Congress leaders also requested postponements for political gains in the past. "While candidates fight day and night, instead of showing sympathy, you are making political criticisms," Harish said, accusing Revanth of trying to evade responsibility by blaming others and playing with the lives of the unemployed. "The public is observing your behavior and your two-faced approach. They will definitely teach you a lesson," Harish concluded.

SOT Police break up mujra party; arrest 4 girls, 12 youth

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

In a deepening crackdown, the Special Operations Team (SOT) Police busted a *mujra* party at a farmhouse in Moinabad. During the raid,



Farmhouse where mujra party took place on Monday night at Moinabad in Rangareddy district

four girls and twelve youths were arrested. The investigation revealed that the girls

had been brought from Delhi specifically for the party. The police apprehended all involved while they were allegedly engaged in indecent activities.

Acting on a tip-off, the SOT

to find that those taking part in the party had been performing dance almost naked. All those arrested were handed over to Moinabad police for further investigation.

This operation is part of a broader effort by the police to crack down on rave parties and prostitution. It is part of the drive to curb drug menace.

The police intensified crackdown on drugs following Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasizing the need to eradicate drugs menace in the State.

Recently, there has been an uptick in drug usage among youths in city's pubs, with a notable presence of students and software professionals. Many citizens believe the government should intensify its focus on combating the spread of ganja, drugs, and illicit parties.



Congress MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud addressing the media along with Youth Congress leaders at Gandhi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Tuesday

Telangana Youth Congress election schedule announced

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Congress leaders on Tuesday released the Youth Congress election schedule as the tenure of the present body came to an July 9.

The leaders, TPCC working president Mahesh Kumar Goud, Bhongir MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, Youth Congress Telangana in-charge Surabhi Dwivedi, outgoing Youth Congress Telangana president Shivsena Reddy, who now becomes Sports Authority of Telangana State (SATS) chairman, said that he is tendering resignation

to his position. He said that he is requesting the party national leadership to give opportunities to the leaders who worked hard. He said that the Youth Congress strived to defeat the BRS government. He revealed that the previous BRS government filed cases against 400 Youth Congress leaders and the are forced to go from one court to another.

TPCC working president and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud said that Youth Congress worked for the success of the Congress.

As part of Youth Congress election schedule, the membership drive would be held from August 5 to September 5 and Telangana would be divided as 5 zones for the purpose of election. It may be recalled that those who make the highest membership become the Youth Congress president.

Speaking on the occasion, outgoing Youth Congress Telangana president Shivsena Reddy, who now becomes Sports Authority of Telangana State (SATS) chairman, said that he is tendering resignation

NAIDU'S STATEMENT OF 'RESTORING TDP GLORY IN TELANGANA'

Cong, BRS unnerved?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Andhra Pradesh Chief N Chandrababu Naidu's statement at a meeting at NTR Trust Bhavan on July 7 that he would restore the past glory of TDP seems to have unnerved the Congress and BRS leaders.

The BRS leaders launched a scathing attack against Naidu holding deliberations on the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. The BRS social media wing tried to raise fears over the talks between two Telugu states Chief Ministers, Chandrababu Naidu and Revanth Reddy.

Later, Congress leaders entered the scene and made allegations against Naidu almost in the same manner. TPCC senior vice-president G Niranjan, on Tuesday, found faults with their own Congress party government commenting that "the people of Telangana are not happy with the welcome and honour given to Naidu in Hyderabad".

Niranjan also said that 'If the Telugu people of Telangana and Andhra states are to develop with cooperation, Naidu should stop taking interest in Telangana politics. TDP should be abolished

in Telangana state and remain confined to the Andhra region. The overambitious Naidu declared while speaking at NTR Bhavan that he would take an interest in strengthening the TDP in Telangana'.

A day before Niranjan's criticism, TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy alleged that the BJP was using Naidu to weaken the Congress in Telangana state.

The way both the ruling Congress party and main opposition party BRS are targeting Naidu reflects that they are afraid of his entry into Telangana forgetting the fact that any political party cannot sustain without the support of the people.

A political analyst said on condition of anonymity, "It's a democratic country and everyone has the right to do politics anywhere across the nation as was done by the former Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao in Maharashtra state. If people like Naidu, then TDP will survive in Telangana if not it is not possible.

I don't understand why the BRS and Congress leaders are objecting to the entry of Naidu.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Forum For Good Governance (FGG) said that Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has become unmanageable and became an epicenter for corruption. On Tuesday, the FGG wrote an open letter to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy to bring a single act covering GHMC, municipal corporations and Municipalities. A special Act was made for GHMC.

In the letter, the FGG mentioned that apart from GHMC, there are 13 other Corporations and 129 Municipalities in the State. There are two Acts, one for GHMC and other act for other Corporations and Municipalities.

The FGG said that in the present circumstances, the 1955 GHMC Act is not able to meet the requirements of the people of Hyderabad. A number of amendments were made to the 1955 (MCH) Act. On the

other hand, the Telangana Municipalities Act covers all the 12 Corporations and 129 Municipalities.

"As the GHMC has a separate Act, it is a separate unit for appointment of staff, as such once a person is recruited by GHMC and that person will work in GHMC jurisdiction and retire there only. After the formation of Telangana State corruption has increased in the GHMC. It is reported in a section of the press that GHMC

properties let out to private individuals are not properly accounted for leading to an annual loss of Rs 100 crores in the shape of rents," the FGG said in an open letter.

The FGG said that most of the officials in GHMC are in collusion with politicians and closing their eyes for all the irregularities that are taking place. Though unauthorized constructions are mushrooming no official of GHMC is punished for dereliction of duty.

"Former Chief Minister on one occasion talking about corruption in GHMC stated that "If I start taking action on corrupt officials in GHMC non-will he left". The statement of the former Chief Minister is an indicator of the level of corruption in GHMC" FGG said.

The FGG requested the government to bring a single act for all municipalities and corporations including GHMC for people to get corruption free civic services.

Ensure continuous power to consumers, says Ronald Rose

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

State Government Energy Department Secretary Ronald Ross has directed the officials of the Southern Telangana Electricity Distribution Company to ensure continuous quality power supply and to remain accessible to consumers, promptly addressing their complaints.

In a meeting held at the TGSPDCL headquarters, Ronald Rose, along with CMD Musharraf Farooqi and the company's chief engineers and superintending engineers, discussed the operational challenges and

goals. Addressing the officials, the Secretary emphasised the importance of uninterrupted power supply, instructing them to work diligently and restore any disruptions on a war-footing.

He also directed the chief engineers and superintending engineers to regularly visit the field, meet with local public representatives and consumers, and collect complaints, suggestions, and feedback. He stressed the need for immediate action on any complaints and advised every employee to treat consumers with respect and courtesy.

Lizard found in breakfast of students in Telangana

17 girls students took ill after having breakfast at the hostel attached to Model School at Ramayampet in Medak district

PNS ■ MEDAK

A lizard was allegedly found in the breakfast served to students of a girls' hostel attached to a government school in Medak district of Telangana on Tuesday, an official said.

As many as 17 students who had eaten the breakfast were taken to a primary health centre in Ramayampet mandal and two students among them who had stomach pain were shifted to Area Hospital in Medak. The remaining 15 students were discharged from the health centre, they said.

A cook and an assistant cook were terminated for alleged negligence after a "lizard was found" in the breakfast while the caretaker and the



Girl students of TG Model School being treated at Area Hospital in Medak on Tuesday

Special Officer of Model School Girls' Hostel were served show cause notices, Medak District Educational Officer (DEO) said. The DEO dismissed the reports that appeared in a section of the media stating that the students had fallen ill due to food poisoning.

The DEO, who enquired into the issue, in a report submitted to higher officials

including the District Collector said that when upma was served to the students, one of the students noticed a "lizard" in the breakfast.

Immediately, the caretaker instructed all the students to stop eating and the caretaker then took 17 students who had eaten the dish to the nearby Primary Health Centre in Ramayampet. Later, 70 students were also taken to the health centre for checkup.

The doctor examined all the students and they were kept under observation for six hours to check for symptoms like vomiting, loose motions and high fever which would indicate food poisoning. However, no such symptoms were

observed, the report said.

"Except two students who were suffering with stomach pain, all the remaining 15 students were discharged from the hospital. Both the students have been shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital in Medak," the DEO said in the report.

Meanwhile, a video purportedly showing a rat scurrying through a container of food cooked at the hostel canteen of a state-run Engineering College in Sangareddy district went viral on social media on Tuesday. A Sangareddy District official told media that after some students posted the video, they visited the institute for inspection and were verifying the facts.

GHMC okays Rs 41.5 cr for deployment of monsoon teams

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In order to deal with emergency situations due to waterlogging and inundation in low-lying areas during monsoon season, GHMC deploys emergency teams in the city for which the GHMC sanctioned Rs 41.47 crore. In all, 154 monsoon emergency teams and 238 static labour teams would be deployed in the GHMC.

The GHMC said that a total of 168 dewatering pumpsets are also available in various circles of GHMC for pumping out stagnated water. In addition, the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Programme (CRMP) agencies also deployed 29 monsoon emergency teams to attend to water stagnation on CRMP roads during the monsoon season.

These monsoon emergency teams work round-the-clock till October 31.

Mobile and mini mobile emergency teams consist of four labourers per team on shift basis with a vehicle along with equipment such as crowbars, spades and dewatering pumpsets and safety items.

Static labour teams comprise one or two labourers stationed near the major water stagnation points and catchpits to immediately resolve the stagnation by clearing the floating material blocking the holes of catchpits and gratings. "Instant repair teams (IRTs) will be available from November 1 to repair potholes and patchworks. However, these teams will clear water stagnations during unseasonal rains."

Strong message

PM Modi's Russia visit signals India's intent to preserve its strategic autonomy and pursue its national interest

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in Moscow for a two-day state visit. The visit comes after a long gap as the last time PM Modi visited Russia was in 2019. Since then, a lot has happened in the international arena and India and Russia have emerged as reliable friends. This visit holds profound implications for India-Russia relations, and it sends nuanced messages to both China and the West. India and Russia share a long-standing relationship rooted in historical, strategic, and economic cooperation. This visit underscores India's commitment to maintaining and strengthening these traditional ties. The partnership between the two nations spans various sectors, including defence, energy, space, and nuclear technology. By reaffirming these bonds, PM Modi signals India's intent to preserve its strategic autonomy and resist external pressures to align exclusively with any single global power bloc. India's relationship with China has been marked by border tensions. PM Modi's visit to Russia is a strategic manoeuvre in this delicate



balance. Russia and China have their own close ties. However, India's engagement with Russia serves to remind China that India has strong partnerships beyond its immediate neighbourhood. PM Modi was welcomed at the airport by Russia's First Deputy Prime Minister, Denis Manturov, a higher-ranking official than the Deputy Prime Minister who greeted Chinese President Xi Jinping on his recent visit. This underscores the significant importance Russia places on its relationship with India and is in contrast with Xi Jinping's welcome, where the lower-ranking Deputy Prime Minister received him. On the other hand, India's relationship with Western powers, particularly the United States, has grown significantly in recent years. However, by visiting Russia, PM Modi communicates India's desire to maintain an independent foreign policy. This visit is a reminder that India will not be swayed into a singular alignment with Western interests. It underscores India's multipolar approach to international relations, where it seeks to engage with all major powers based on mutual interests and benefits. To put things in perspective Russia happens to be the major supplier of arms to India and India made no bones about buying Russian oil despite western sanctions. One of the critical aspects of PM Modi's visit is the focus on economic and energy cooperation. Russia is a significant supplier of energy resources, including oil and natural gas. Strengthening this energy partnership helps India secure its energy future while diversifying its sources. Defence cooperation has been a cornerstone of India-Russia relations. PM Modi's visit likely includes discussions on furthering defence ties and technology transfers. Furthermore, India has challenges in its neighbourhood and by leveraging its friendship with Russia, it can always have an edge. Besides, Russian support would come handy in India's bid for a permanent seat at the United Nations. India's engagement with Russia is vital for world peace and fostering a multipolar world which is the best guarantee for world peace.

PICTALK



NDRF personnel rescue trapped people from the flooded areas in Tanakpur

Babas thrive on social equality deficit



SIDHARTH MISHRA

The Hathras incident points to a deeper societal neglect of marginalised communities, offering a fertile ground for dubious leaders to emerge as champions of social reform

The unfortunate incident in Hathras is finding a very despicable narrative in social media. Nobody seems to be mourning the death of 120-odd people belonging mostly to the Dalit community but contesting the fact that a godman had emerged from the Jatav community. We political analysts talk of undercurrents in polls and leave it unexplained.

The emergence of a Baba like Surajpal Singh explains it. In times when the most powerful of the political leaders with the help of all the money and machinery at their disposal find it difficult to get 25000 people to attend a rally, there must be something in Surajpal Singh's modus operandi which saw a gathering of 250000 people. When the BJP blames the Hindu voters for deserting it, particularly in Uttar Pradesh during the last parliamentary elections, its answer lies in the Hathras incident. The opposition leaders led by Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav have blamed the administration for the tragedy and in a way covertly if not overtly taken a stand in defence of the Baba.

It's not only about a Surajpal from the Jatav community but several others like Rampal from the Jat community in Haryana, who have challenged the upper caste monopoly on Hindu spiritual discourse. They have their methods that challenge the Puritan practises but they are applauded by their followers for it. The police report filed in the matter states that organisers "underreported the number of expected attendees, did not cooperate in managing traffic, and concealed evidence after the stampede, which occurred when people stopped to collect soil from the path of the baba's vehicle." The FIR indicated that the police and administration did everything possible with available resources. The FIR ironically also shows that how the administration, not just district but pan-India, has been completely unaware of the swelling undercurrent. When such a large gathering of people clamber to clutch dust particles



kicked up by a departing godman's car, it reflects that the government and society have failed to engage with the poor and the deprived. Poverty is not as an economist would define it but that of ignorance and inequality. This provides just the fertile ground for a Baba from the community to emerge as a 'social reformer'. The social reform programmes of the government, be it the 'sarvodaya' of the yore or the 'antodaya' of the current times, have focussed on cash transfer and not social equity transfer. This explains the financial sinews of Surajpal and others like him. The financially prosperous in the community donate liberally as he talks of ending social discrimination. In his discourses Surajpal talks of equality and empowerment. He advocates education and even facilitates the admission of children from his community into upmarket schools. He routinely condemns caste-based discrimination and preaches universal brotherhood. What got his following soar was that during the Covid-19 pandemic, he is reported to have facilitated food and medicine distribution and other such succour to the poor from the community. During the second wave of the pandemic, in

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THE SOCIAL REFORM PROGRAMMES OF THE GOVERNMENT, BE IT THE 'SARVODAYA' OF THE YORE OR THE 'ANTODAYA' OF THE CURRENT TIMES, HAVE FOCUSED ON CASH TRANSFER AND NOT SOCIAL EQUITY TRANSFER. THIS EXPLAINS THE FINANCIAL SINEWS OF SURAJPAL AND OTHERS LIKE HIM

May 2021, when contagion was at its peak, Surajpal organised a camp in Farrukhabad. The district administration had allowed the presence of 50 people but several thousand attended. Such 'social movements' are not alone in western Uttar Pradesh where Surajpal operates. People flock to 'Deras' of different hues, especially in the region of Haryana-Punjab. Though all these Deras have followers among every caste, most followers are Dalits and backward caste people, who are often economically weaker too. Punjab has been witness to the emergence of a large number of Deras due to prevailing inequality in the social and economic order and the marginal position of the Dalits in society. According to rough estimates given by Sikh scholars, there are more than 9,000 Sikh and non-Sikh Deras in 12,000 villages in Punjab. Of these, there are about 300 major Deras across Punjab and the neighbouring Haryana. Out of these almost a dozen have over one lakh devotees each. Going by these standards Surajpal's Ashram as if not more at least as strong a numerical strength as the major Deras of Punjab like Radha Soami (Beas), Dera Sacha Sauda (Sirsa),

Nirankari, Namdhari, Diya Jyoti Jagran Sansthan (Nurmahal), Dera Sant Bhanirwala (Ropar), and Dera Sach Khand (Ballan). As of now, a judicial commission has been set up to enquire into the matter. The commission would blame Surajpal, his devotees and the administration for the tragedy. The state would also for some time act with full might carrying out arrests. Once the public outcry dies down, the media would withdraw its cameras and post it at another news event. The matter under judicial probe too will hit a dead end. Probably nobody wants to answer why Babas like Surajpal get a tailor-made pitch to mould public emotion. Through their clout they come to command political influence and every political party wants them on their side. No wonder Congress and Samajwadi Party are backing Surajpal Singh in the same way as the BJP government of Haryana gave liberal furloughs to murder convict Ram Rahim Singh of Dera Sacha Sauda. The wrath of Babas could be politically harmful. (The writer is the author and president of the Centre for Reforms, Development & Justice; views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REEVALUATE CANDIDACY CRITERIA

Madam — The radical Sikh preacher and chief of 'Waris Punjab De', Amritpal Singh, who is imprisoned in Assam's Dibrugarh district under the National Security Act, and Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, who is in Delhi's Tihar jail for a terror funding case under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, were granted parole to take their oaths as members of the Lok Sabha on July 5. This event took place amid heavy security in and around the Parliament complex. People are wondering how, under our constitution, both individuals were allowed to run for MP and won convincingly as independents. This reflects on the electorate's choices, not the country's policies. Moreover, while both Amritpal (31) and Rashid (56) took their oaths to uphold the Constitution, they have no faith in it. I believe it is high time our Parliament revisited the criteria for election candidates. Anyone facing charges of terrorism or anti-national activities should not be allowed to contest elections, regardless of their popularity. Any individual who does not respect India's integrity and sovereignty should be ineligible to file a nomination. Instead, an affidavit affirming faith in the Constitution and National Integrity should be a prerequisite for candidates. **Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee** | Faridabad

CELEBRATING TRUE HEROES

Madam — At a recent event in Kozhikode, Kerala, Union Minister Suresh Gopi referred to the cleaning staff as "superheroes" for their efforts in maintaining the cleanliness of the venue. He also invited them to sit in seats reserved for special guests, which they did hesitantly. Kudos to the minister for recognizing and honoring the work of a group of workers who are often overlooked. We hope this generous gesture will inspire more such acts of appreciation for those who typically remain on

Mumbai battles monsoon rains



Mumbai, India's financial capital, has come to a standstill as heavy rain lashes the city, causing widespread flooding and disruption. The city's residents are struggling to cope with the torrential downpour, which has led to waterlogging in many areas, particularly low-lying regions like Sion,

Andheri, and Kurla. The rain has also caused significant damage to property and infrastructure, with reports of wall collapses and tree falls disrupting daily life. The city's drainage system has been overwhelmed, leaving many areas submerged in water and hindering emergency services. The heavy rain has also affected the city's transportation systems, with flights and trains delayed or cancelled, and major roads clogged with traffic. Schools and offices have been forced to shut down, and the authorities are working hard to mitigate the situation. However, the city's residents are bracing themselves for another day of heavy rain and flooding, as the weather forecast predicts more rainfall in the coming days. The situation has sparked discussions on the need for improved urban planning and infrastructure to handle such extreme weather events.

Purva Pandya | Ujjain

the margins of social functions. Even Gandhiji once said, "Sanitation is more important than Independence."

Avinash Godbole | Dewas

AGENDA OF PM'S RUSSIA VISIT

Madam — As Prime Minister Narendra Modi traveled to Russia on Monday, July 8, there was anticipation about whether he would address the issue of Indian nationals fighting for the Russian army in the conflict zone and ensure their safe return to India as soon as possible. The prime minister will hold summit talks with President Vladimir Putin amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine during this visit, which is his first trip to Russia since 2019 and the first since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. India has a longstanding relationship with Russia, initially with the USSR, thanks to the diplomatic and strategic initiatives of various Congress governments over the decades. More recently, during his ten years as Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh met with Russian Presidents Vladimir Putin and Dmitry

Medvedev 16 times, either in India or Russia. In comparison, this is only Mr. Modi's 11th meeting with President Putin after a decade in office. Between FY14 and FY23, India's exports to Russia stagnated, dropping from USD 3.17 billion to USD 3.14 billion, while imports surged dramatically from USD 6.34 billion to USD 46.21 billion. Such an imbalanced trade relationship is unsustainable in the long term and has harmful effects on our domestic industry. According to the Indian Embassy in Moscow, at least 50 Indian nationals have joined the Russian army. Many others have been "duped" into fighting in a war where they have no stake, aside from a chance to escape the poverty and unemployment crisis perpetuated by the current administration. Will the prime minister address the plight of these youth and ensure their safe return to India as soon as possible?

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

The Imperative of upskilling strategies in modern business



ANISH SRIKRISHNA

By investing in learning and development initiatives, organisations not only equip their workforce with essential skills but also drive sustainable growth

In today's fast-evolving business environment, the ability to adapt and thrive through continuous learning has become indispensable for sustained success. To remain competitive amidst technological advancements, economic shifts, and geopolitical changes, businesses must adopt proactive upskilling strategies. These strategies empower organizations to innovate and stay resilient, ensuring readiness to tackle uncertainty and adapt to evolving market demands. A crucial aspect of fostering organizational success lies in developing a robust upskilling plan tailored to the needs of C-suite executives. This comprehensive approach focuses not only on enhancing technical competencies but also on cultivating strategic thinking and leadership abilities. CEOs play a pivotal role in this endeavor by investing in tailored Learning and Development (L&D) programs. These initiatives aim to refine communication skills, enhance adaptability, manage crises effectively, and unleash influential leadership potential. Strategic thinking involves



synthesising information from diverse sources and cultivating collaborative relationships with stakeholders. These competencies are pivotal for making informed decisions and driving organizational progress. Embracing technology-centric strategies that incorporate cutting-edge skills such as Generative AI, Machine Learning, Data Analytics, and Cybersecurity is essential for navigating complexities and maintaining market competitiveness. To effectively implement upskilling initiatives, organizations must first identify skill gaps within their workforce through regular assessments and performance reviews. Tailoring training programs to address these specific needs is key. Technology plays a crucial role in modern L&D, with e-learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and mobile appli-

cations offering flexible and accessible training options. Research underscores the importance of fostering a culture of continuous learning. Encouraging cross-functional experience is another pivotal element of a robust development plan. Leaders benefit from rotating through various roles and departments, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the organization and fostering better decision-making. Building strong internal and external relationships is crucial, enabling effective collaboration and leveraging partnerships for innovation and growth. The 2024 Business Outlook Report highlights that a significant majority of small and medium-sized enterprises have either implemented or plan to implement upskilling strategies. Failure to do so risks falling behind in a competitive landscape. McKinsey & Company supports this, citing that investment in employee development enhances engagement and retention. AI-powered Human Capital Management (HCM) systems are transforming how

organizations manage skills gaps. These systems analyze workforce data to identify current competencies and predict future skill requirements, recommending personalized development opportunities. Tracking metrics such as employee engagement, course completion rates, and skill acquisition is crucial for refining L&D strategies aligned with business objectives. Creating a culture that values learning is pivotal for upskilling success. Leaders must champion continuous development by setting an example, fostering an environment where learning is encouraged and rewarded. This involves integrating development goals into performance reviews, providing incentives for learning activities, and ensuring visible support from CEOs and senior leaders. Such a culture not only keeps businesses abreast of industry changes but also fosters sustainable growth and innovation, securing a competitive edge in the market. (The writer is CEO, TimesPro; views are personal)

FIRST COLUMN

DISCOVERING TRUE STRENGTH


The soul's intrinsic qualities of peace, love, and wisdom give us true strength and power



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Mahatma Gandhi has defined power in 2 forms, one is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. According to him power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment. However, the world that we live in today has a different scenario wherein power spells authority, strength, capability and superiority. If we walk down history lane, we can see that all good and bad endeavours by individuals or groups in the past were directed at garnering power. Be it world wars, political uprisings, revolutions, religious propaganda, scientific research, technological innovations, economic strategies, or ethnic-cultural dominance, almost everything was aimed at being powerful or being in the seat of power. So what is it about power that makes most of us go crazy after it? Well!! The simple reply to this would be .. Who doesn't want to be powerful & experience the adrenaline rush? Of course, all of us just love that moment of power that allows us to do what we want to do on our terms.

Power has different meanings for different people, but the most common association of power is with money and that is why the rich and the powerful people in society always make headlines due to their high net worth. Another common imagery of power goes with political leaders who are seen as synonymous with power. In the 21st century, science and technology combined with marketing has also become another means of power along with media which has also emerged as a highly influential medium of power. It won't be exaggerating to say that media is one such source that affects all other powers as it can help to highlight downplay or even destroy the power value of all the above-mentioned powers. However in reality these are all outer forms or sources of power and since they are based on outer reality they tend to deplete or change and perish with time also they are unstable, unreliable and often disempowering. If that is so then what is the True source of power? The majority of us are unaware of the reality that True power is rooted in human consciousness i.e. in the soul. Yes!! But it's unfortunate that most of us, in our quest for power, totally forget that money or status



is the only means from which temporary power can be derived. Such power is also limited in its outreach, value or benefit. The sense of 'I' and 'mine' turns such power into a limitation and it has its influence for a limited period on a limited area of life to a limited degree. On the other hand, true power will be unlimited, benevolent and universal in its impact & hence it will automatically empower others. Therefore to reclaim our real power we need to first understand who we are and live life from a spiritual perspective because when the spirit is awake and aware it is indomitable. When we become aware of how powerful we are from within, we become free from all kinds of desires. Remember! A person who can control his thoughts and emotions and live by the highest values of peace, love, truth and joy under all circumstances is truly powerful. Such a person can influence and bring about change not only in his life but also in others' lives and the world around him. As children of the Supreme, every human being is a soul inherent with core values like peace, joy, love, purity, wisdom, power and bliss. Due to gross ignorance about these very values, we lose our true power and start searching for it in the wrong sources. That is why today the whole human race has become weak and impure. But! Now the Supreme Source of Power himself is guiding us all to regain our lost power and sovereignty by imparting knowledge of spirit (soul) through which we would become the rulers of our inner kingdom. So what are we waiting for? Let's just begin the journey to experience real power by connecting to our true selves and the Supreme Source.

(The writer is a spiritual educator and a popular columnist; views are personal)

Leadership shifts in the UK and Iran signal a new era of moderate politics

The recent election results in the UK and Iran reflect a broader global trend of voters favouring leaders who advocate for inclusivity and moderation

There has been a change of leadership in both the United Kingdom and Iran. In the UK, Rishi Sunak of the Conservative Party has been succeeded by Keir Starmer of the Labour Party. In Iran, the people have elected Masoud Pezeshkian, a reformist and relatively liberal candidate, as their new President. The Iranian presidential election was necessitated by the death of the former President, Ebrahim Raisi, in a helicopter crash in May. These shifts, one in Europe and the other in Asia, represent a change in the mindset of people across continents. Both countries, with their rich traditions and civilizations, have seen their electorates reject hardliners in



AKHILESH SUMAN

favor of moderate leaders and parties. This highlights how, when given the choice, people make thoughtful decisions on a large scale, guided by the current needs rather than the incessant rhetoric of hardliners invoking civilization and nationalism. The Labour Party in Britain had been out of power for the last 14 years. Many predicted the party's demise and

Airfares to surge amidst aircraft shortage

Indian air travelers are bracing for a steep hike in ticket prices as India is feeling the repercussions of a significant disruption in Boeing's production schedule

BOEING REACHED A \$2.5 BILLION SETTLEMENT FOR THE 2018 AND 2019 ETHIOPIAN CRASHES WITH THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT IN JANUARY 2021 TO AVOID PROSECUTION ON A SINGLE CHARGE OF FRAUD — MISLEADING FEDERAL REGULATORS WHO APPROVED THE PLANE



Airfares to shoot up sharply as airlines in India, the third largest in the world, face a shortage of aircraft. The airlines are to suffer as the US Boeing is in crisis for its Starliner space vehicle leakage and two fatal crashes defrauding the US government. Boeing has lost more than \$32 billion since 2019. Fewer companies could lose that kind of money and not be facing bankruptcy. Boeing may face three years of probation, independent safety audits and a penalty of \$ 487.3 million in penalty. It has put its new aircraft manufacturing off schedule causing delivery of far fewer planes to airlines in India. It would hamper the growth of the industry here and limit the capability to offer seats to fliers. It would result in severe seat shortages and spiralling fares. The US Justice Department might charge Boeing with fraud if it does not plead guilty to two deadly Max crashes in 2018 and 2019 killing 346 people. The case stems from the department's determination that Boeing violated an agreement that was intended to resolve a 2021 charge of conspiracy to defraud the US government. Boeing is charged with misleading regulators who approved the 737 Max and set pilot-training requirements to fly the plane. The company blamed two relatively low-level employees for the fraud. Boeing reached a \$2.5 billion settlement for the 2018 and 2019 Ethiopian crashes with the Justice Department in January 2021 to avoid prosecution on a single charge of fraud — misleading federal regulators who approved the plane. Boeing blamed the deception on two relatively low-level employees. In March 2019, an Ethiopian Airlines 737 MAX crashed, killing all 157 on board, after which regulators around the world grounded MAX aircraft. The crashes were blamed on a flaw with a newly-

inducted system for pushing the aircraft nose down to prevent the plane from stalling. This week the justice department's criminal fraud section told a federal court Boeing violated terms of the settlement by failing to make promised changes to detect and prevent violations of federal anti-fraud laws. The determination means that Boeing could be prosecuted "for any federal criminal violation," including the charge of fraud that the company hoped to avoid with the settlement, the Justice Department said. The company handed over 27 planes in January, its lowest tally since September, compared with 67 deliveries in December. It sold three Boeing 737 Max planes but also logged three cancellations. As it was grappling with the situation on January 5, 2024, a door plug blew out on an Alaska Airlines flight at 16,000 feet shortly after take-off from Portland, Oregon. None was injured but it ripped off headrests and exposed passengers to a gaping hole in the 26th row. Bolts holding a door panel were also found missing, the US National Transportation Safety Board reported. This led the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to halt Boeing's planned production increases till it was satisfied with the quality control issues. The Max planes that Air India wants to buy, Boeing says, would have to rework about 50 of the undelivered planes because of incorrectly drilled holes in 22 fuselages or the larger outer shell that encompasses the main aircraft body.


It is a new production glitch that could slow deliveries further. Various FAA safety inspections would periodically stop the production line. The FAA says that it would allow the variant of the 737 Max 9 with the door plug to fly again — after demanding checks to the bolts on every plane. The family of two MAX victims want Boeing to face a criminal trial and pay a fine of \$ 24.8 billion. They are against plea bargaining saying this was just a reworking of "letting Boeing off the hook". In such a situation, the hope of Air India Express and Akasa getting their deliveries does not look bright. Questions arise about how the two airlines agreed to the deal of MAX, which still has not cleared safety issues. China has reportedly cancelled some of its bookings. Amid such situations in June 2022, Tata Sons signed the agreement during the Paris Air Show for 20 Boeing Dreamliners, 10 Boeing 777X widebody aircraft, and 190 Boeing 737 MAX narrow-body aircraft along with 250 Euro Airbus for \$ 70 billion, according to Tata Sons and Air India chairman N Chandrababhan. In June 2023, IndiGo made the world's largest aircraft order by signing a deal for 500 A320neo family planes from Airbus. IndiGo is expecting some Airbus 320 deliveries. But that would not suffice the needs of the growing number of passengers. IndiGo is set to ground many aircraft. So would Spicejet, which met with several security issues. The delays, which are said to be unavoidable, would create a

shortage of aircraft almost with all major airlines, IndiGo, Spicejet, Akasa and Air India. Jet Airways and Go First have gone bankrupt adding to the shortage. The Boeing crisis could hit India hard with Air India and Akasa having fewer aircraft and an overall shortage of seats for domestic and international routes spiralling fares. Airlines in India carried a record 152 million passengers in 2023, a 30 per cent increase from 2022 and a 5 per cent rise over 2019. According to the Director General of Civil Aviation, the domestic air traffic from January to May rose 4 per cent during the period to 13.8 million. The aviation industry fears that the reduced aircraft delivery is set to impact the aviation market severely more so as several passengers rise more owing to a fallacious dynamic Indian Railways fare structure. It hikes train fares to the level of air fares making people prefer to travel by air. This is impacting the railways and the airlines alike. Fares in certain destinations like Kochi-Delhi Kolkata-Delhi Mumbai-Delhi or Guwahati-Delhi could skyrocket and match some of the international routes as the country does not have an integrated transportation approach. If the rail fares are cut and the reservation system rationalised, it could take off a significant load from the airlines. The unimaginative system predicts a scramble for airline tickets by the end of December winter vacation.

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

Leadership shifts in the UK and Iran signal a new era of moderate politics

The recent election results in the UK and Iran reflect a broader global trend of voters favouring leaders who advocate for inclusivity and moderation



RENEW TIES WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND IRAN MAY AIM TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE WEST.

Iran's isolation in the West. These election results suggest a potential leftward shift in global politics, with significant changes occurring in both major European and Asian countries. This could mean that governments will need to focus more on job creation and improving the quality of life for their citizens. Britain is currently facing financial difficulties and high inflation, despite soaring property prices. Similarly, the Iranian people are feeling the weight of ever-increasing sanctions imposed by the US and its allies. Iranians need a new economy and a new approach to their relations with the West. While Western nations are cautiously optimistic

about the change in Iran, they are confident that the new Labour leadership in the UK will adopt a pragmatic approach. Moving away from the Conservative tactics of unnecessary assertiveness driven by nostalgic colonial attitudes, the UK will need to redefine its strategy and engage more openly with the public. Finally, there is a message for political parties worldwide: if you stay connected with the grassroots and continue to address the issues of the common people in pragmatic ways, you will remain relevant and potentially revive.

(The writer is a senior journalist and has been covering foreign affairs and international politics; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

India added 4.7 cr jobs in FY24: RBI data

India added nearly 4.7 crore jobs during 2023-24, taking the total number of employed people to 64.33 crore spread over 27 sectors covering the entire economy, according to Reserve Bank data. The number of employed people was 59.67 crore at the end of March 2023, said the RBI's update on 'Measuring Productivity at the Industry Level-The India KLEMS [Capital (K), Labour (L), Energy (E), Material (M) and Services (S)] Database'. Using the Tornqvist Aggregation formula, the RBI said the annual growth in employment during 2023-24 was 6 per cent compared to 3.2 per cent in the year-ago period. In the last five years, the India KLEMS database revealed that total employment increased from 53.44 crore in 2019-20 to 64.33 crore during the previous fiscal. The data for financial 2022-23 is a provisional estimate of productivity for the total economy. The 'agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing' employed 25.3 crore individuals, up from 24.82 crore in 2021-22, the fiscal 2022-23 data suggested.



CCPA directs Yatra to expedite COVID-19 flight cancellation refunds

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has ordered online travel agency Yatra to speed up pending refunds for flight cancellations during the COVID-19 lockdown, the consumer affairs ministry said on Tuesday. In its June 27 order, the CCPA directed Yatra to establish five dedicated seats at the National Consumer Helpline to contact remaining passengers about their pending refunds. The company will bear the costs of this arrangement. This action follows a 2020 Supreme Court ruling mandating immediate refunds for tickets booked during the lockdown period. The CCPA initiated suo-moto action against Yatra following numerous grievances lodged through the National Consumer Helpline regarding non-refund of cancelled air tickets. From July 2021 to June 2024, CCPA conducted several hearings to address these issues. "As a result of these efforts, Yatra has made significant progress in reducing the total number of pending refund bookings," the ministry said in a statement.



KVIC turnover crosses Rs 1.5 L cr, 10 lakh jobs created in FY24: Chairman

Khadhi and Village Industries' annual turnover crossed Rs 1.5 lakh crore for the first time in FY 2023-24 with over 10 lakh new jobs generated during the fiscal, its Chairman Manoj Kumar said on Tuesday. According to provisional figures for 2023-24 released by KVIC, a 315 per cent increase in production and a 400 per cent rise in sales were registered in the last 10 years. New employment generation also witnessed an 81 per cent increase during the decade starting from 2013-14. "For the first time, over 10 lakh new jobs were created and our turnover crossed Rs 1.5 lakh crore in 2023-24," Kumar said. Surpassing all previous figures, there has been an increase of almost 400 per cent in sales, nearly 315 per cent in production, and 81 per cent in new employment generation compared to the financial year 2013-14, KVIC stated. KVIC's sales were Rs 1.34 lakh crore in 2022-23.



Financial inclusion index rises with growth across all segments

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank's FI-Index, capturing the extent of financial inclusion across the country, rose to 64.2 in March 2024, showing growth across all parameters.

The index captures information on various aspects of financial inclusion in a single value ranging between 0 and 100, where 0 represents complete financial exclusion and 100 indicates full financial inclusion.

"The value of the index for March 2024 stands at 64.2 vis-à-vis 60.1 in March 2023, with growth witnessed across all sub-indices," the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in a statement on Tuesday.

Improvement in FI-Index is mainly contributed by usage



"The value of the index for March 2024 stands at 64.2 vis-à-vis 60.1 in March 2023, with growth witnessed across all sub-indices," the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in a statement on Tuesday

dimension, reflecting deepening of financial inclusion, it added.

The FI-Index comprises three broad parameters -- access (35 per cent), usage (45 per cent), and quality (20 per cent) -- with each of these consisting of various dimensions, which are computed based on a number of indicators.

In August 2021, the central bank said FI-Index has been conceptualised as a comprehensive index, incorporating details of banking, investments, insurance, postal, as well as the pension sector, in consultation with government and respective sectoral regulators. The index is responsive to ease of access,

availability and usage of services, and quality of services.

According to RBI, a unique feature of the index is the quality parameter which captures the quality aspect of financial inclusion as reflected by financial literacy, consumer protection and inequalities and deficiencies in services

ATMA asks govt to restrict import of waste tyres

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) on Tuesday said there is a need to restrict import of waste tyres into India, saying the country is becoming a 'dumping ground' for scrap tyres. The import of waste/scrap tyres into India has increased by more than five times since FY20-21, ATMA said in its pre-budget submission to the finance ministry.

"Such indiscriminate import of waste/scrap tyres is not only an environmental and safety concern but also undermines the very purpose of Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) Regulation on Waste Tyres which is in place since July 2022," it added.

Govt may relax 45-day payment rule for MSMEs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government may relax the requirement of making payments to MSMEs within 45 days of buying goods and services to check large corporate from looking at other sourcing avenues, sources said.

The announcement to this effect could be made in the Budget likely to be presented on July 23.

The government is considering suggestions regarding changes to Section 43B(h) of the Income Tax Act made by MSMEs during pre-Budget consultations, sources said.

The government in last year's Budget added a new clause under Section 43B of the Income Tax Act to address the challenge of delayed payments

faced by MSMEs in the country.

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.

MSMEs fear that due to this provision, large buyers could cold-shoulder MSME suppliers and start buying

either from those MSMEs that are not registered with Udyam or from non-MSMEs.

The amendment was brought in for MSMEs to get timely payment, but there are a lot of fear were raised by them, sources said, adding

that they feared that large corporate, in bid to safeguard their interest, can shift their sourcing requirement to bigger firms or ask their vendors to give up their MSME registration to do business with them.

Earlier in May, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said the changes, if any, to the rule will have to be done in the full Budget in July under the new government as per the representations submitted by MSMEs.

Indian gaming industry set to reach Rs 23,100 cr by FY25, says Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian gaming industry is poised to record a 20 per cent growth to reach Rs 23,100 crore by FY25, a report on Tuesday said, citing industry estimates that number of online gamers in India has touched 442 million, surpassing China.

The report by Grant Thornton Bharat and E-Gaming Federation further advocated a comprehensive Code of Conduct (CoC) for the gaming industry, setting clear standards for ethical behaviour to ensure accountability and transparency.

The dynamic gaming landscape in India is fuelled by a vibrant young demographic and set for unprece-

dented growth, the report said.

"The industry is projected to experience a 20 per cent growth by FY25, reaching Rs 23,100 crore. Over the last five years, Indian gaming has raised US\$ 2.8 billion from domestic and global investors," it added.

According to industry estimates, the number of online gamers in India has reached a soaring 442 million, surpassing China, making a case for adherence to a strong code of conduct and embracing self-regulation to ensure sustainable growth of this industry.

The real money gaming (RMG) segment is emerging as one of the chief revenue drivers within the industry.



Sensex, Nifty hit all-time closing high levels on gains in auto, FMCG

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Tuesday, hitting their fresh record closing levels on the back of gains in auto and FMCG shares and foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 391.26 points or 0.49 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 80,351.64. During the day, it jumped 436.79 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 80,397.17.

The NSE Nifty went up by 112.65 points or 0.46 per cent to 24,433.20 -- its record closing high. During the day, it surged 123.05 points or 0.50 per cent to hit a new record peak of 24,443.60.

"Both domestic and global factors continue to drive the market momentum. Currently, consumption sectors like FMCG and auto are leading

the gains, buoyed by progress in the monsoon and kharif sowing," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among Sensex shares, Maruti Suzuki India jumped



over 6 per cent amid reports that the UP government waived registration taxes on hybrid cars as part of its initiative to promote environmentally friendly vehicles in the state.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Titan, Sun Pharma, ITC, Nestle and Tata Motors were

the other big gainers.

Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finance and JSW Steel were among the laggards.

Investors are eagerly awaiting the first-quarter earnings results, which will guide market direction, Nair said, adding, "Additionally, continuous positive FII inflow contributes to the prevailing positive sentiment."

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.36 per cent and smallcap index went up by 0.22 per cent.

Among the indices, auto jumped 2.17 per cent. Consumer durables (2.01 per cent), realty (1.23 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.21 per cent), healthcare (1 per cent) and utilities (0.76 per cent) also closed higher. Telecommunication, capital goods and tech were the laggards.

Sebi invites public comments on amendments to REIT, InvIT rules

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday said it has sought public views on the proposed amendments to the master circulars for REITs and InvITs.

In a consultation paper, Sebi said these amendments will provide clarity on the nomination rights of directors to the boards of REIT (Real Estate Investment Trusts) and InvIT (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) managers.

In the proposed amendments, the markets watchdog has addressed market participants' requests for clarification on the rights of unitholders to nominate a director to the board of the investment manager or manager of REITs and InvITs.

The changes propose that the restriction on nominating a unitholder nominee director will not apply if the right to appoint a nominee director is available as per the Sebi (Debtenture Trustees) regulations.

Mcap of BSE-listed firms at record high of Rs 451.27 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms on Tuesday hit a fresh lifetime high of Rs 451.27 lakh crore on a day when the BSE Sensex reached a record closing level.

The 30-share BSE benchmark climbed 391.26 points or 0.49 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 80,351.64. During the day, it jumped 436.79 points, or 0.54 per cent, to hit a new lifetime high

of 80,397.17.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit an all-time high of Rs 451,27,853.30 crore (US\$ 5.41 trillion). Investors' wealth also went up Rs 1.56 lakh crore on Tuesday.

"After consolidating in the last few days, markets bounced back to make fresh high amid buying seen in index heavyweights," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.



Among Sensex components, Maruti Suzuki India jumped 6.60 per cent amid reports that the UP government waived registration taxes on hybrid cars as part of its initiative to promote environmentally

friendly vehicles in the state. Mahindra & Mahindra, ITC, Sun Pharma, Titan, Tata Motors, and Nestle were the other big gainers.

Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finance, and JSW Steel were among the laggards.

Among the indices, auto jumped 2.17 per cent, consumer durables (2.01 per cent), realty (1.23 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.21 per cent), healthcare (1 per cent),

and utilities (0.76 per cent).

Telecommunication, capital goods, and tech were the laggards.

A total of 2,010 stocks advanced while 1,924 declined and 92 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Also, 320 stocks hit their upper circuit limit while 242 firms hit the lower circuit levels.

Both domestic and global factors continue to drive the market momentum.

ONGC to invest Rs 2 L cr to meet net zero emission target

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) will invest about Rs 2 lakh crore in setting up renewable energy sites and green hydrogen plants and cutting gas flaring to zero to achieve its 2038 net-zero carbon emission goal.

The company, which produces about two-thirds of India's crude oil and about 58 per cent of natural gas, on Tuesday released a 200-page document, detailing its path to achieving net zero emissions.

It listed clean energy projects even as it looks to boost its hydrocarbon output to meet the country's energy needs.

ONGC will invest Rs 97,000 crore by 2030 in setting up 5 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity, green hydrogen, biogas, pump storage plant and offshore wind project, according



ing to the document. Another Rs 65,500 crore will be invested by 2035, mostly in a green hydrogen or green ammonia plant, and the remaining Rs

38,000 crore by 2038, primarily in setting up 1 GW of offshore wind projects.

These projects will help the firm offset 9 million tonnes of carbon emissions it is directly (Scope-1 emissions) or indirectly (Scope-2 emissions) responsible for.

ONGC said it will invest Rs 5,000 crore to cut gas flaring to zero by 2030 through technological intervention.

The firm released into the atmosphere 554 million cubic metres of methane in 2021-22 (base year), mostly because it was an incidental by-product of oil or the quantity was not economical enough to pipe it to consumers.

FLY ASH DISPOSAL

19 coal mines allocated to 13 thermal power plants: Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday said 19 coal mines have been allocated to 13 thermal power plants for disposal of fly ash.

The Ministry of Coal has undertaken a significant initiative to ensure proper disposal of fly ash by allocating mine voids.

A Central Level Working Group (CLWG) under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Ministry of Coal, was formed in 2023 for this purpose.

The interested Thermal

Power Plants (TPPs) applies for the allocation of mine voids to the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), which is eventually discussed in the CLWG meeting.

"In this proactive move, a total of 19 mines have been allocated to 13 TPPs," the coal ministry said in a statement.

This allocation addresses environmental concerns associated with fly ash disposal and promotes sustainable practices within the coal mining sector.



Gold falls by Rs 100 to Rs 73,310 per 10 g; silver rises Rs 180

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices fell by Rs 100 to Rs 73,310 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid weak global cues, according to HDFC Securities.

The precious metal had settled at Rs 73,410 per 10 grams on Monday. However, silver prices jumped by Rs 180 to Rs

94,450 per kg from Rs 94,270 per kg in the previous session.

Gold prices traded lower ahead of the Fed member speech and US inflation data. The silver prices at domestic as well as global front traded higher tracking strong base metal and risk-on moods," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said.



month, had indicated that the government would come out with historic steps to accelerate the pace of reforms.

She also said the Budget will be an effective document of the government's far-reaching policies and futuristic vision.

Sitharaman has already held discussions with various stakeholders, including economists and captains of Indian industry, on the forthcoming Budget.

Several experts have urged the government to provide tax relief to the common man to boost consumption and come out with steps to check inflation and accelerate economic growth.

The economy has recorded a growth rate of 8.2 per cent in 2023-24. Earlier in February, Sitharaman came out with an interim budget for 2024-25 in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Panchayat Raj Engineering Department

"I" Procurement Tender Notice

1. Tender Notice No: P/RAEP/10/11/2024-25 (2nd Call) Dt: 08-07-2024

Number of works: 2. a) Work Name: Tendering of Fly Ash Disposal to Sangam of Aravally (M) in Suryapet District (2nd Call) by Est. Cost: Rs. 2900.00 Lakhs, C) Govt: CRR 2023-24

a) Work Name: Tendering of Fly Ash Disposal to Nallakur of Thangathurthy (M) Suryapet District (2nd Call) by Est. Cost: Rs. 1200.00 Lakhs, C) Govt: CRR 2023-24. Tenders Opened Last Date & Time: 15.07.2024 @ 10:00 AM. Tenders Opened Last Date & Time: 01.08.2024 @ 04:30 PM. For further details: 'I' Procurement Market Place is www.eprocurement.gov.in soprop@gmail.com

Sd/- Superintending Engineer
PR Region, Suryapet

DPFR ID No: 67-0PCL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25

Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority
Urban Forestry

HMDA Office Building, Narasimha Reddy, Hyderabad-500 032

Rc. No.391/UF/HMDA/2023 Date: 04.07.2024

The HMDA is inviting tenders for Maintenance of greenery and plantations on Outer Ring Road, Hyderabad from the registered contractors in any state or Central Government Departments / Organizations who have previous experience of executing similar nature of works on e-procurement platform. The last date for tender filing is 16.07.2024. For further details please visit e-procurement website <http://tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Director Urban Forestry, HMDA

DPFR ID No: 104-PPCL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
"E" PROCUREMENT SHORT TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. 09/EE-6/CRZ/GHMC/2024-25 Dt: 09.07.2024

Nature of the Work: BT, CC Road, Chequered tiles and other Works. Estt. Cost: Rs. 43.695 Lakhs. SI No 1 to 5: Download Start Date: 10.07.2024 @ 12.00 PM, Download End Date: 11.07.2024 @ 12.00 PM., SI No 6 to 8: Download Start Date: 10.07.2024 @ 12.00 PM., Download End Date: 15.07.2024 @ 12.00 PM.

Name & Address Officer, Cell No: Smt. M.Peersingh, EE, Div-6, CRZ, GHMC, Hyderabad. Phone No.: 9154960551. For further details can be seen at e-procurement @ www.tender.eprocurement.gov.in. Note: 1% EMD should be obtained after the date of tender notice. Sd/- Executive Engineer, R.O.No: 1666-PPCL/ADVT/1/2024-25, Dt: 08-07-2024 Circle No.6, Charaminar Zone, GHMC

'I'm not making any special appearances anymore'

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Rajeev Khandelwa has acted in several big-name productions. Recently, the actor discussed it with *The Pioneer* during the promotion of his upcoming series *Showtime*.

"Apart from the fact that we are both actors, Armaan and I have nothing in common. There is a big difference between what he saw as superstardom and what I saw as love. It was easy for me to believe in the character because I had seen so many Armaans. And I believe that's the reason it came through in my performance. An actor's work becomes effortless when they have faith in their performance," Rajeev Khandelwal starts the interview on a positive note.

We were somewhat curious to find out how his character changed from the first season of *Showtime* to the second. In response, he says, "Season 2 will feature Armaan without the mask he wears in public, as most actors do. He is the man behind the actor and you will see his true feelings. His desires, his emotions and his fears." Even in the first season, it was clear how Rajeev's character dealt with obstacles and criticism in the plot. In response, the well-known fame of *Kahiin Toh Hoga* replies, "Humans are naturally inclined to take criticism poorly. Furthermore, my character speaks for most of humanity. He feels that he is impervious to criticism and that those who do so are motivated by resentment or jealousy at the stark differences between their status and his. Regarding the current cinema industry, the character is a star in several films. And it makes perfect sense. In the spotlight, you often feel alone because everyone wants a piece of you. You are forced to isolate yourself from others, which leads to creating more enemies than friends. The first thing to do is to have faith in the procedure. The people closest to you are mostly waiting for you to fall. Therefore, it becomes extremely complex in the minds of all extremely popular people. While some people handle things quite well, others buckle under strain."

In the suspenseful film *Table No. 21* by Rajeev Khandelwal, the two protagonists must make life-or-death choices

and unexpected turns. For lovers of suspense movies, this one was a must-see! We brought those days back to him. He recalls with us, "Certain movies had pyrotechnics when they first came out, but they quickly went out of style. However, some movies start a fire when they're released and continue to do so for a long time. *Table No. 21* most likely belongs in the later group. I was drawn to the movie because of how honestly it presented its argument. It was also, of course, a crazy thriller."

Separately, delving a little into his personal life, we heard him mention that at first it was challenging to not be what the public expects him to be since, as performers, they can so easily fall into the stereotype of being a famous person. However, the world is highly gullible and will never stop altering the opinions of actors. Rajeev therefore made the very early decision to believe what he knows about himself and to reject what others tell him about himself. Furthermore, he is aware that he is not unique.

Aamir fame says, "I'm not making any special appearances anymore. I've declined the makers' offer. For me, *Hero* *Heeroine* didn't work out. What's going on in that movie, I have no idea! Furthermore, I think the projects chose me because I don't have a manager chasing down jobs for me or an agency working for me. I constantly hope to come across projects that will allow me to write a fresh story or alter the course."

He takes a break after each project and only returns to it when there are promotions or other events. After it's out, he never looks at it again. It leaves and remains in his mental collection! "I suppose that travelling makes me more whole and real. I've always thought of myself as not being restricted to any one area, whether at work or not. I was born in Jaipur, currently reside in Mumbai and spend a lot of my leisure time at my house in Goa. I have travelled through nearly all of India and around 25% of the globe. My travels to remote communities in Rajasthan, Ladakh and the northeastern region of our nation frequently give me the impression that pleasure is unrelated to financial advantages. It is an attitude."

In closing, he makes an even lighter statement, which we thought was great.

Speaking with *The Pioneer*, Rajeev Khandelwal shares some exclusive information about his character and the new series *Showtime*. He is now peddling the show.

Creating an 'Antique' impact on the breaking map!

THE PIONEER IS TAKEN SOLELY BY ANKIT KUSHWAH, ALSO REFERRED TO AS BBOY ANTIQUE, ON HIS INSPIRATIONAL JOURNEY AS THE FIRST BREAKING ARTIST OF BHOPAL.



TEJAL SINHA

The first ones are always special, they say. Well, Ankit Kushwah, who popularly goes by the name Bboy Antique, is one of the special ones Bhopal has been really proud of. Now when we mention 'first', it aptly goes with him; it's because when he began breaking, he was Bhopal's first breaking star.

During his early days, he too was one of those fun li'l guy, who did not really bother about the things around him. However, in 2008, when he was in his 10th grade, he just saw a video of the *Red Bull BC One* finals and that really hit something within him that made him wonder, 'What really is it?'. But again, he knew this was his calling and wanted to do something around breaking. "I have always been around the internet and browsing. I come from a village and there you did not really have any dance classes. So what I did was search for it on YouTube and start practicing for it. I did come across many such tutorials. However, I did not understand anything about the battles. But as I went on taking it ahead, my knowledge also kept growing far beyond," shares the breaking star, all set to battle in the finals of *Red Bull BC One*.

There was a time back then when he used to just randomly play some songs and then start practicing his breaking. He found his inner peace while dancing. After connecting with many people and gathering more insights on battles and breaking, he began his travels in 2013. It was in Bangalore that he got on the ground for the battle for the very first time. "During that, I came across so many Bboymers. They were all in front of me, live and I was performing in front of them." Today, he has come so far! And to him, the journey did not require any sort of support because he never got one. It was all self-made and self-earned. "In 2012, my dad got transferred to Bhopal and we shifted here. I did come across many dance classes

there, but there was nothing regarding breaking. I knew if I had to do something around breaking, I had to do it all alone. I began solo travelling. In 2014, I had my third battle, which was a national championship and I won it."

The support he received from the audience from all over the nation was something he never knew was coming his way. And since then, there has been no looking back for him. He began connecting with more and more people and finally got the most deserved, breaking support he never knew was what he needed.

"I never got proper guidance," shares Ankit, who represented India in the Asian Breaking Championship 2023 in China, speaking about the challenges he initially faced. "Having learned and practiced via YouTube, I believe if I had gotten proper guidance, I could have been somewhere else today. Something that I began in 2013-14, I would have started much earlier. Being the first-breaker from Bhopal, there was also a time when I felt like giving up because of the ups and downs. But later, I did find people who did want to get into breaking, and I used to teach them. That really brought immense confidence and I was like, 'I'm not going to give up.'"

That made him start his own *Raw Breakers Crew India*, which also includes the one he used to practice with. Constantly changing the dynamics in Bhopal, he believes, "When I saw Bboy Junior performing in 2008 in the world finals and now in 2024, I just saw him live, and he was the one who selected me and brought me here. That itself shows the changes in the dynamics and how things have changed. The *BC One* qualifier is also happening in Bhopal. Things have gotten so much better now in Bhopal that if I don't perform, I know the ones I have taught are there. It's only and only growing."

The breaking scene is growing so much in Bhopal that the Madhya Pradesh government is soon setting up a 'break-dance' academy in the city. And with this, he is very confident that Bhopal is soon going to turn into a 'breaking hub'.

But one thing they were keen on knowing about was his Bboying name, 'Antique'. So further speaking about it, he enthuses, "In 2016, Bboy Brainstorm from Ukraine came to Bhopal, who was invited by a company. And to my surprise, he researched who all are breaking in Bhopal and came across my page. He invited me, and we did practice in his hotel too. During that, he keeps travelling to India and I was very keen because I would also be getting guidance. He was an international Bboyer. There's a place in Bhopal called MP Nagar and we used to practice there and on the streets, we used to perform cipher. And people, every time they saw me dancing, were always like, 'Aap bahut antique dance karte ho'. As Brainstorm noticed that, he started calling me 'Antique'. And that's when I kept my name as Bboy Antique."

"Crashes" are something that inspires his moves. On a concluding note, he shares that breaking creates a lot of freedom and you can do it your own way. "My main goal is to always break and keep doing it forever. I want to keep breaking until the last breath. (he laughs)"

Revolutionising relief by decoding PRP for musculoskeletal pain

The musculoskeletal system, comprising bones, muscles, joints, cartilage, tendons, ligaments, and connective tissue, provides structural support and facilitates movement in our body. Any disorder or injury that affects this system is called a musculoskeletal disorder; its predominant symptom is pain. As advancements in pain management continue, the utilisation of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) in managing musculoskeletal pain is gaining popularity.

About 1.71 billion individuals worldwide grapple with musculoskeletal problems, a leading contributor to disability. These problems impact mobility and agility, resulting in early retirement, diminished well-being, and decreased societal participation affecting the quality of life. Musculoskeletal pain is a common experience for adults, regardless of gender, and economic status.

PRP treatment is emerging as a promising solution, demonstrating pain reduction and improved function in patients with musculoskeletal disorders. It is a non-surgical, outpatient procedure with minimal side effects, as it uses the patient's own blood.

Conventional musculoskeletal pain management includes methods like Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation, along with physical therapy and corticosteroid injections combined with targeted rehabilitation exercises. While providing temporary pain relief and early functional recovery, these methods usually do not reverse structural changes linked with musculoskeletal conditions.

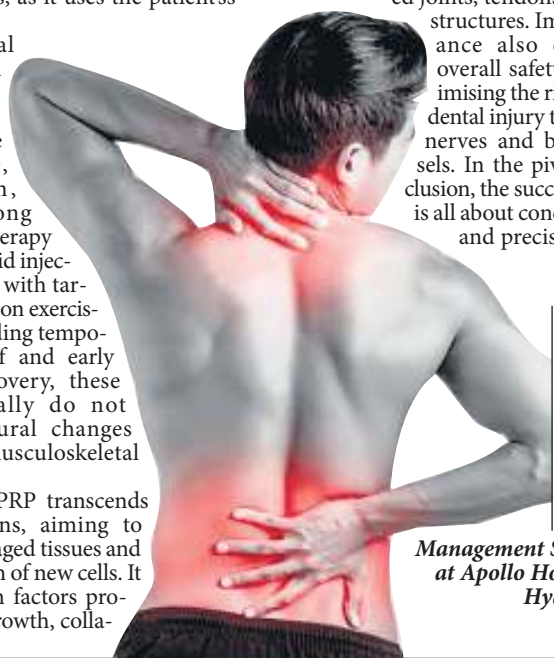
In contrast, PRP transcends these limitations, aiming to regenerate damaged tissues and spark the growth of new cells. It contains growth factors promoting tissue growth, collagen production, and increased stem cell numbers, enhancing the healing process. PRP also harnesses anti-inflammatory properties, serving as a promising therapeutic approach for arthritis.

Tailoring PRP formulations for specific injuries or conditions ensures better results. The platelet concentration in PRP is crucial for its effectiveness in treating conditions, like joint arthritis and shoulder rotator cuff tears. Studies indicate that higher platelet concentrations generally result in better healing. For instance, conditions like knee osteoarthritis may benefit from a specific platelet concentration, around 10 billion platelets, with fewer white blood cells preferred, as it is believed to reduce inflammation and minimise the risk of adverse reactions.

Image-guided injections, especially under ultrasound or X-rays, are another determinant of PRP success. Doctors find these methods beneficial as they provide precision through real-time visualisation, ensuring accurate needle placement in the targeted area. This is important for delivering PRP directly to affected joints, tendons, or other structures. Image guidance also enhances overall safety by minimising the risk of accidental injury to adjacent nerves and blood vessels. In the pivotal conclusion, the success of PRP is all about concentration and precision.

Management Specialist, at Apollo Hospitals in Hyderabad.)

(The author, Dr Tushar B Mummoli, is a Pain



what's brewing?



Komal



Srikanth and Sandya



Tadasha



Chandini



Divya



Shivangi



Amisha and Aana



Nikshita



Kirty

With their combined more than ten years of experience, seasoned professionals and lifelong friends Sandhya Reddy and Shreekanth are revolutionising the world of aesthetic cosmetology with Shynex. Under the permanent supervision of dermatologist Dr. Moulika Vangala, Shynex guarantees the utmost accuracy and care.



The opening of Cloudnine's third hospital, located in Kompally, Hyderabad, was announced. After purchasing the birthplace in Banjara Hills and HITEC City, the group has opened three dedicated boutique women's and childcare centres in the city.



At the recent "Vegan India Conference," Arvind appeared on stage alongside actress and animal rights advocate Jacqueline Fernandez. At the same summit, he also received the "Vegan Voice" award!



Barbeque Nation opened its latest outlet in Hyderabad Knowledge city, Sattva Groups. Strategically situated in Hyderabad, this newest addition promises to ignite the culinary scene with its signature blend of flavoUrs, ambience, and impeccable hospitality. Celebrating the rich tapestry of Indian cuisine combined with global culinary influences, Barbeque Nation's newly launched outlet offers an immersive dining journey for patrons of all palates.

Lebanese Indulgence

Indulge in a culinary journey like no other as Chef Jameela Ghani brings the authentic taste of Lebanon to your plate at Novotel Hyderabad Airport (NHA), situated at GMR Aerocity in Hyderabad. From traditional dishes such as mezza and flavourful shawarma, every bite will transport you to the bustling streets of Beirut. Immerse yourself in a lively Lebanese oasis, where vibrant decor and live music create the perfect ambience for an exceptional dining experience. From July 19 to July 28 2024, join us in Hyderabad for an exquisite taste of Lebanon. Reserve your table now for an unforgettable evening. Don't miss this event if you love Lebanese cuisine or are a foodie looking for new flavours.

Where: Food Exchange, Novotel Hyderabad Airport, GMR Aerocity arena

When: 19th to 28th July 2024 Time: 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM

Punjabi Food Festival

Experience the vibrant flavours of Punjab at the Punjabi Food Festival hosted by Cayenne, Mercure Hyderabad KCP. Indulge in an array of authentic dishes crafted by expert chefs. Relish mouth-watering delicacies such as Butter Chicken, Dal Makhani, Sarson da Saag, and Chole Bhature, each prepared with traditional spices and ingredients that capture the essence of Punjabi cuisine. Complement your meal with refreshing lassi and end on a sweet note with delectable desserts like Gulab Jamun and Phirni. Immerse yourself in a festive ambience with live music and traditional decor that brings the spirit of Punjab to life. Join us for a gastronomic journey celebrating the rich culinary heritage of Punjab.

When: 12th July to 21st July, 2024

Where: Cayenne, Mercure Hyderabad KCP Time: 7 PM-11 PM

FUN

ARCHIE



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



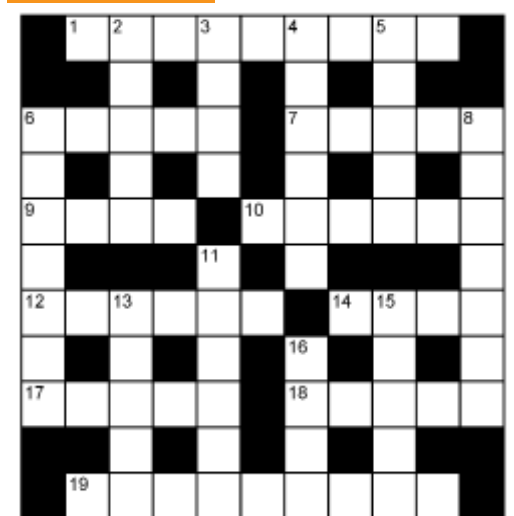
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

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1	4	7		8	2			
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8				7	5			

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

ACROSS

- Saying again
- These brown fruit grow on a palm tree
- A clothing size
- A hard black fuel
- Beat in a battle
- A fire-breathing monster
- The number in a quartet
- Frown
- Played a part in a play
- Replying

DOWN

- More than is needed
- A compass direction
- Had a conversation

- A health professional
- Makes a decision
- Went in
- Go after
- Nut from an oak tree
- Frequently
- This grows on heads



FILMMAKER NAG ASHWIN DISCUSSES HIS THOUGHTS ON THE SUBJECT WHILE TAKING PLEASURE IN THE RECEPTION AND BOX OFFICE SUCCESS OF HIS MOST RECENT FILM, **KALKI 2898 AD.**

‘SECURING FINANCE WAS INCREDIBLY TOUGH IN KALKI 2898 AD’

PNS | HYDERABAD

Nag Ashwin, the director of the monumental sci-fi epic *Kalki 2898 AD*, expresses profound relief as the film grosses Rs 500 crore in its first week at the box office. Featuring an ensemble cast including Amitabh Bachchan, Prabhas, Kamal Hassan and Deepika Padukone, the film was a project of immense ambition and significance within the industry. “The response to a movie like this goes beyond us,” remarks Ashwin. “The stakes were high, not just for us but for the entire filmmaking community waiting for the verdict on this sci-fi venture. Its success opens doors for future projects.” Reflecting on the challenges faced during production, particularly navigating the pandemic and financial hurdles, Ashwin acknowledges, “Securing financing was incredibly tough, but the strong backing of our stellar cast and the goodwill from our previous successful collaborations provided some cushion.” Acknowledging viewer feedback about the film’s pacing, Ashwin comments, “It’s universally noted that the first half, drawing heavily from the Mahabharata, was perceived as slow. In a three-hour epic,



if audiences embrace most of it, I consider it a victory.” From the moment *Kalki 2898 AD* hit theatres, viewers have been quick to hail her as the ‘soul of the film’. With fans and critics alike praising her powerful presence and nuanced performance, Deepika Padukone walking through flames—a moment that has gone viral since the film’s release—has resonated deeply with audiences worldwide. The striking visual has led many to dub her the new “Khaleesi”, drawing comparisons to the

iconic character from *Game of Thrones*. Director Nag Ashwin himself called the scene his favourite in the entire film. He said, “The visual of that scene and the way Deepika holds herself—the poise. I told her that if everything goes well, this is a movie poster that will probably live longer than you and me.” Nag Ashwin did not hesitate to emphasise Deepika’s critical importance to the storyline. He revealed that extensive discussions during the writing process underlined her character’s significance. “She is the most important part of the story. We had a lot of discussions about it when we were writing as well. I think the simplest answer that we arrived at was: whose character do you remove and the story does not exist? And that became Deepika’s character. Because if you remove her character, there is no story. There is no *Kalki*,” he added. Addressing speculation about Mahesh Babu’s role as Lord Krishna, Ashwin clarifies, “Krishna’s portrayal in the film was deliberate—maintaining his silhouette to preserve his divine essence without humanising him.” *Kalki 2898 AD* continues to captivate audiences with its grand narrative and visual spectacle, solidifying Ashwin’s status as a visionary filmmaker in Indian cinema.



Trisha Krishnan’s crime thriller *Brinda* teaser unveiled

Trisha Krishnan’s upcoming crime thriller *Brinda* has unveiled its teaser, sending chills down the spine. This highly anticipated series, slated for release on August 2nd, features the acclaimed South Indian star Trisha Krishnan in a pivotal role. It promises to captivate audiences across the nation in seven languages: Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Bengali and Hindi. Set in a world overshadowed by darkness, *Brinda* introduces us to a character who emerges as a symbol of hope, embodying the unyielding determination of a woman striving for justice. As she navigates through the murky underworld of crime, she unravels profound truths about courage and resilience. Brace yourself for an enthralling narrative that not only keeps you on the edge of your seat but also delves into the complexities of human nature. Writer and director Surya Vangala shares his vision for *Brinda*, expressing excitement about collaborating with Sony LIV and reaching a pan-India audience. He describes the series as a compelling blend of suspenseful plots and unexpected twists that will challenge viewers’ perspectives. Highlighting a strong female-driven storyline, Vangala is delighted to have Trisha Krishnan bring the multifaceted character of Brinda to life, aiming to redefine the genre and set new standards in Telugu cinema. Produced by Adding Advertising LLP, with screenplay by Surya Manoj Vangala and Padmavathi Malladi, *Brinda* boasts a talented crew including music director Shakthikanth Karthik, production designer Avinash Kolla, cinematographer Dinesh K Babu, and editor Anwar Ali. The ensemble cast features Indrajith Sukumaran, Jaya Prakash, Aamani, Ravindra Vijay, Anand Sami, Rakendu Mouli, among others, each contributing their unique talents to enrich the series. Mark your calendars for August 2nd to witness *Brinda* exclusively on Sony LIV, inviting you to immerse yourself in a world where appearances are deceiving. From shadows to light, this series promises to keep you enthralled until the very end, exploring themes of crime, mystery and drama with finesse.

PEKA MEDALU TRAILER OUT NOW

The eagerly anticipated trailer launch event for the film *Peka Medalu* took place, signaling its upcoming release on July 19th. Vinodh Kishan makes his debut as a Telugu lead actor in this film, following his roles in *Na Parama Shiva*, *Andhagaram* and *Gangs of Godavari*. Anusha Krishna stars opposite him as the heroine. The film is presented by Crazy Ants Productions, known for their previous work on *Evvariki Cheppoddu*. The movie has already generated buzz, with its teaser and songs receiving positive feedback. A recent promotional video by Vinodh Kishan further impressed the audience, setting high expectations for the film. The trailer launch event today showcased innovative promotional strategies aimed at heightening anticipation among viewers. Director Nilgiri Mamilla expressed his delight, stating, “It’s a pleasure to have the trailer launched amidst media personalities. *Peka Medalu* resonates closely with everyday life events, blending entertainment with poignant family emotions. We look forward to its release on the 19th and

seek the support of both media and audiences for its success.” Producer Rakesh Varre extended his gratitude to the media for their continuous support, emphasising their innovative promotion techniques, including a successful QR scan initiative. “This film isn’t just a comedy; it explores a profound theme about women’s support for men, combining entertainment with emotional depth. We are confident audiences will embrace it when it hits screens on the 19th,” he remarked. Anusha Krishna, the lead lady, thanked the media for their presence at the trailer launch, urging audience support to make *Peka Medalu* a triumph. In his debut as a Telugu hero, Vinodh Kishan expressed his gratitude to director Nilgiri and producer Rakesh Varre for their faith in him. “I appreciate the media’s unwavering support from the start of promotions. I urge the audience to watch and support the film to ensure its success,” he concluded confidently. With innovative promotions and a promising storyline, *Peka Medalu* gears up to captivate audiences when it releases on July 19th.



Thangalaan trailer announced

The trailer for *Thangalaan*, a period action film starring Chiyaan Vikram and produced by director Pa Ranjith, is set to release today. Renowned producer KE Gnanavel Raja is backing the project under the Studio Green Films banner. Parvathy Thiruvothu and Malavika Mohanan play prominent roles alongside Vikram in this film based on real events unfolding at the Kolar Gold Fields. The movie is preparing for a global theatrical release. The makers announced the release date of the *Thangalaan* trailer. Scheduled for July 10, this announcement follows the enthusiastic reception of the film’s teaser. Vikram’s remarkable transformation for *Thangalaan* has sparked heightened anticipation for the forthcoming trailer. The makers announced the release date of the *Thangalaan* trailer. Scheduled for July 10, this announcement follows the enthusiastic reception of the film’s teaser. Vikram’s remarkable transformation for *Thangalaan* has sparked heightened anticipation for the forthcoming trailer.



Prasanth Varma clarifies amid speculations ‘No targeted dig at anyone’

Prasanth Varma, director of the anticipated film *HanuMan*, addresses recent speculations about a cryptic post on his social media, clarifying that it was not aimed at actor Ranveer Singh. The post, which stated “one day you realise every rejection was a blessing in disguise,” sparked rumours due to the duo’s previous collaboration attempt on the film *Rakshas*, which didn’t materialise reportedly due to creative differences. Setting the record straight, Varma explains, “The post was a reflection on my journey and gratitude for where it has led me. Rejections early in my career eventually paved the way for projects like *HanuMan*. It was not directed at anyone specific.” The 35-year-old filmmaker emphasises that his social media presence aims to inspire positivity, despite the misinterpretations that often arise. “I

refrain from posting frequently due to the fear of misinterpretation. People tend to connect dots baselessly. My intention is to inspire, and that sentence was meant as a general motivational quote.” Regarding the fallout with Ranveer Singh over *Rakshas*, Varma attributes it solely to creative differences. “It was a matter of differing viewpoints on the films’ direction. I hold great respect for Ranveer as an actor and I believe he respects my work as well.” When asked about finding a replacement for Singh in *Rakshas*, currently on hold, Varma states, “I haven’t considered anyone else at this point. It will take time to revisit that decision.” Despite the project’s setback, Varma confirms that he and Singh maintain a positive relationship. “We are in touch and maintain cordiality. The film didn’t happen, but our friendship remains intact.” Prasanth Varma concludes on a positive note, focusing on his ongoing projects and emphasising his commitment to delivering meaningful cinema.



‘SONGS AND FIGHTS IN INDIAN 2 ARE VERY UNIQUE’

Kamal Haasan spoke many good things about the highly anticipated *Bharateeyudu 2* (*Indian 2*), bringing back the iconic duo of Kamal Haasan and director Shankar. Scheduled for release on July 12th, the film promises to be one of the year’s biggest releases. The star-studded cast includes Kamal Haasan, Shankar, Kajal Aggarwal, Siddharth, SJ Suryah, Rakul Preet Singh, Priya Bhavani Shankar, Bobby Simha, Brahmanandam, among others. Anirudh Ravichander has composed the music for the film, produced by Lyca Productions and Subhaskaran under the banner of Red Giant. The Telugu theatrical rights have been secured by Asian Suresh Entertainment LLP, with Sriakashni Movies acquiring the ceded rights. An extravagant pre-release event was held in Hyderabad, followed by a media interaction today where the film’s insights were unveiled. Expressing his excitement for the release, distributor Suresh Babu praised Kamal Haasan’s innovative approach to cinema, recalling their collaboration in *Indrudu Chandrudu*. He also commended Shankar for blending social issues with commercial elements in films like *Gentleman*. He extended his best wishes to the entire cast and crew, including Siddharth, Rakul, and Bobby Simha. Kamal Haasan emphasised, “It’s the Telugu audience who made me a star. I have classic hits in Telugu. The dialogues spoken by the general in *Bharateeyudu 2* might also resonate in society. Are there songs and fights? Distributors are asking. They are indeed present, but in a unique form. I always tell Siddharth that I am his teacher, much like I once said to Shivaaji Ganeshan. Siddharth, I am one of Ekalavya’s disciples. The industry needs personalities like Kamal Haasan and upcoming talents like Siddharth. Everyone must watch *Bharateeyudu 2* and absorb its message. Therefore, media cooperation is crucial in bringing this film to the masses.”



So much action done for Aadiparvam: Manchu Lakshmi



Manchu Lakshmi takes on the lead role in the film *Aadiparvam*. Co-starring Shivakanth, Aditya Om, Esther Anil, Sreejith Ghosh, Venkat Kiran, Satyaprakash, Suhasini and others, the movie is jointly produced by Ravula Venkateswara Rao under Anyika Arts and AEI Entertainment. Directed by Sanjeev Moggoti, *Aadiparvam* is set to release globally in Telugu, Kannada, Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam as a period drama. Speaking at the grand trailer launch event held in Hyderabad, actress Manchu Lakshmi said, “I did not think that a huge film like *Aadiparvam* would be completed so soon, including CG work. Our director, Sanjeev, made a great effort for this movie. All the team members worked hard with passion. I spent the whole last year doing aerial stunts on ropes. So much action has been taken for this movie. I have worked in three locations. Thanks to all the team members at *Aadiparvam*. We are showing such socio-fantasy stories to the audience. That is the best of our soil. We are on this powerful soil, which is the best of our soil, and we are able to make films with grounds. Stories with out-of-this-world characters are coming to me. Recently I did a *Yakshini* web series. Now I have done *Aadiparvam*. I can say that *Aadiparvam* will be liked by all of you.”

VN ADITYA’S AUDITIONS IN DALLAS FOR NEW FILM GARNER MASSIVE RESPONSE

Renowned director VN Aditya, celebrated for his successful films like *Manasantha Nuvve* and *NenuNannu*, has established himself as a prominent figure in Tollywood, known for crafting heartwarming love stories and family entertainers. With nearly 25 years of industry experience, he recently announced his latest venture, produced by Dr. Meenakshi Anipindi under the banner of OMG Productions. Auditions for his upcoming film took place in Dallas on Sunday, the 7th of this month,

attracting a diverse array of aspiring actors from American, Spanish, European, African, Asian, Indian, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu backgrounds. VN Aditya expressed his delight at the overwhelming response from the auditions. OMG Productions will soon unveil details about the film’s auspicious ceremonies, muhurtam date and shooting schedule. VN Aditya is gearing up to bring forth a compelling narrative that promises to resonate strongly with audiences across various demographics.



PIC TALK

Legendary writer V Vijayendra Prasad and renowned writer Mamidi Hari Krishna unveiled the first look of Big Hit Productions’ upcoming film, Production No-2 titled *Kalinga*. The event marked a significant moment as the team behind the acclaimed movie *Kerosene: A Burnt Truth* presented their next cinematic venture. Starring Dhruva Vaayu, Pragya Nayan, Deepthi Kondaveeti and a talented ensemble cast, *Kalinga* promises to be a compelling addition to the lineup of Big Hit Productions. The launch of the first look garnered attention, highlighting the anticipation surrounding the film’s release. Further details about the storyline and production schedule are expected to follow, as the project moves ahead under the guidance of seasoned writers and promising talent.



BUMRAH, MANDHANA NAMED ICC PLAYER OF MONTH FOR JUNE



PTI ■ DUBAI

Hero of India's victorious T20 World Cup campaign, Jasprit Bumrah added another feather to his hat when he was on Tuesday named the 'ICC Men's Player of the Month for June'. It was double delight for India as women's team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana was also named the 'Women's Player of the Month' by the global body.

Mandhana won her first ICC Women's Player of the Month after playing a starring role in India's sweep over South Africa in the ODI series last month. Bumrah came out on top in the men's vote from compatriot Rohit Sharma and Rahmanullah Gurbaz of Afghanistan, while Mandhana won the women's award by overcoming England's Maia Bouchier and Sri Lanka's Vishmi Gunaratne.

Bumrah, who bagged 15 wickets to be adjudged the Player-of-the-Tournament in the T20 global showpiece last month, also claimed the Men's Player of the Month accolade for June, the ICC announced. "I am delighted to be named the ICC Men's Player of the Month for June," Bumrah said in the ICC statement. "It's a special honour for me following a memorable few weeks spent in the USA and West Indies. We have had a

lot to celebrate as a team, and I'm delighted to be able to add this personal accolade to the list." The 30-year-old was at his dependable best in the USA and Caribbean and bowled at an average of 8.26, at an astonishing economy rate of 4.17. He joined Virat Kohli (a two-time winner in his own right) as India players to claim the Men's T20 World Cup Player of the Tournament award. India were the first team to

win the men's T20 World Cup without losing a game all tournament. Barring a washout against Canada in the first round, the Rohit Sharma-led India went on to win all eight matches they played in the tournament. "To perform as well as we did at the tournament and lift the trophy at the end is incredibly special, and I will carry those memories with me forever," Bumrah said. "I wish to congratulate my

captain Rohit Sharma and Rahmanullah Gurbaz for their excellent performances in the same period, and I am humbled to have been chosen as the winner." In the women's game, Mandhana set the tone with a commanding 117 in the first outing in Bengaluru. Despite an early stutter by the hosts in which they fell to 99 for five, Mandhana remained resolute, and benefitted from some lower order resistance to guide India to a formidable score of 265 from their 50 overs, which proved far beyond the Proteas. Mandhana went one better in the second match, hitting her second successive century and top scoring in a game that saw 646 runs in total. The opener blitzed the South African bowling attack, smashing 136 in 120 balls and in tandem with her captain Harmanpreet Kaur, posted just enough to see off the resurgent visitors. She came close to sealing a hat-trick of hundreds in the final outing, falling agonizingly on 90 in a stylish effort that ensured India recorded a comfortable victory to close out the series. During the period, Mandhana recorded 343 runs at an average of 114.33, with a strike rate of over 100, earning her the Player of the Series award. "I'm really glad to have won the ICC Women's Player of the Month for June. I'm really happy with the way the team has performed and I'm happy to have contributed. For us, we won the ODI and the Test series and hopefully we can continue our form and I can further contribute to win more matches for India," Mandhana said.



Retired Warner says he is open to play Champions Trophy next year

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Declared his international career a "closed chapter" but at the same time, the Australian batting great won't mind padding up in the Champions Trophy next year should he be selected, something that has been described as an "emergency option" by his ODI captain Pat Cummins. Warner retired from ODIs after Australia's World Cup-winning run in November last year, while his last Test was against Pakistan in January. His final T20I came against India on June 24 at the shortest format's recently-concluded global showpiece.

give some others a crack [in ODIs], but knowing that he's going to still be playing cricket." "So it might be more of a kind of break glass in an emergency option. But, you know, David is going to be scoring runs somewhere in the world. So you never quite know that this is (the end)." Reflecting on his illustrious career, Warner, who retired as Australia's highest scorer and seventh-most prolific batter in the world in T20 format with 3,277 runs from 110 matches at an average of 33.43 and strike rate of 142.47, thanked his family, fans and teammates. "For all the cricket fans out there, I truly hope I have entertained you and changed cricket, especially tests, in a way where we scored a bit faster than others. We cannot do what we love without the fans, so thanks. "I want to say thanks to everyone out there who has made this possible. My wife and my girls, who sacrificed so much, thank you for all your support. No person will ever know what we've been through. From 112 Tests, he has scored 8,786 runs at an average of 44.59 with 26 hundreds and 37 fifties between 2011 and 2024. He also scored 6,932 runs from 161 ODI matches at an average of 45.30 with the help of 22 centuries and 33 half centuries. "To the players and staff, thanks for putting up with me. No more what's app junk, your ears are now going to be free of my voice. This team has had unbelievable success the last few years and long may this continue. Pat Cummins, Andrew old Mac and staff have got this," he added.

SLC denies report of drinking party inside team hotel during recent T20 World Cup

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan Cricket Board on Tuesday described a media report which claimed that its players were involved in a drinking party inside team hotel during the recent T20 World Cup as "entirely false, fabricated, and baseless." A weekend newspaper had on July 7 claimed that the Sri Lankan players had a drinking party inside the team hotel before the match against South Africa, which the islanders lost by six wickets in New York on June 3. "Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) wishes to issue the following clarification regarding an inaccurate article titled 'Drinking Party Inside Team Hotel Before South Africa Match?' published in a weekend newspaper on July 7th and subsequently circulated on social media. "SLC categorically and strongly

refutes the contents of the article and confirms that no such incidents, as described, have occurred. Therefore, SLC states unequivocally that the news report is entirely false, fabricated, and baseless," the SLC said in a statement. Sri Lanka secured only one victory at the T20 World Cup, defeating the Netherlands. The islanders were eliminated in the group stage as they finished third after losing to South Africa and Bangladesh, while their game against Nepal was washout out. "We vehemently believe that such false reporting unfairly damages the reputation of Sri Lanka Cricket, its officials, and the players," the SLC added. "In light of the said false allegations, Sri Lanka Cricket has requested that the respective newspaper publish a 'Right of Reply' to address and rectify the damage caused to Sri Lanka Cricket."

It will be tough to fill Kohli's shoes, says Gaikwad

PTI ■ HARARE

India batter Ruturaj Gaikwad knows well that it will be "tough" and "hard" to replace retired Virat Kohli at number three spot in T20Is and said he is just focusing on making valuable contributions with the bat in whatever position the team leadership deems fit. The retirement of Kohli, skipper Rohit Sharma and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja from the shortest format following the T20 World Cup triumph has opened the doors for the upcoming players and Gaikwad is one such talented batter who has the potential to seal the No. 3 spot. "This is a big topic and I think it's not the right point to think about it. To even compare with him (Kohli) or try to fill in his shoes is relatively very tough and very

hard," Gaikwad said on the eve of the third T20I against Zimbabwe. "As I had said in the IPL as well, it is difficult to fill my best shoes as well. Definitely, you want to start your career, you want to start the way you want, you want to play your own game. So that's the priority right now. "Focus on one game, focus on how you can contribute towards the team in whichever position you play and make sure you are on the winning side more often than not." Gaikwad has batted at No. 3 position for India in the first two T20Is against Zimbabwe but the Pune-born cricketer said he has no preference and will bat wherever the team requires him. "No, wherever the team wants, I will bat there. There is no problem. There is not much difference between the

opening and the number 3 because you have to play the new ball. So there is not much difference," he said. Gaikwad led the Chennai Super Kings in the IPL this year and he said captaincy has made him to get more involved in the game though it didn't make any difference to his batting. "Actually, to be honest, nothing has changed much. Because my batting has been the same as before. I have to play with responsibility and try and finish it on my own," he said. "It's just that the way you look at the game, I think every time you are more involved now in the game since you have captained the IPL franchise for a long period of time. "So you tend to be into the game for a longer period of time instead of just staying in the boundary outside and just

focusing on one ball. As I said, batting wise it's not made much difference." Young opener Abhishek Sharma had spoken about how Gaikwad helped him in "keeping perspective" as he went hammer and tongs to blast a match-winning 47-ball 100 in the second T20I. "Actually, communication is not from a senior player," Gaikwad said. "It comes from a batting partner because obviously with non-strikers you feel something about a particular bowler or particular conditions and you have to have that confidence to go and share with your partner whatever you feel and what are the right options, what to do in certain situations. "Definitely this is something which I have been doing it being part of all the teams whether state team, IPL team or Indian team as well..."

Focus on Jaiswal's batting position as stronger India ready to make statement against Zimbabwe

PTI ■ HARARE

India will find it tough to choose between Yashasvi Jaiswal's seemingly effortless flamboyance and Abhishek Sharma's uber-cool aggression at the top when they rejig their combination to make space for World Cup-winning squad members in the third T20 International against Zimbabwe here on Wednesday. The arrival of Jaiswal, Sanju Samson and Shivam Dube, all of whom were part of the main team during the title-winning run last month, gives the Indian team a formidable look in the most important game of the series as visitors look to press home the advantage after the booster shot of a series-levelling 100-run victory in the second match. Abhishek, the left-handed opener, did enough to live up to his pre-series hype with a 46-ball century in only his second game and did look the part opening the innings. However, Jaiswal, with a handsome strike rate of 161 plus in 17 T20I matches, including a hundred and four half-centuries, does have the first claim to be skipper Shubman Gill's opening partner by virtue of being the reserve opener of the first-choice T20 team. Although rare but it is not

uncommon for batters to be dropped in the very next match after a milestone innings. Case in point were Manoj Tiwary, immediately after his maiden ODI hundred against the West Indies in 2011, and Karun Nair after his triple hundred in a Test match against England in 2016. But skipper Gill is unlikely to let that happen with his best friend since their U-14 days and someone who scored his first international ton with a willow borrowed from the former. So, it could well be a case of one of the two southpaws batting at one drop. Sanju Samson, who normally bats at No. 3 for Rajasthan Royals, might come in at No.5, while Ruturaj Gaikwad, who batted at No.3, will probably drop down a place to No.4. As far as the changes in the playing eleven are concerned, Jaiswal is likely to replace B Sai Sudharsan, who was selected only for the first two games. Samson will come in place of



Dhruv Jurel, who had a good outing behind the stumps. Dube, the only player who was a part of T20 World Cup playing XI, is likely to walk in to replace Riyan Parag. The imposing batter could be an even bigger nemesis for the Zimbabwean spinners during the back-10. As far as Zimbabwe is concerned, their batting has left a lot to be desired with scores of 115 while batting first and 134 in the second essay chasing 235. On the Harare Sports Club track where there is a bit of extra bounce available for the spinners, Ravi Bishnoi (6/24 from 8 overs) and Washington Sundar (3/39 in 8 overs) have proved to be unplayable at times. Bishnoi, who normally bowls 20 to 22 googlies in his 24 balls per match, has varied his pace brilliantly and with home skipper Sikandar Raza being kept quiet, the other batters haven't looked good enough to counter the Indian bowling attack. The 13-run shock

defeat in the opener was a timely wake-up call for the young visiting side and it did well to play without five specialist bowlers in the second game where batting first became an advantage. For skipper Gill, a good score would be a necessity after two dry games and he is just too good a player to fail thrice. That could prove to be an ominous sign for the home team bowlers, who don't have even one guy with express pace. In a nutshell, it could be another one-sided game. **TEAMS (FROM)** **India:** Shubman Gill (captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Abhishek Sharma, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Sanju Samson (wk), Shivam Dube, Rinku Singh, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Mukesh Kumar, Riyan Parag, Dhruv Jurel, Khaleel Ahmed, Tushar Deshpande. **Zimbabwe:** Sikandar Raza (captain), Faraz Akram, Brian Bennett, Johnathan Campbell, Tendai Chatara, Luke Jongwe, Innocent Kaia, Clive Madande, Wessly Madhevere, Tadiwanashe Marumani, Wellington Masakadza, Brandon Mavuta, Blessing Muzarabani, Dion Myers, Antum Nazari, Richard Ngarava, Milton Shumba.