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What is the true purpose of government hiring or recruitment? Is it to fulfil the poll promises of the party that comes to power? Is it to leak question papers of recruitment examinations to make money? Is it to fill long-tenured government posts with supporters so that politicians currently in power can control governance even after losing power? Is it to give solace to at least some of the unemployed youth?

Those observing the attitude of the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) government from 2014 to 2023 or the Congress government since December 2023 in Telangana are bound to believe that governments hire employees for one or more of the above reasons. It would be hard for them to conceive that governments recruit employees to build machinery -- popularly called the bureaucracy -- to deliver on its essential responsibility: governance. If it were indeed so, wouldn't governments recruit as and

Time to turn the page on employment

when vacancies arise, just like the private sector? Or periodically, like once a year, if the process is too cumbersome?

Noticeably, the BRS government did not notify and complete the recruitment of a single Group I officer vacancy in almost 10 years of its rule. Many recruitment notifications it released were designed so poorly that they were mired in litigation in the courts and never resulted in any recruitment. Of the remaining, a majority had to be cancelled due to question paper leaks.

The Congress, which came to power promising to fill two lakh vacancies within a year if voted to power, has yet to release a new notification for a single job seven months after coming to power.

For the past few weeks, youth organisations affiliated

The unemployed youth's demands reflect their scepticism. Based on experience since Telangana's formation, the youth of Telangana has come to believe that neither the BRS nor the Congress government cares about governance and, if left to themselves, would not fill a single vacancy.

with almost every political party in the state and many unemployed youth have been agitating. Their demands include lowering the Group I Preliminary examination marks cutoff to ensure at least 100 candidates qualify to write the Mains examination for every post notified. They also urge the government to add thousands more posts to the already notified Group II and III recruitment drives. Similarly, they demand the

government modify the current teacher recruitment notification for hiring 11,062 teachers and conduct a mega-drive to fill all of the more than 25,000 vacant positions in state government schools. Finally, they are demanding a rescheduling of some of the above exams so that they get enough time to prepare for multiple types of jobs.

The unemployed youth's demands reflect their scepticism of the current govern-



KISHORE POREDDY

ment's intentions. Based on experience since Telangana's formation, the youth of Telangana has come to believe that neither the BRS nor the Congress government cares about governance and, if left to themselves, would not fill a single vacancy. The agitations

reflect their angst that if they let go of this one opportunity, which came about because of the notifications released by the earlier BRS government just before the elections to gain their votes, they might not get another chance.

Right now, the state Congress leadership, especially the Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues, are focused more on poaching BRS MLAs than on governance, fulfilling their poll promises, or even solving people's problems. If the Congress government wants to earn the trust of the unemployed youth and the citizens of Telangana, it must show that governance is a priority.

The Congress can show its sincerity towards governance by announcing comprehensive reforms in government recruitment, including, at minimum, an annual job calendar

and sticking to it religiously year after year. The job calendar should specify approximate dates, with a 2-3 week window by which it would release notifications and conduct various stages of selections - like prelims, mains, interviews, etc. Incidentally, Congress made a poll promise to announce a job calendar by June 2nd - Telangana Formation Day but reneged on it.

Next, it should make a law that makes it mandatory for all departments to announce vacancies by a specific date every year. Third, after considering the government's capacity and the needs of governance, it should mandatorily announce the number of vacancies it would fill that year by a particular date. Finally, it should delegate all recruitment to one or more independent agencies like the Public

Service Commission. These changes would enhance governance by insulating recruitment from politicians and helping unemployed youth better plan, prepare and compete for government jobs.

Introducing and implementing these reforms would reduce the intensity of the agitation by the unemployed, which we see now. It would spare the agony of long waits and provide multiple chances for every youth at a government job, reducing their anxiety and allowing them to plan their career options better.

The unemployed youth of Telangana propelled the separate statehood agitation to its peak through their sacrifices--some even of life, demanding 'water, funds, and jobs'. The least any government could do is to implement reforms that provide certainty at the chance of a government job, if not a job itself.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson.)

Amarnath criticises CM Naidu's development claims

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Former minister Gudivada Amarnath has accused Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of hijacking credit for development projects pioneered by the Jagan Mohan Reddy administration. Speaking to the media on Friday, Amarnath lambasted Naidu for forsaking future development discussions and instead, spreading false propaganda against Jagan Mohan Reddy. Amarnath alleged that Naidu is deceiving the public by falsely claiming Jagan's accomplishments as his own. He criticized Naidu's tenure from 2014-2019 for concentrating solely on a single region and neglecting the developmental needs of North Andhra.

Amarnath highlighted the rapid progress of the Bhogapuram International Airport project as a testament to Reddy's leadership. He noted that nearly 1,900 out of the required 2,200 acres for the



airport have been acquired under Reddy's administration, a stark contrast to the 377 acres secured by 2019. Furthermore, 35% of the airport's construction has been completed, with all necessary permissions obtained and legal hurdles in the National Green Tribunal resolved. Questioning Naidu's vision, Amarnath pointed out the absence of significant projects like Mulapeta Port, fishing harbours, and medical colleges during Naidu's term. He expressed scepticism about the newly announced airports in Anantapur, Moolapeta, and

other areas, doubting their completion within five years. Amarnath also criticized the lack of progress toward making Visakhapatnam the financial capital, a promise made by Naidu during his first cabinet meeting at Andhra University in 2014.

Amarnath also addressed the recent publicity surrounding the establishment of a BPCL factory. He noted that BPCL is considering other locations and questioned the government's assurances if the factory were established elsewhere; asserting that Reddy's government only announces investments once they are secured. Amarnath demanded clarity on the Taliki Vandanam Scheme, part of the Super Six initiatives, amidst rising doubts. He highlighted the successful implementation of the Amma Vodi scheme under Reddy's government, which has benefited 4.3 million mothers and 8.3 million students.



CM congratulates APCNF for winning prestigious prize

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu congratulated the Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) for winning the prestigious Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity 2024. Taking to X (Twitter), Naidu said, "Delighted to learn that the Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) has won the prestigious Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity 2024. I am incredibly proud to witness the worldwide acknowledgement of APCNF's groundbreaking Zero Budget Natural Farming model, which was launched in 2016 during my previous term as Chief Minister."

Atchannaidu assumes office, signs 'Polam Pilustundi' file

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Agriculture, Cooperation, Marketing, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries K Atchannaidu assumed office at Block 4 in the State Secretariat on Friday. A 'puja' was performed in his chambers in the secretariat amid the chanting and blessings of Vedic scholars. Soon after taking charge as the minister, he first signed the 'Polam Pilustundi' file and other five files on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that under the leadership of CM Chandrababu, the farmers will lead their lives with self-respect. The minister said that the previous YSRCP government had completely neglected the agriculture sector which contributed to 35 percent of the state's GDP. He said that he would do his best to bring back the glory of these departments. The minister said that from July



23 Polam Pilustundi programme will be organized across the state. Plans are being made to organise the PolamBadi programme for four months in Kharif and four months in Rabi. Steps are being

taken to distribute agricultural mechanized equipment to all the farmers.

Minister Atchannaidu said that GO No 217 was issued by the previous government to seize the fish ponds, which are

a source of livelihood for the fishermen, and the minister signed the file cancelling the GO. He said that the previous government had stopped the Diesel subsidy provided by the government to the fishermen, and the state chief minister had sanctioned Rs10 crores to continue the subsidy. De-warming camps are being organized from tomorrow (July 13) for the improvement of the dairy industry and to protect the health of the cattle. He said that the cattle statistics data is being carried out to know the details of how many cattle are there across the state.

State Revenue Minister Agani Satya Prasad, State Finance Minister Payavula Keshav, State Fisheries Department Secretary Babu A, State Animal Husbandry Secretary MM Naik, Special Commissioner of Agriculture Department Hari Kiran and others were present.

Political vendetta...

Continued from page 1

He recalled that on May 14, 2021, a case was filed against then-MP Raghu Rama Krishna Raju, who was arrested in Hyderabad and brought to Guntur court. Raju filed a complaint with the Guntur SP on June 11, alleging torture in police custody. Based on this complaint, a case was registered against YS Jagan on July 11.

Ponnavolu expressed surprise at the police's delayed response to Raju's complaint, suggesting the case was filed to please certain individuals and trouble others. He highlighted inconsistencies between Raju's initial statement in the Guntur court three years ago and his recent complaint. Initially, Raju claimed unidentified masked individuals tortured him in police custody. In his recent

complaint, he accused senior IPS officers Sunil and Seetharamanjaneyulu and alleged that YS Jagan watched the torture video.

Ponnavolu questioned the validity of filing a case based on a complaint made three years later and how YS Jagan could be implicated. He cited a Supreme Court statement that examining witnesses after 77 days is invalid and questioned the legitimacy of doing so after three years.

He also raised doubts about the police's claim of seeking legal advice on June 10 when Raju filed the complaint via email on June 11. He asked if the police had anticipated Raju's complaint. Ponnavolu clarified that they would address the case legally and judicially and asserted that Raju was not tortured in police custody, as reported to the Judiciary.

Attempt to...

Continued from page 1

I was not given my medicine despite having had an open heart bypass surgery," Raju, who was an YSRCP MP from Narasapuram, claimed.

Raju also alleged that when the Magistrate had sent him to Guntur Government General Hospital, the then superintendent of the hospital, Prabhavathi, had colluded with Sunil Kumar to create false medical reports that no injuries were inflicted on his person.

"Due to police brutality, I was shifted from Guntur to Secunderabad Army Hospital by the orders of the Supreme Court and thereafter I was granted bail by the Supreme Court," said Raju. The bail came a week later.

Among other allegations, he

demanding that a case be registered against all the accused persons and said in his complaint that "these criminal offences must be addressed promptly and justice be done."

For several months preceding his arrest, Raju was accused of abusing the then CM Jagan Mohan Reddy on a daily basis through select media houses from Delhi and Hyderabad.

Reacting to the FIR filed against him, Sunil Kumar wondered how a "new FIR" can be filed in a three-year-old case "rejected" by the Supreme Court. "I leave it to your wisdom to understand how an FIR can be filed anew in a case that has already been dismissed by the Supreme Court after three years of proceedings," Sunil Kumar said in a social media post.

New hope for tribal education, healthcare in Paderu Agency



PNS ■ PADERU

The newly formed coalition government has pledged to focus on education and healthcare for tribal development, bringing a wave of optimism to tribal communities in Paderu Agency. These communities

have long struggled with inadequate medical services, particularly the lack of Primary Health Centres (PHCs) in remote areas.

A key challenge identified by officials is the limited number of Primary Health Centres (PHCs) in remote areas. To

address this gap, the government plans to introduce six new PHCs, significantly improving healthcare accessibility for the tribal population. This initiative builds upon a comprehensive survey conducted two years ago, where former District Collector Sumit Kumar submitted proposals for additional PHCs.

Paderu Agency, with its existing network of 35 PHCs, caters to a vast tribal population of seven lakh spread across 11 mandals. Additionally, there's a 200-bed district hospital, along with area hospitals and a social health center. Despite these facilities, timely medical attention remains a distant dream for tribals in remote.

ISIS terrorist..

Continued from page 1

The charge sheet, filed on Friday before an NIA special court here, named the duo as key conspirators in the ISIS terror conspiracy case connected with the 'global terror network's' Chhatrapati Sam Bahinagar (Aurangabad), Maharashtra, linked module".

Investigations into the case by the anti-terror agency have revealed a web of anti-India activities involving the two accused. The NIA, which has been working to dismantle the ISIS network of modules in India, found the two men had taken a pledge of allegiance towards the self-proclaimed Khalifa of ISIS. The accused, who had planned to flee to Afghanistan or Turkey after executing a series of terror attacks in India as part of the conspiracy.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Saptami: Jul 12 12:33 PM to Jul 13 03:05 PM

Ashtami: Jul 13 03:05 PM to Jul 14 05:26 PM

Nakshatram: Jul 12 04:08 PM to Jul 13 07:14 PM

Chitra: Jul 13 07:14 PM to Jul 14 10:06 PM

Rahukalam: 9:07 AM to 10:44 AM

Yamagandam: 1:59 PM to 3:36 PM

Varjyam: 04:12 AM to 05:59 AM

Gulika: 5:53 AM to 7:30 AM

Amritakalam: 12:28 PM to 02:16 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:56 AM to 12:47 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered Thunderstorms

Temp: 28°

Humidity: 75%

Sunrise: 5:49 AM

Sunset: 6:54 PM

Updated: July 12, 2024 5:00 PM

10 AP youths..

Continued from page 1

Thokalapalli, Veera Swamy from Pithapuram, Chalamalla Ravi, Ajay Arjunudu, Dharmaraju, and Mahesh, all of whom were sent by an agent named Jhansi. In a particularly distressing incident, Mahesh had his passport and mobile phone stolen by miscreants in Dubai. Distraught, he disappeared to an unknown location. His worried parents are fervently hoping for his safe return to India.

The families of the stranded youths are deeply concerned for their loved ones' safety and are urgently appealing to the government to take swift action to bring them back home safely.



CM Naidu...

Continued from page 1

"We are working tirelessly to ensure that the investment process is smooth and efficient," he said, outlining the administration's strategy to streamline regulatory frameworks and reduce bureaucratic hurdles. The minister also underscored the government's relentless efforts to drive development and generate employment opportunities for the youth. "Since Chandrababu Naidu assumed office as Chief Minister, we have witnessed a growing willingness among industrialists to invest in Andhra Pradesh," he noted. Minister Bharat credited Naidu's visionary leadership and progressive policies for instilling confidence in potential investors

and catalyzing economic growth.

The event was marked by active participation from industrialists, CII members, Chamber of Commerce representatives, and other key stakeholders, reflecting a collective optimism towards the state's economic prospects. The presence of influential business figures underscored the widespread support for the government's initiatives and its vision of a prosperous and industrially vibrant Andhra Pradesh. Minister Bharat's address reiterated the administration's commitment to creating a dynamic and inclusive economic environment. He assured the audience that the government would continue to prioritize industrial growth and infrastructure.

YSRCP...

Continued from page 1

Officials reported that potholes affect 4,151 km of roads, with 2,939 km requiring immediate attention. The Chief Minister also discussed with professors from IIT and SRM University, Tirupati, implementing advanced technology to construct high-quality roads with minimal expenditure. They explored non-traditional methods and materials to build durable roads, especially in high-traffic areas.

Minister for Roads and Buildings BC Janardhan Reddy, department officials, professors, construction experts, and others participated in the meeting.

'24x7...

Continued from page 1

Vijayanand highlighted the importance of strengthening the systems from the ground level to enable consumers to report any power supply interruptions, which would help improve the overall power supply. "Providing quality power to all consumers, making the state power entities financially robust, and improving administrative efficiency are key priorities for the State Government. We are committed to implementing 24x7 power supply with the highest quality and reliability across all key sectors to accelerate the state's economic development," he stated.

The Special Chief Secretary, along with Saurav Kumar Shah, ED/PFC, and Ashok Kumar Rathore.

Waste management..

Continued from page 1

Even a small stream is revered as River Ganga, but we have neglected to keep our water bodies clean." He cited the example of the Yanamadurru canal in Bhimavaram, which has turned into a dumping ground. During the rainy season, waste pollutes the canal water, and cattle often die from consuming plastic waste discarded on the roads. "We are responsible for the death of cows while also performing Go Puja," he remarked.

Pawan Kalyan announced that the SLRM project would begin as a pilot initiative in the Pithapuram constituency. Based on its success, plans

will be formulated to expand the project across the state. He noted, "When we talk about service, few come forward. However, when we highlight the potential for wealth creation from garbage, everyone is interested. We will put all efforts into making this project a success in Pithapuram and will seek support from all stakeholders."

Earlier, SLRM Project Director C. Srinivasan delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the project.

State Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Principal Secretary Shashi Bhushan Kumar, Commissioner Kannababu, and other officials and staff were present at the event.



Deputy CM emphasises coastal preservation efforts

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan emphasised the importance of preserving and managing Andhra Pradesh's extensive coastline, which spans over 973 km. Addressing concerns about sea erosion, he highlighted the state government's commitment to tackling this issue with focused attention and preventive measures.

During a recent review of the erosion at the Uppada coast, the Deputy Chief

Minister discussed the problem with experts, instructing them to study and recommend protective measures.

On Friday, at his residence in Mangalagiri, the Deputy Chief Minister released the Coastal Management Plan. Developed by experts from the National Center for Coastal Research (NCCR), the plan aims to mitigate erosion and reduce wave intensity in coastal areas. The plan is also expected to guide the selection of suitable sites for new docks and fishing har-

bours.

In a significant step, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between NCCR and the Andhra Pradesh Coastal Zone Management Authority (APCZMA) in the presence of the Deputy Chief Minister.

The event was attended by PCB member secretary B. Sridhar, senior forest department officials Saravanan and Dr. P.V. Chalapathi Rao, along with NCCR scientists Dr. M.V. Ramanamurthy and V. Ramanathan, among others.

Himanshu calls on Minister Kolusu



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Himanshu Shukla, who has been appointed as the Director of the State Information and Public Relations Department, took

charge as the Director on Friday. Later, the Director met the Minister for Information and Public Relations Kolusu Partha sarathy at the Tadigadapa camp office as a courtesy visit.

CM halts convoy to address public grievances

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

While en route to the Secretariat on Friday, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu stopped his convoy to address grievances from the public. The impromptu halt occurred after the CM saw people waiting to present their issues.

Among those who approached the CM were the family members of former Araku MLA Siveri Soma, who was killed by Naxalites. The CM listened to Soma's wife, inquired about her well-being, and assured her that he would take responsibility for her son's education.

During this unexpected stop, Araku Sarpanch Srinivas also sought assistance from the CM, explaining that he had lost everything due to an attack by YSRCP supporters. The Chief Minister promised to support Srinivas and informed the public that a new system has been established at the party office for receiving grievances.

The wife of Siveri Soma expressed her gratitude for the CM's willingness to address her concerns and his commitment to supporting her children's education.

Journalist Sakhamuru to be conferred doctorate by US varsity

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Senior journalist Sakhamuru Srinivas Prasad will be conferred a doctorate by South Western University of Texas, USA, on July 24 in New Delhi.

Srinivas Prasad is being awarded the Doctorate for his dissertation "Chandrababu X.O-Anantabhavajalikudu." He has been in the journalism field for the last 36 years and is currently working as the editor of the Telugu daily 'Repatri Kosam.'

Srinivas Prasad's book, "Chandrababu X.O-Anantabhavajalikudu," analyses the ideology of TDP chief and Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. South

Western University of Texas recognized his in-depth analysis and characterization in the book, which led to his selection for the Doctorate.



"I have sent my essays to the University. These essays, published in 'Repatri Kosam,' compare Chandrababu Naidu

with former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who served from 1953 to 1961. Eisenhower made several significant decisions during his tenure, including initiating the construction of national highways that later became a crucial source of America's financial development," explained Srinivas Prasad.

Srinivas Prasad highlighted that Chandrababu Naidu is making similarly impactful decisions. He compared the decisions of Eisenhower and Naidu in his book "Chandrababu X.O-Anantabhavajalikudu," which is being translated into multiple languages, including German and French.

Chief commercial manager inspects Vijayawada rly station

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

D Satyanarayana, Chief Commercial Manager, Passenger Services (PS), conducted a comprehensive inspection of Vijayawada railway station on Friday. The inspection aimed to identify areas for improvement, enhance passenger comfort and convenience, proper functioning of all passenger amenities and ensure compliance with safety and security protocols.

Satyanarayana commenced the inspection along with the station staff at Old Booking Office Concourse, Vijayawada. He inspected all catering stalls, Jan Aahaar units and fast food units. He checked the quality of food, hygiene, and pricing at all catering stalls, hygiene of food preparation area in Food Plaza, emphasising the need for quality and affordable options for passengers. He inspected the water vending machines and tested the TDS



levels of water for sale to the passengers. D Satyanarayana also inspected the amenities and services offered in Rail Coach Restaurant at the East circulating area, ensuring they meet the desired standards.

He also inspected the cleanliness, maintenance, and amenities in the retiring rooms above Platform No 1, emphasising the need for comfortable and hygienic facilities for passengers. Satyanarayana interacted with passengers, vendors,

and railway staff, soliciting feedback and suggestions to enhance the overall passenger experience. He directed officials to ensure proper working of all amenities and services offered at the stations. He also instructed officials to ensure prompt redressal of passenger grievances.

MD Ali Khan, DCM, V Ravi Varma, ACM, M Sailaja, Station Director, Vijayawada, other officials and inspectors took part in the inspection.

CII conclave stresses relevance of Indian values in contemporary businesses

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Andhra Pradesh chapter, convened the second edition of its HR Conclave in Visakhapatnam on Friday. Titled 'Magic of Make in India: Indian Ecosystem Needs Indian Management Ethos', the event fostered a thought-provoking discussion on the relevance of traditional Indian values in leading contemporary businesses.

Saurabh Gaur, IAS, Principal Secretary for Skill Development, Andhra Pradesh, underscored the criticality of robust leadership and team-building within the government sector. He elaborated on the State's ongoing skill census initiative and the pressing need for collaboration between

industry and academia to address the skills gap. Gaur championed the integration of internships and apprenticeships into higher education curriculums to enhance graduate employability.

Dr. V Murali Krishna, Chairman of CII Andhra Pradesh, emphasised the growing importance of ethical and authentic leadership in the context of India's future. He highlighted the necessity of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) initiatives to combat workplace biases and cultivate a more equitable environment.

Padmakumar P. Chairman of CII's People Skills Taskforce, underscored the significance of positive work culture and leadership in fostering well-being of employees. He cautioned against the uncritical adoption

of traditional practices, advocating for introspection to identify timeless leadership principles. Padmakumar emphasised the importance of industry-academia partnerships in upskilling and reskilling the workforce, advocating for modular skill programmes that adapt to evolving industry needs.

K Srinivas Rao, founder of The Strategist, spoke about the challenges faced by CEOs due to the dissonance between traditional Indian values and Western management principles. He proposed exploring and adapting Eastern management models for a better fit with the Indian context.

Dr. Radhakrishnan Pillai, author of Corporate Chanakya, set the tone for the event by advocating for the integration

of Indian management ethos into the global business landscape. He emphasised the need to strike a balance between Indian roots and global aspirations for leadership success. Dr. Pillai discussed the ancient Indian philosophy of Aavishiki, highlighting its importance as foundational knowledge for leaders. He used the example of Draupadi as a strategic thinker to illustrate the timeless nature of knowledge and wisdom rooted in universal principles.

The CII Andhra Pradesh HR Conclave served as a valuable platform for industry leaders, government officials, and academicians to engage in a critical discussion on the role of Indian management ethos in driving success within the Make in India initiative.

Zilla Parishad meeting proposes unified vision for district development

Ministers Gummadi Sandhya Rani, Kondapalli Srinivas attend meeting

PNS ■ VIZIANAGARAM

Women and Child Welfare and Tribal Welfare Minister Gummadi Sandhya Rani, and Minister for MSME, SERP, and NRI Affairs, Kondapalli Srinivas, underscored the importance of bipartisan collaboration in the development of the district during a pivotal Zilla Parishad meeting chaired by Mazji Srinivas Rao on Friday. The session delved into crucial sectors such as agriculture, water management, and healthcare, culminating in significant policy decisions.

Zilla Parishad Chairman Srinivas Rao articulated a unified vision aimed at enhancing the well-being of district residents through proactive measures. He called upon the State government to



urgently address local issues, appointing MLAs to specialised committees aimed at expediting key projects. Notably, the timely completion of the airport and the establishment of a tribal university were highlighted as priorities.

Minister Sandhyarani emphasised the imperative of supporting farmers by providing preferred seed varieties and ensuring fair compensation for crop damage. She issued directives to crack down on counterfeit seeds and fer-

tilisers, advocating a significant subsidy for millets in tribal communities. Kondapalli Srinivas lauded the Rythu Seva Kendras for their pivotal role in farmer education and applauded improved seed distribution practices.

In the domain of water management, Minister Kondapalli Srinivas proposed optimising existing canal networks and leveraging employment guarantee schemes to enhance irrigation efficiency. The discussion emphasised equitable

water distribution and outlined challenges and solutions for ongoing irrigation initiatives.

Healthcare took center stage with intensified efforts against seasonal diseases like malaria, ensuring sustained staffing levels at public hospitals. Plans were outlined for bolstering medical infrastructure in rural areas, including the deployment of feeder ambulances to remote tribal villages.

The meeting concluded with a resolution to relocate the toll-gate at Jonada, reflecting a commitment from public representatives and officials to address local concerns effectively. Participants included Zilla Parishad members, MPs, MLAs, and senior district officials from Vizianagaram and Parvathipuram.

AIRA to establish robotics university in Andhra Pradesh

Association also plans to establish a Centre for Advanced Robotic Research

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The All India Robotics Association (AIRA) has unveiled plans to establish a state-of-the-art robotics university in Andhra Pradesh, marking a significant step forward for robotics education in the region. The announcement was made by AIRA Chairman PSV Kisshhan during a recent tech talk on the Future of Robotics at GITAM Deemed to be University School of Technology.

AIRA's vision extends beyond the university itself. The association also plans to establish a Centre for Advanced Robotic Research. This centre will serve as a focal point for ground-breaking research, fostering robust collaboration between academia and industry leaders. The ultimate objective is to propel the southern region of India to the forefront of robotics excellence.

To ensure graduates possess the necessary skill sets



for immediate industry impact, AIRA, in collaboration with the Electronic Sector Skill Council of India (ESSCI), has developed a comprehensive curriculum specifically designed to meet industry standards. This comprehensive approach extends to standardised frameworks for robotics labs, research facilities, and centres of excellence. Additionally, plans are underway for a larger Robot Park to create a holistic ecosystem that fosters innovation and collaboration. Furthermore, AIRA is

actively working with the IT & Electronic Sector Skill Council and the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) to refine and implement specialised robotics education programmes.

AIRA Chairman Kisshhan emphasised the critical role students can play in shaping India's future through advancements in robotics. He implored them to leverage their creativity, fresh perspectives, and unwavering enthusiasm to propel the field forward.

APJU hails appointment of Himanshu Shukla as I&PR Director



PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

Andhra Pradesh Journalists Union for Print and Electronic Media (APJU) welcomed the appointment of senior IAS officer Himanshu Shukla as Director of the Information and Public Relations department.

In a statement here on Friday, APJU State General Secretary Chaladi Purnachandra Rao and President J Vasudeva Naidu welcomed the appointment of Himanshu Shukla as the Director of I&PR.

They thanked the Director for deciding to renew the working journalists' health scheme. They appealed to Himanshu Shukla to focus on the welfare of journalists in the state.

Krishi Rasayan Exports launches five new products

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Krishi Rasayan Exports Private Ltd, a leading Indian agrochemical multinational company, launched five new products in Vijayawada on Friday. Company's Sales and Marketing General Manager N Eshwar Reddy, President Manager A Anjaneyulu, and Field Marketing Manager Ch Rajeswara Rao launched the pesticides 'Krifos Gold', 'Krill', 'Kri Krete', 'Kougar', and 'Koksy55'.

These products are manufactured on par with international standards. However, 'Krifos Gold', 'Krill', 'Kri Krete', and 'Kougar' target sap-sucking pests and bollworms in cotton, chilli, and



Krishi Rasayan Exports Sales and Marketing Manager Eshwar Reddy, General Manager Anjaneyulu, and Field Marketing Manager Rajeswara Rao launching new products in Vijayawada on Friday

paddy to support higher yields, and better-quality produce.

Koksy55 is a fungicide effective against pests in chillies, vegeta-

bles, nuts, and root crops in horticulture.

Speaking on the occasion, Eshwar Reddy said that the company has produced 142 high-quality products so far, including 14 patented innovations. Over the past five decades, Krishi Rasayan Exports' robust growth was underscored by a 250-fold increase in turnover, he said.

General Manager Anjaneyulu highlighted the company's strong global presence in 40 countries and its eight business subsidiaries. The company continues to innovate, introducing pioneering molecules like metribuzin and metalaxyl to the Indian market, he added.

Food processing sector has great future in State: Minister KP Sarathy

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Kolusu Parthasarathy, Minister of Housing, and Information and Public Relations, has said that CM Chandrababu Naidu is taking various measures for the development of the industrial sector in the State. The minister was the chief guest of an awareness programme on opportunities in the food processing sector that was held under the joint auspices of the Food Processing Society of India, Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and CII in Vijayawada on Friday.

On the occasion, the minister urged the industrialists to set up industries in the State. He said that the State government is providing many concessions as well as permission through



a single-window system. The food processing sector has a great future as many crops are grown in the State, thanks to many rivers. Food processing also provides employment opportunities to many people. He stated that the CM is moving ahead with the cooperation of the Central government in order to bring due recognition to the State world-wide. He stated that the government will give a big boost to the food pro-

cessing sector in the State. Minhaj Alam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing, said that the Central government is offering many subsidies for the food processing sector. He said that besides food processing units in many parts of the country, testing centres are also being set up. He assured that there is a great future in this sector and if young entrepreneurs come forward and set up industries, the Central

government will definitely support them. He assured that he will meet representatives of various industrialists and industries associations to understand their problems and resolve them.

Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCI) national president Narra Ravi Kumar said that the coastal region of Andhra Pradesh is suitable for the food processing sector. In this context, he appealed to CM Chandrababu to allot suitable space for setting up industries. DICCI national vice-president Dr Raja Naik, national vertical head Manjul Kumar, State presidents Ashirwad and Rajamani, SBI DGM Manish Kumar Sindhya, UBI Manager Vasanth Kumar and others were present.

Complete TIDCO houses and hand them over to beneficiaries: DC

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari District Collector C Nagarani has directed the officials concerned to expedite the construction of TIDCO houses and hand over them to the beneficiaries.

The Collector held a meeting with the officials of TIDCO, Engineers, Municipal Commissioners and L and T representatives here on Friday and reviewed the progress of the construction of TIDCO houses. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that 19,872 houses were constructed in the district, out of which 8,736 houses had already been completed and handed over to the beneficiaries.

Out of the 11,136 houses to be handed over to the beneficiaries, 4,668 houses are 90 per cent complete and 6,368 houses are 95 per cent complete, she said and directed the TIDCO officials and the L and T representatives to carry out minor repairs to the houses and complete the painting works at the earliest. The construction



works of the TIDCO houses should be completed 100 per cent and the houses should be handed over to the beneficiaries at the earliest, she ordered the officials.

"Out of 8,352 TIDCO houses in Bhimavaram, the construction of 2,944 houses has been completed and 5,408 houses are yet to be handed over. In Tadepalligudem, out of a total number of 5,376 TIDCO houses, 3,232 houses have been handed over to the beneficiaries and the construction of 2,144 houses is to be completed," Collector Nagarani stated.

In Palakollu, construction of a total number 6,144 houses

has taken up of which 2,560 houses were handed over to the beneficiaries. However, the construction of 3,584 houses is to be completed. The Collector ordered the Municipalities concerned to properly maintain the drainage, roads, sanitation and other infrastructure facilities at the TIDCO housing complex that had already been handed over to the beneficiaries in the district.

"Out of 2,944 houses completed in Bhimavaram, 960 houses have to be handed over to the beneficiaries and more than 90 per cent of the construction work of the STP plant has been completed and the houses will be handed

over to the beneficiaries as soon as they are completed," the Collector told the officials. The Bhimavaram Municipal Commissioner was directed to take immediate steps to construct an approach road to the Bhimavaram TIDCO housing complex.

TIDCO Executive Engineer MS Swamy Naidu, Bhimavaram Municipal Commissioner M Shyamala, Tadepalligudem Municipal Commissioner D Muralikrishna, Palakollu Municipal Commissioner Parthasarathy, L&T Representative Manikanthan and other officials were among those who attended the meeting.

Goal is NTR district's overall development: Collector Srijana

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector Dr G Srijana has stated that her goal is the overall development of the district and for that she sought cooperation of all stakeholders including the media. Media plays a pivotal role in protecting democracy and with cooperation and suggestions from the media, she will strive to develop the district and to serve the public transparently, the Collector said.

Collector Srijana interacted with the media at the camp office in Vijayawada on Friday, for the first time after assuming office.

Speaking on the occasion, Srijana said that she earlier worked as Vijayawada Sub-Collector. But after the district's bifurcation, some geo-



NTR District Collector Dr G Srijana addressing a press conference in Vijayawada on Friday

logical changes have occurred. She said that she was aware of all issues in the district through media friends.

Also, the Collector said that she and other district officials will respond to every

issue as early as possible. She will give importance to addressing the people's problems. Srijana added that she will give top priority to education and infrastructure facilities at the welfare hostels, besides the effective implementation of the mid-day-meals scheme in all schools.

The Collector said that as per the requirements of the industries and with the support of the Skill Development Corporation, the district administration will provide skill training for students. She assured the people of necessary steps to prevent accidents in major industries. During the rainy season, special focus will be on maintaining sanitation, and preventing waste dumping in canals, she explained.

IIT experts to assess strength of halted structures in Amaravati

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development, Ponguru Narayana, announced that the Andhra Pradesh government has decided to engage engineers from the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) to assess the structural integrity of buildings whose construction has been halted in Amaravati. IIT Chennai will be responsible for evaluating the foundation strength of the iconic buildings, while IIT Hyderabad will assess the strength of residential complexes for public representatives, officers, and employees.

In a press conference held in Amaravati on Friday, Minister Narayana stated that the government plans to resume construction based on the findings provided by the IITs. He also mentioned that due to the departure of 47 consultants who previously worked for the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA), new tenders have been issued to appoint consultants. Additionally, he highlighted a staff shortage at CRDA, noting that the current workforce is 528 employees fewer than it was previously.

Collector inspects repair works of Gundlakamma project

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Collector A Thameem Ansariya on Friday inspected the crest gates repair works of the Gundlakamma project.

The Collector visited the Gundlakamma project accompanied by the engineers and officers. She inspected the repairing works of crest gates at the project. The officials were asked about the present condition of the crest gates, the water level in the project and the water supply system. The site engineers explained to her the details of the 12 crest gate, stating that the repair works are ongoing. They said that steps are being taken to install all the gates by the end of August.

The engineers apprised the Collector that the crest gates are currently being sandblast-



ed. The Collector directed them to ensure that there is no delay in these works.

Irrigation SE Naga Murali Mohan explained to the Collector about the supply of water through the project and land acquisition.

He said that this project has strengthened the distribution system to provide water to 28,000 acres under the right canal, adding that the government cancelled the work order due to land acquisition problems under the left canal.

MP assures farmers of setting up palm oil board

PNS ■ ELURU

Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar assured of striving to establish a palm oil board in the district.

Addressing the oil palm farmers' meeting in his office here on Friday, the MP said that he would work to establish a palm oil board. He recalled that there are tobacco boards and coconut boards for the benefit of farmers and underlined that a palm oil board should be established.

The MP said that he would ask the Central government to fix Rs 17,000 as the basic price for palm oil. He also promised to strive to hike the price every year for the palm oil farmers.

"After the Polavaram project,



he gave importance to resolving the problems of palm oil farmers. I am ready to go to any extent for the sake of oil palm farmers. I will speak to the Central ministers in this regard," he made it clear.

MP Mahesh Kumar maintained that he would strive hard to complete the

Chintalapudi lift scheme. Palm oil farmers union State president Bobbara Veera Raghava Rao, national secretary Kranthi Kumar Reddy, Pedavegi OilFed president Undavalli Venkata Rao and Navabharat president Achanta Suryanarayan were among those who attended the meeting.

Minister launches removal of hyacinth from irrigation drain

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Minister for Water Management Resources Nimmala Ramanaidu launched the removal of hyacinth from the Aava drain at Konteru in Yelamanchili mandal on Friday.

He also launched spraying of chemicals by drones to check the spread of wild creepers in the drain. Speaking on the occasion, Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu said that the government had released funds for the removal of hyacinth, wild plants and creepers, which were spread in the irrigation canals and drains inhibiting the water flow.



"The government is spending Rs 90 crore to carry out over 960 works of removal of hyacinth,

other wild creepers and plants from the canals and drains in the state. The government has

taken up the mission within one month of coming to power," the Minister highlighted.

Nimmala Ramanaidu said that as part of modernizing the canals and drains, the government focused on the free flow of water in canals and drains by removing hindrances like hyacinths and wild plants.

The removal of hyacinths and creepers from the canals and drains should have been taken up during April but the erstwhile YSRCP government did not invite tenders for the works, he slammed.

Drainage EE MVV Kishore, DE E Vinod and AE P Uday Shankar were among those who were present.

‘Many BRS MLAs ready to join BJP, but they will have to face by-polls’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Many BRS MLAs are ready to join the BJP but the BJP told them that they will be inducted into the BJP only if they are ready to resign their MLA post and face by-elections, the BJP's Medak MP, M. Raghunandan Rao, said.

He made it clear that the BJP will induct BRS MLAs only if they are ready to resign their MLA posts.

Raghunandan said that pink changed to tricolour in the last seven months but there is no change in governance quality. He warned that the BJP will teach a lesson to the Congress and the BRS for engaging in 'political prostitution'.

Asking Revanth Reddy's government to explain why it is afraid to arrest KCR in connection with the phone tapping case, the Medak MP said the Revanth Reddy government is wasting time by not arresting former ministers who engaged in corruption.

He criticised the Congress government saying that R-Tax, B-Tax and U-Tax have been



squeezing the state in the last seven months and demanded that the government should issue new ration cards to the poor as per the assurance given during elections.

He said the BJP executive committee meeting decided to launch a stir demanding

immediate implementation of the farm loan waiver and Rythu Bharosa schemes.

Stating that the BJP will stand by the unemployed, Raghunandan said the Congress spoke one thing when it was in the opposition and is speaking differently when in power.

He said the Congress government is postponing elections to local bodies due to fear of defeat and demanded that the government should conduct local elections within a month. He said the Revanth admin is not in a position to give Rs 4,116 as unemployment allowance but the CM is taking Rs 4 lakh as salary per month. He said that Chief Minister Revanth draws the highest salary across the country among CMs.

12,184 MTs recycled PDS rice seized: Collector

PNS ■ KAKINADA

District Collector Shan Mohan said that during the last 15 days, 119 rice mills and 76 godowns had been inspected in the wake of reports of PDS rice recycling and export and 51,427 MTs of rice worth Rs 215 crore were seized of which 12,184 MTs of rice was found out to be recycled in the Laboratory tests.

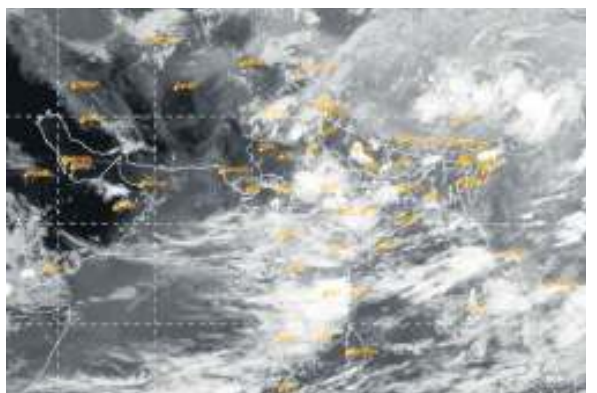
Addressing a press conference here on Friday, he said that laboratory test reports for 11,000 MTs of rice were awaited, adding the recycled rice could be easily diagnosed as they are fortified. Cases were registered against those for illegally stocking the recycled rice.

He stated that action is being taken to unearth the role of traders involved from PDS rice purchase to the exporting chain network, adding that surprise raids are also being

conducted at random. The surveillance and inspection would continue till the irregularities are curbed 'he said.

The Collector informed that special check posts were being set up to identify the recycled PDS rice inside the port and also on main roads leading to the port posting special staff imparting training, the Collector added. DSO MV Prasad, DM civil supplies Balasaraswathi, and DD information D Nagarjuna were among those who attended.

The Collector observed that they had identified that the polished PDS rice was being exported to other countries only through the anchorage port. To curb the illegal PDS rice exports, a special checking system was arranged with the coordination of eight departments including port, customs, police, and civil supplies.



Heavy rain likely in north coastal AP over next 5 days

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next five days, the Meteorological Centre said on Friday.

A daily weather report here said that the same situation is likely to prevail in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next 24 hours and on July 15 and 16.

Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and strong surface winds with speeds ranging from 30-40 Kmph are likely to occur at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next five days and in Rayalaseema from July 13 to 16.

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers is likely to

occur in many places or at a few places or one or two places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema during the next seven days.

A trough runs from northeast Assam to northwest Bay of Bengal at 0.9 km above mean sea level. A trough runs from west Assam to northwest Bay of Bengal at 3.1 km above mean sea level.

The southwest monsoon has been normal in Coastal Andhra Pradesh & Yanam and weak in Rayalaseema. Rain occurred at a few places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and dry weather prevailed in Rayalaseema during the last 24 hours. Heavy rain occurred at Nuzvid in the Eluru district of Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the same period, the report added.

Harish calls for restoration of Brahmin welfare initiative

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Minister and MLA T Harish Rao has penned an open letter to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, urging the restoration of the Telangana Brahmin Samkshema Parishad. In his letter, Harish Rao expressed deep concern over the current state of Brahmin welfare schemes which have come to a halt under the Congress-led government.

The Telangana Brahmin Samkshema Parishad, established during the administration of former chief minister

K Chandrashekar Rao, aimed to uplift poor Brahmins in the State.

Under the KCR's leadership, an annual allocation of Rs 100 crore was consistently provided for the Brahmin Parishad. Initiatives like the "Vivekananda Overseas Education Scheme" for students, the "Sri Ramanuja Fee Reimbursement Scheme," and financial aid for Vedic schools and scholars through "Vedahita" were significant in promoting education and self-employment among the Brahmin community.

INDIA CORNER

Plea claims MP minister acquired fake caste certificate to contest state polls

A petition has been filed in the Madhya Pradesh High Court seeking a probe regarding the caste certificate of state Minister Gautam Tetwal, who contested the 2023 legislative assembly elections from a Scheduled Caste reserved seat. The petitioner has contended that Tetwal, minister of state (independent charge) for Skill Development and Employment, contested the assembly election last year from the Sarangpur seat in Rajgarh district with a fraudulently acquired caste certificate. Tetwal defeated Congress candidate Kala Mahesh Malviya by 23,054 votes.

The petitioner, Jitendra Kumar Malviya, stated that the minister was from the Jingar community, part of the Other Backward Classes (OBC). The petition might come up for hearing next week, the petitioner's lawyer, Dharmendra Chelawat, told reporters here on Friday.



Three arrested for forcing minor to drink urine in UP's Shravasti

Three persons have been arrested for allegedly making a minor consume urine in Uttar Pradesh's Shravasti district, police said on Friday. The accused, identified as Bhure Tiwari alias Kishan, Dilip Mishra and Satyam Tiwari, are residents of Rampur Tribhaina village of the district's Gilaula area, the police said. According to Gilaula Station House Officer (SHO) Mahima Nath Upadhyay, the victim's elder brother on Tuesday lodged a complaint with the Shravasti Superintendent of Police saying that the three accused "tried to forcibly make his 15-year-old brother drink urine by filling it in a liquor bottle". Following the complaint, a case was registered at the local police and the accused were arrested on Wednesday, the SHO said. The victim's brother said in his complaint that on July 1, Kishan had asked his brother to put a disc jockey (DJ) on a vehicle and later demanded that a generator be also loaded on it, SHO Upadhyay said.



Ch'garh CM flags off 15 interceptors; says mishap prevention top priority

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Friday flagged off 15 hi-tech interceptors and said preventing road accidents was among his government's top priorities. The aim was to make people aware of traffic rules and regulations rather than just collecting fines from offenders, Sai added. These interceptors have radar gun to detect speeding, breathalysers to check drunken driving, surveillance cameras for 360 degree monitoring, light intensity measuring instrument for headlight beam, glass transparency instrument and decibel meter to check noise pollution, a government official said. "Preventing road accidents is among our top priorities and we are working in this direction by making the traffic system hi-tech. Traffic rules compliance while driving guarantees safe travel. Road safety is a collective responsibility as every year thousands of people lose their lives in road mishaps while many become permanently disabled," CM Sai said.



DU VC: Plan to start Manusmriti for LLB students not found appropriate

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi University (DU) Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh on Friday said the proposal to introduce Manusmriti for LLB students was rejected as it was not found appropriate, and that there are other texts which can be used for teaching Indian knowledge.

In an interview with PTI, Singh said he exercised his emergency powers to scrap the proposal during a pre-screening of the agenda for the Academic Council meeting on Friday.

The vice-chancellor (VC) held back the proposal to introduce Manusmriti for LLB students on Thursday and clarified that no such text would be taught by the university after a section of teachers objected to it. The proposed changes in the syllabus of the jurisprudence paper pertained to semesters



one and six of LLB.

According to the revisions, two readings on Manusmriti - 'Manusmriti with the Manubhasya of Medhatithi' by G N Jha and 'Commentary of Manu Smriti - Smritichandrika' by T. Kristnaswami Iyer -- were proposed to be introduced for the students.

A committee headed by Singh decided that the proposal made by the Faculty of Law was not appropriate to be

introduced for deliberations and rejected it before it could be tabled before the Academic Council, the highest decision-making body of DU.

"When this proposal was put forward in front of a committee headed by me, we did not find it appropriate and rejected it. There are many other texts to teach Indian knowledge and we should not rely on any one text," Singh said.

Pradhan: No question of including controversial portion of any script

Amid a row over the proposal to teach Manusmriti to law students of Delhi University, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Friday said there is no question of including any controversial portion of any script in the curriculum. While noting that Delhi University Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh had rejected the proposal to teach Manusmriti to law students on Thursday itself, Pradhan said the government is committed to upholding the true spirit of the Constitution. "Yesterday, some information came to us that Manusmriti will be part of Law Faculty course (in DU). I enquired and talked to Delhi University Vice Chancellor. He assured me that some law

faculty member have proposed some changes in the jurisprudence chapter," Pradhan told reporters in Hyderabad. "There is no endorsement of any such proposal in the Academic Council. Yesterday itself, the Vice Chancellor rejected that proposal. We all are committed to our Constitution, to futuristic approach. Government is committed to upholding the true spirit and letter of Constitution. There is no question of including any controversial portion of any script," he said. A proposal to teach Manusmriti to Delhi University's LLB students was slated to be discussed in a meeting of its Academic Council.

'Guarantees block funds for developmental works'

K'taka CM Siddaramaiah's economic advisor admits

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's economic advisor Basavaraj Rayareddi has said that huge allocations to the five guarantees of the state government have made it difficult to get funds for developmental works.

The Congress MLA from Yelburga in Koppal district was speaking at a farmers' meeting after launching work at a lake at Mangaluru village in his Assembly segment.

"The Chief Minister has made me his economic advisor, and as I interact with him daily, this money has come (for the lake project), or else it wouldn't have come...impossible. This is the only work that is happening in the entire state, because guarantees will itself finish things... Rs 60,000- Rs 65,000 crore we have to



spend for it (guarantees). I know how difficult it is, internal finance" Rayareddi said.

Opposition BJP and JD(S) have been accusing the Congress government in the state of not taking up any developmental works, because of the large spending to fulfil the guarantees promised by the party during the Assembly elections.

Reacting to Rayareddi's claims, Deputy Chief Minister and state Congress President

D K Shivakumar has said "there are no difficulties, we are streamlining. We have fulfilled our promises. We will continue the guarantee schemes..."

Siddaramaiah has set aside Rs 52,009 crore for his government's flagship five guarantee schemes in the current financial year. The five guarantee schemes are: 200 units of free power to all households (Gruha Jyoti), Rs 2,000 monthly assistance to the woman head of every family (Gruha Lakshmi), payment of cash in lieu of the additional 5 kg of rice to every member of a BPL household (Anna Bhagya), Rs 3,000 every month for unemployed graduate youth and Rs 1,500 for diploma holders for two years (YuvaNidhi), and free travel for women in public transport buses.

Indian techie drowns in Glacier National Park in US

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

A 26-year-old Indian IT professional working in California drowned in the famous Glacier National Park in the US state of Montana while on vacation with friends, according to park authorities.

The victim has been identified as Siddhant Vitthal Patil, the National Park Service said in a statement.

Patil, who was a technology professional, was hiking above the gorge on June 6 on Avalanche Lake Trail, where he fell off a large rock into Avalanche Creek.

It is unclear if he slipped on a wet portion of the rock or lost his balance.

Friends who were with him saw Patil go underwater and resurface before being swept up by the current into the gorge.

His body has not been found. Helicopters conducted aerial searches, but officials suspected the body was being held down. Patil is presumed

dead, the statement said.

Rangers suspect that the body is being held down by submerged obstacles such as fallen trees or rocks.

Rangers are continuously monitoring the area and are starting to recover personal items that have washed downstream.

The water in the gorge is unsearchable due to depth and turbulence, creating whitewater conditions. Rangers flew a drone to try and determine the location of the body, but the effort was unsuccessful. Ground search efforts continue from the gorge to the bridge on Trail of the Cedars.

Patil, hailing from Maharashtra, was living and working in California and on vacation with friends.

He texted his mother two hours before the tragic incident, telling her that he would be returning to San Jose, where he worked with Cadence Design Systems, in another three days.



Snow cover in HP river basins declined by 12.72% in 2023-24

PNS ■ SHIMLA

The seasonal snow cover in Chenab, Beas, Ravi and Sutlej river basins in Himachal Pradesh decreased by 12.72 per cent in 2023-24 compared to 14.25 per cent in 2022-23, a statement issued here on Friday said.

During the early winter months of 2023-24 (October to November), the Chenab, Beas and Sutlej basins showed negative trends in snow cover, whereas the Ravi basin showed a marginal increase, reflecting a positive trend, the statement quoting a study said.

However, results for the peak winter months indicated significant declines in all the basins -- 67 per cent in Sutlej, 44 per cent in Ravi, 43 per cent in Beas and 42 per cent in Chenab in January 2024, according to the study conducted by the State Centre on Climate Change, under the aegis of the HP Council for Science, Technology, and Environment (HIMCOSTE).

In February, a positive trend was observed in all basins, with an increase in snow cover, continuing into March 2024.

Based on the analysis, it was observed that the decline was 15.39 per cent in the Chenab basin, 7.65 per cent in Beas, 9.89 per cent in Ravi and 12.45 per cent in Sutlej in 2023-24.

RADICAL CHANGE AFTER 94 YEARS

Kerala Kalamandalam serves non-veg food for the first time

PNS ■ THRISSUR (KERALA)

For the first time in the history of the Kerala Kalamandalam, a premier public institution for the preservation and promotion of the traditional performing arts of the state, non-vegetarian dishes were served at its canteen to students on July 10, on popular demand.

An official at the Deemed-to-be-University said that chicken biryani, prepared at the famous kitchen run by inmates of Vayyur Central Jail, was served to the students on Wednesday.

This marked the first time since its founding in 1930 that



food was served to students at the institution which was not just plant-based or dairy-based, according to the official.

Kalamandalam is a residential institution that imparts training in various performing arts, such as Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Thullal,

Kuttiyattam (male and female), Panchavadyam, Carnatic music, Mridangam, etc.

The official said the decision to serve meat-based dishes was taken by the university authorities in response to the demand from students to not be restricted to plant-based food. Initially, a mess committee comprising representatives of students, teachers, and non-teaching staff was formed, and based on student demand it was decided to serve chicken biryani on July 10. The mess committee is scheduled to meet on July 20, and a decision is expected to be made on serving other meat-based dishes to the students, the official said.

Delhi HC denies bail to Bibhav Kumar in Swati Maliwal assault case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday denied bail to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar who is accused of assaulting AAP Rajya Sabha member Swati Maliwal.

Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta dismissed Kumar's bail plea, saying he enjoys "considerable influence" and no ground to grant him the relief was made out.

It cannot be ruled out that witnesses may be influenced or evidence tampered with in case the petitioner is released on bail, said the judge.

Keeping in view the nature of accusations and apprehension of the witnesses being influenced, no grounds are made out for releasing the petitioner on bail at this stage, the judge concluded. "Application is accordingly dismissed."

Kumar, presently in judicial

custody, allegedly assaulted Maliwal on May 13 at Kejriwal's official residence. He was arrested on May 18.

An FIR was registered against Kumar on May 16 under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code, including those related to criminal intimidation, assault or using criminal force on a woman with the intent to disrobe, and attempt to commit culpable homicide.

Scribe uttering objectionable word not edited: X

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Social media platform X has contended before the Delhi High Court that the video clip in which senior journalist Rajat Sharma could be heard uttering allegedly an objectionable word to Congress leader Ragini Nayak during a TV debate cannot be construed to be "edited".

X claimed that the video in the social media posts which Sharma seeks to remove from its platform matches with his channel India TV's own livestream and is prima facie "authentic".

The micro-blogging site has approached the high court seeking vacation of an ad-interim injunction order by which X Corp, Google India

and Meta platforms were required to remove social media posts if they are not deleted by Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh, Pawan Khera and Ragini Nayak.

The application-cum-reply has been filed by X in the pending suit of Sharma in which he sought removal of the alleged offensive posts and videos against him on social media and restraining the political leaders from making allegations against him.

Justice Manmeet P S Arora issued a notice and asked the journalist to respond to file response to X's application. He listed it for further hearing on August 22.

Meanwhile, the counsel for the three Congress leaders



submitted that in compliance with the high court's June 14 order, they will delete the social media posts authored by them.

However, the take down of posts will be without prejudice to their rights and contentions on the merits of the matter, the counsel said.

Justice Arora asked X to unblock the particular URLs

which it claimed to have geo-blocked in pursuance of the court order by 5 pm on Friday and inform the Congress leaders about it.

Upon being informed, the leaders shall immediately delete the tweets, latest by 7 pm on Friday, the high court said.

"In the unlikely event that defendant nos. 4 to 6 (Congress leaders) breach the undertaking given to this court and do not take down the impugned tweets listed above by 7 PM on July 12, the plaintiff shall notify the defendant no. 1 (X) about the non-compliance by 8 PM on July 12. Upon receiving intimation from the plaintiff, the defendant no. 1 shall on or before 8 PM on July 13 once again block the above listed

URLs," it said.

The journalist has claimed that he was defamed by the Congress leaders over use of "abusive language" during his show on June 4, the day counting of the Lok Sabha elections was taking place.

X, in its application-cum-reply, said, "This court cannot conclude that the video is 'edited' or that it contains 'insertions' merely on the basis of plaintiff's (Sharma) vague and unsubstantiated assertions... The injunction order should be vacated because it has prejudiced the trial in the suit by already returning an unsubstantiated finding that the video is edited at a preliminary stage, when prima facie there was no 'editing'."

My role is to translate aspirations of states into reality: Scindia

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia on Friday said his role would primarily be that of a facilitator, ensuring that aspirations of the states in the region are realised.

He emphasised the importance of showcasing the North Eastern region's rich cultural heritage, traditions, and natural resources to the world.

Talking to reporters at the airport here on his first visit to the North East since assuming charge, Scindia said he will work towards realising the government's vision of making



the region the "gateway of India's progress". "Work to achieve it has already been on track for the last 10 years," he added.

He said the budgetary outlay for the region has increased from Rs 24,000 crore to almost Rs 84,000 crore in the last decade, highlighting develop-

ments in infrastructure such as roads, railways, and airports, which have expanded from nine to seventeen.

Scindia also pointed out advancements in social sectors including health, education, and sports, as well as potential growth areas like tourism, agarwood, and bamboo production.

"North East is a repository of our age-old traditions, rituals, cultural vibrancy, nature's abundance and that must be showcased to the world," Scindia said, adding that the nation's 'Look East Policy' has been changed to 'Act East Policy' for this purpose.



Do Democrats have a Plan B?

With Biden increasingly under attack for his lacklustre performance, Democrats must be exploring alternatives

The Democratic Party have to take a make-or-break decision— to continue with Joe Biden as presidential candidate or find an alternative. Both choices are difficult and have their pros and cons. Biden's age and performance might push the party to consider a Plan B. But the time is running out for Democrats and so are the options. It all began much earlier but the presidential debate was the proverbial last straw when Biden performed below par. However, Despite the challenges, there are strong arguments for sticking with Biden. He has overseen a period of significant legislative achievements, including the passage of a massive infrastructure bill, ambitious climate change initiatives, and a robust COVID-19 vaccination campaign. Biden's administration has also navigated complex international relations, working to rebuild alliances and address global threats, especially China and Russia. His centrist approach has aimed to unify a deeply divided nation, seeking to appeal to both progressive and moderate Democrats, as well



as independents and even some Republicans. However, concerns about Biden's age and cognitive abilities persist. At 81, he is the oldest president in US history, and questions about his stamina and mental acuity have been fodder for both political opponents and media speculation. Polls indicate a significant portion of the electorate is uneasy about his capacity to serve another four-year term. Furthermore, his handling of certain issues, such as the withdrawal from Afghanistan and ongoing economic challenges, has drawn criticism from both sides of the political spectrum.

These controversies have fueled speculation about whether Biden is the best candidate to lead the Democrats to victory in 2024. But with elections barely four months away Democrats would find a replacement rather hard. Even invoking the 25th Amendment, which allows for the removal of a president deemed unfit to serve, remains an extreme and unlikely scenario. Given the potential political fallout and the necessity for clear, indisputable evidence of incapacity, this route is rather a precarious one. If the Democrats decide to explore alternatives, several high-profile figures could emerge as potential contenders. As the sitting vice president, Kamala Harris is the most obvious choice. Her historic candidacy as the first female, first Black, and first South Asian vice president offers a compelling narrative, but her leadership and policy effectiveness will be under intense scrutiny. Next in line would be Pete Buttigieg, the Secretary of Transportation and former mayor of South Bend, Indiana. His youth, eloquence, and policy acumen make him a viable candidate. Then of course you have Gavin Newsom, the governor of California has been a vocal advocate for progressive policies and has shown resilience in the face of political challenges. The Democrats are caught between the devil and the deep sea. Ultimately, the decision will hinge on the party's assessment of Biden's ability to lead effectively and win re-election.

PICTALK



Priests of Shiva Temple perform 'pooja' at the reception of container ship San Fernando, in Thiruvananthapuram PTI

Young philanthropists ushering in new age of giving in India

With a burgeoning startup ecosystem, India is witnessing a new generation of wealth creators who are passionate about funding impactful projects

Young philanthropists are playing a catalytic role in ushering in a new age of giving that underscores the need for scalable change and long-term impact. Having the third-largest startup ecosystem, and being home to 100 unicorns, India has given rise to a new generation of wealth creators who are young, tech-driven, and passionate about change. These 'new-age' philanthropists are transforming the country's infrastructure and bringing about long-lasting growth. Their efforts are not just about giving back; they are about driving systemic and sustainable impact across communities. For instance, initiatives like the Karnataka Model School Pathways Programme are redefining India's education thinking. In a world where socioeconomic challenges are pervasive, these young change-makers are bringing fresh perspectives and innovative approaches to philanthropy, making it not only a trend but also a powerful force for social change. Moving away from the traditional approach of philanthropy being seen as a post-retirement task, this genera-



tion of philanthropists is starting early, leveraging their wealth, influence, and technological savvy to drive meaningful change within their lifetime. Instead of adhering to traditional models of charity, young philanthropists are adopting a more entrepreneurial approach, seeking out innovative solutions and investing in new focus areas like climate change, mental health, sports for development, etc. The India Philanthropy Report 2024 shows how emerging issues like climate change and Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) have become the top three areas of interest apart from traditional causes for this new cohort of young entrepreneurs. Nikhil Kamath, CEO of Zerodha and one of the

youngest philanthropists is a strong advocate of climate change. A founder of YIPP which brings together young entrepreneurs to address pressing societal issues collectively, Kamath had started investing in environmental problems way back in 2019 with the launch of Rainmatter Foundation and recently invested in a charity that combats climate change in India. These new age givers are using technology to tackle some of India's most pressing problems, combining data-driven insights with a deep understanding of social issues to create long-term, scalable impact. Their approach has been guided by a blend of head and heart making their philanthropy more strategic and forward-thinking. Their willingness to collaborate and pool time, talent and treasure for collective impact is another characteristic of this new generation of philanthropists. Recognizing the complexity of social challenges and the need for coordinated action, they are forging partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations to amplify their efforts. Collective philan-

thropy presents a dynamic approach to otherwise traditional models of philanthropy, opening avenues for innovative solutions to India's unique problems. This spirit of collaboration is exemplified by initiatives such as the YIPP which was started in 2021 to bring together young change makers below the age of 45 to create new-age solutions collectively. With a clear focus on accountability and scalability, this 15-member group aims to make their giving more structured, bold and innovative. Hailing from diverse backgrounds, experiences and philanthropic aspirations, they are collectively a motivated force keen to showcase the power of collaboration and strength in working together towards a set common goal. With their entrepreneurial spirit, technological acumen, and commitment to collective action, they are leading the charge towards a brighter tomorrow for India and the world.

(The writer is founding member, Young India Philanthropic Pledge and chief inspiration officer, Yuva Unstoppable; views are personal)



AMITABH SHAH

The Taliban's war on Afghan women

Despite denials by Taliban officials, the bravery of Afghan women coming forward underscores the severe and dehumanising treatment they endure

A piece in *The Guardian*, bylined Zahra Joya, Chris McGreal, Khodadad Poladi, Annie Kelly and Tom Levitt, dated July 6, 2024, and published under the heading "Video appears to show gang-rape of Afghan woman in Taliban jail," makes horrifying reading. According to the report, the video recording, seen by *The Guardian* and Rukhsana Media, an online news agency focused on covering issues affecting women in Afghanistan, shows a young woman, a human rights activist, being gang-raped and tortured in a Taliban jail by armed men. It shows her being told to take off her clothes and then raped multiple times by two men. She is seen as standing naked, her face visible, and is identifiable during the attacks. The report cites the woman as saying that she was arrested for participating in a public protest against the Taliban and was raped in a Taliban prison. The video was sent to her after she had fled Afghanistan and spoken out against the Taliban, with the threat that it would be shown to her family and released on social media if she spoke against the Islamic Emirate in public. It also cites other examples of sexual abuse, beatings, and torture, including by electric shocks, of not only those protesting against the Taliban's squelching of women's rights but of young women and teenagers accused of violating hijab rules. Zabihullah Mujahid, Chief Spokesman and Deputy Minister of Information and Culture of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has, according to *The Guardian* report, denied the allegations of widespread sexual assaults on incarcerated women. While he could not have done otherwise, one can hardly doubt the women's versions, given the stigma attached to victims of sexual violence in countries like Afghanistan. It takes a massive amount of courage and resolve for a woman, or her relatives, to state that she had been raped or molested in custody. Even the UN has commented on the arrests and detentions. Under the heading "Permanent Darkness," Ajit



Kumar Singh has written in the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATPOR, Volume 22, Number 18) dated March 11, 2024, that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) had expressed grave concern over the arrest and detention of women and girls for alleged non-compliance with the Islamic dress code. He has quoted Roza Otunbayeva, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and head of UNAMA, as observing that enforcement measures and physical violence were "especially demeaning and dangerous for Afghan women." Detention, she continued, carried "an enormous stigma that put Afghan women at even greater risk." The Taliban's war on women—perhaps the most diabolical feature of their first stint in power from 1996 to 2001—continues in their second innings with rape and molestation as a part of it. The process started in September 2021 when the Taliban removed the signboard of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Kabul and replaced it with that of the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, the earlier incarnation of which had



IT TAKES A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF COURAGE AND RESOLVE FOR A WOMAN, OR HER RELATIVES, TO STATE THAT SHE HAD BEEN RAPED OR MOLESTED IN CUSTODY

earned widespread notoriety during their first stint in power, for arbitrary and savage enforcement—with particular harshness towards women—of the government's obscurantist diktats. A series of measures has followed. Women are not allowed to travel more than 70 kilometres without a male escort who is her husband or a mahram, a close blood relative—father, son, brother, grandfather, great-grandfather, nephew with whom marriage is prohibited and, in whose presence, she need not wear a hijab. They are to wear "proper" hijabs, loose black garments, covering their bodies and faces, in public places and their male relatives have been made responsible under pain of punishment. They are excluded from education above the primary level and virtually every kind of employment. Worse, in a voice message broadcast by Afghanistan's state television on March 23, 2024, the Taliban's supreme leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada, had said, "We will flog the women ... we will stone them to death in public [for adultery]." The Taliban had started flogging women even before the announcement, administering at least 30 strokes for

"offences" like using cell phones, talking to men or being in love or relationships. All this was not unexpected given the Taliban's obscurantist beliefs and record in power during its first coming from 1996 to 2001. What is surprising is the silence—to say nothing of the absence of effective action—of the rest of the world, even the Western democracies, in the matter. The UN too seems to be falling in line. This is suggested by its surrender in the case of the recent conference of global envoys, held in Doha, Qatar, and attended by envoys of 25 countries including the US, Russia, China and the European Union. The conference, to promote engagement with the Taliban on a variety of issues, was the third of its kind. The Taliban, which had not attended the earlier two, attended it only after the organisers accepted their condition that women would not attend it. The UN's capitulation has been widely condemned by human rights organisations which rightly believe it would encourage the Taliban to further trample on women's rights. But who cares? (The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FARMERS TO REIGNITE PROTESTS

Madam — The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), India's largest farmers' organization that led the historic 2020-21 protests, has announced plans to resume their agitation against the BJP-led NDA government to push for their pending demands. These demands include a guaranteed MSP law, loan waivers, and pensions for farmers and farmworkers. The General Body has decided to restart the agitation, demanding the implementation of the agreement signed on December 9, 2021, by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and other key demands affecting farmers' livelihoods. The SKM plans to campaign against the BJP in the upcoming assembly elections and intends to expose, oppose, and punish the party. The farmers' movement has significantly impacted Lok Sabha elections, defeating the BJP in 38 rural seats across Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Clearly, all is not well for the BJP.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

PRIORITIES OF GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Madam — Madam, This is in reference to the report, "Namami Ganga: Rs211 Crore Splash to Keep Maha Kumbh Eco-Friendly" (July 10). Whether the state government spends money on the Maha Kumbh Mela (MKM) at Prayag or not, the Modi government at the Centre is ready to pour money into the coffers of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's government months ahead of the function. The Government of India, which delayed the payment of flood relief money to Tamil Nadu for many months and finally released a small amount with great reluctance coinciding with the Lok Sabha elections, has now 'splashed' Rs211 crore to the UP government quickly for the Mela scheduled for January-February 2025. This money is intended for preserving the purity of the Ganga river and ensuring cleanliness throughout the mega event. Just a week ago, another annual global event, the Puri Jagannath Rath Yatra, was celebrated by the

World Population Day



World Population Day is observed with various programs aimed at achieving overall population control worldwide, and India is no exception. The focal theme

emphasises family planning to significantly improve the health of mothers and children. However, in India, discussions about controlling the population of over 1.35 billion people often meet with resistance from both the public and political leaders. Given the current growth rate, India is expected to surpass China's population by 2025, ahead of the earlier projection for 2028.

This year's World Population Day on July 11 coincides with the anticipated birth of the Earth's eight billionth inhabitant. While this milestone celebrates our diversity and advancements in health that have extended lifespans and reduced maternal and child mortality rates, the uncontrolled population increase poses a significant threat. The situation demands urgent attention and action to avoid potential dangers.

Jayanthi Subramaniam | Mumbai

ISKCON organization in Odisha. It was also a mega Hindu festival, but the Centre did not choose to fund this festival. However, the core issue I wish to point out is the fate of the Clean Ganga project introduced by the BJP government in its first tenure, for which Rs 5,000 crore was allocated. It is not known if the cleaning project was completed, as no report was presented in Parliament. It is unclear whether sustained maintenance is regularly done by the UP government, whether a system has been put in place to guard against the misuse and overcrowding of the Ganga river, and whether steps are taken to prohibit the immersion and floating of dead bodies in the river. Protecting the holiness and purity of the Ganga river is the foremost duty of both the Centre and the UP government.

Manoharan Muthuswamy | Ramnad

SUPREME COURT'S ALIMONY VERDICT

Madam — The Supreme Court's decision on alimony for divorced Muslim women is significant. The court determined that every woman, regardless of faith, has the

right to alimony. Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Augustin George Masih, though making independent decisions, ultimately reached the same conclusion. Both indicated that a divorced Muslim woman could file a lawsuit against her husband under Section 125 of the CrPC to receive alimony. The Supreme Court's ruling is admirable and consistent with the duties of a welfare state. This verdict mirrors the one handed down in the Shah Bano case on April 23, 1985. Previously, alimony for divorced women was determined by Muslim Personal Law, which allowed alimony only during the Iddat period. However, the Supreme Court declared that Section 125 of the Indian Penal Code is equally applicable to all women, allowing them to claim alimony even after Iddat. Many divorced Muslim women do not remarry, and receiving alimony only during the Iddat period does not resolve their issues.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

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FIRST COLUMN

BALANCING EMPATHY AND PROFESSIONALISM

While layoffs are challenging, there is room for improving how they are managed



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

Layoffs are never easy. The impact on the affected employees will be deep and most often devastating; it is a turning point in their professional and personal lives—a stressful one, of course. But what the majority of people are not aware of is that those tasked to deliver the message—the HR professionals—also carry an emotional burden. It may be the senior leadership making tough decisions, but HR bears the heart-wrenching job of communicating them. HR professionals are often the stoic face of the company during these times. But behind the professionalism of that stone exterior is a very real understanding of the weight of their actions. They, too, are humans.

They also carry the burden of those decisions. The difference lies in their need to balance empathy with the requirement of upholding company policies and procedures, often concealing their feelings in the process. When an HR professional sits down with an employee to discuss a layoff, how complicated the emotions in that moment can be is beyond measure. They know they are delivering news that will change a life. However, how that news is conveyed does indeed have an impact.

There are no ideal words to cushion the blow, but compassion can help ease the transition. Difficult situations present an opportunity for HR professionals to think of effective strategies. They can understand and relate to the challenges faced by their staff, while also providing a positive outlook and potential for growth. They could say, "I do appreciate that this job may be a priority to you, but on the other hand, this could be one of those opportunities for upskilling to do something you are passionate about." I mean, such words, though they don't diminish the hardship—can usher in a glimmer of positivity.

This compassionate attitude toward the situation epitomises how such initiatives can give hope and dignity to the employees during this painful process of transition. It is important to keep in mind that neither the employee nor the organisation wants to end their



relationship on a sour note. By approaching layoffs with professionalism laced with humanity, HR can help ensure a transition to be as respectful and supportive as possible, even while it remains painful.

That being said, while layoffs can be one of the more challenging aspects of corporate life, there is certainly room for improvement in how these transitions are handled. Showing empathy, fostering clear communication, and providing support can greatly improve the experience for those undergoing layoffs. In times of uncertainty and change, it's important to remember that even small acts of kindness can make a difference.

Moreover, providing outplacement services, career counseling, and job search assistance can help laid-off employees find new opportunities more quickly. Encouraging networking and offering workshops on resume writing and interview skills can also make a significant difference. HR departments can collaborate with local businesses and employment agencies to create a support network for those affected.

By taking these extra steps, companies can demonstrate a genuine commitment to the well-being of their employees, even in difficult times. This holistic approach not only aids in the immediate transition but also helps maintain a positive company reputation in the long term.

(The writer is a motivator; views are personal)

Modi-Putin summit revives India-Russia relations amid global tensions

The meeting underscored India's strategic balancing act between global powers while prioritising its own economic and security needs

Just when there was a growing perception that ties between India and Russia were losing momentum, even stagnating, the summit-level meeting between PM Narendra Modi and President Vladimir Putin should help impart a fresh impetus to bilateral relations.

Held after a gap of over two years, amid the ongoing geopolitical churn, the 22nd summit saw the two sides resolve to unlock the full potential of their strategic partnership. The summit's outcomes conveyed New Delhi's intent to continue to forge closer ties with Moscow, notwithstanding the widespread Western opprobrium Putin has drawn after Russia invaded Ukraine and the consequent sanctions slapped on



PARUL CHANDRA

his country. With Putin preoccupied with the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, now into its third year, the summit-level meetings had fallen by the wayside. The last summit was held in New Delhi in December 2021. The summit indicated eagerness on the part of both sides to not just reinvigorate the 'Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership', but also make economic cooperation

the lynchpin of the relationship. This was reflected in a separate joint statement spelling out nine key areas for economic cooperation, with a new bilateral trade target of \$100 billion being set for 2030. While the Modi-Putin Summit left Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressing "disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts to see the leader of the world's largest democracy hug the world's most bloody criminal", it's unlikely to hurt New Delhi's close ties with Kyiv. India may not have condemned the invasion, but Modi did tell Putin "there is no peace on the battlefield" while reiterating India's position on the need for dialogue. While Washington also expressed its displeasure over the Modi-



needs. India's purchase of Russian oil despite the sanctions will not just continue but is expected to increase further. Crude imports from Russia have increased from 2.5 million tonnes in 2021 to 90 million tonnes in 2023, with India being clear this is vital for its energy security. Investments in the energy sector by both sides also remain a top priority.

Fertilizer imports from Russia, too, are seen as vital for India's agriculture sector. Russian oil imports have helped push the bilateral trade figures to \$65.70 billion. But while Indian imports were worth \$61.44 billion, its exports accounted for a mere \$4.26 billion. While happy to import Russian oil at discounted rates, New Delhi will need to address this trade imbalance by widening the trade basket with Russia. Among the major export items from India are pharmaceuticals, organic chemicals, iron and steel and electrical machinery. That the two sides agreed to look at the possibility of eliminating non-tariff trade barriers and the setting up of a Eurasian Economic Union

(EAEU)-India Free Trade Area shows the seriousness of intent to promote bilateral trade. The nudge to begin full negotiations for a free trade agreement between India and the EAEU too should lend a fillip to trade ties. Connectivity too remains a priority for both sides. It would mean access for Indian goods to the Eurasian markets. However, the proposed INSTC (International North-South Transport) Corridor is still a long way away from becoming a reality. While there is renewed interest between the two sides to establish a Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Corridor, which was first mooted in 2019, it also remains to be seen whether it will fructify. The summit, of course, also emphasized

the importance of robust cooperation in the defence sector, which is an important element of India's security paradigm. Russia remains India's biggest arms supplier despite New Delhi's continuing efforts to diversify by turning to others like the US, France and Israel to meet its requirements. India would have undoubtedly sought to address its concerns over the delays in the supply of Russian military hardware and spares owing to the Ukraine war. The Modi-Putin Summit may have left the West fulminating, but it's fairly obvious New Delhi will plough its furrow so long as it serves its strategic priorities. The writer is a senior journalist who writes on foreign affairs.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)



MONEY MATTERS

Centre launches 321 fisheries projects worth over Rs 114 cr in Tamil Nadu

Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh virtually inaugurated 321 projects at the Fisheries Summer Meet held in Madurai, Tamil Nadu on Friday. These initiatives, approved under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), represent a total investment of Rs 114 crore, an official statement said. The projects covering 19 states and Union Territories include fish retail kiosks, shrimp hatcheries, brood banks, ornamental fish units, biofloc units, fish feed mills, and fish value-added enterprises. PMMSY, a flagship programme of the Centre, aims to foster sustainable development in the fisheries sector. While details of specific financial assistance were not disclosed, the scheme is expected to significantly bolster local businesses and enhance the country's fisheries output. The minister also distributed Kisan Credit Cards, presented PMMSY achievement award letters to beneficiaries and felicitated Fish Farmers Producers Organisation (FFPOs) onboarded on Open Network Digital Commerce (ONDC).



Costly vegetables push retail inflation to 4-month high of 5.08% in June

Retail inflation increased to four-month high of 5.08 per cent in June as food items, including vegetables became dearer, according to government data released on Friday. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was on a decline since January, before rising again in June. The CPI-based retail inflation was 4.8 per cent in May 2024 and 4.87 per cent in June 2023. The previous high was in February at 5.09 per cent. Inflation in the food basket was 9.36 per cent in June, up from 8.69 per cent in May, according to the data of the National Statistical Office (NSO). The government has tasked the Reserve Bank to ensure that the CPI inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. The highest inflation was in vegetables at 29.32 per cent, followed by 'pulses and products' at 16.07 per cent in June on an annual basis. 'Cereals and products' and fruits too were dearer in June over the same month last year.



Air Liquide India sets up manufacturing unit in Mathura with Rs 350 cr

Industrial gases firm Air Liquide India on Friday said they have set up a manufacturing unit in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, with an investment of Rs 350 crore with a view to expand its business. This air separation unit, it said, is dedicated to healthcare and industrial merchant activities in Kosi, Mathura. It has a production capacity of more than 300 tonnes of liquid oxygen and medical oxygen per day, as well as about 45 tonnes of liquid nitrogen and 12 tonnes of liquid argon per day, the company said in a statement. The unit will supply industrial gases across Delhi Capital Territory, Western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh. The medical grade oxygen manufactured in this plant will be supplied to hospitals. It added that the new unit is planned to fully operate on renewable energy by 2030. "Air Liquide has invested around Rs 350 crore to build this state-of-the-art air separation plant," it said in a statement.



India-UK trade pact to be win-win result for both economies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the new government taking charge in Britain, the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the UK will get a renewed push and a comprehensive pact would deliver a win-win result for both economies, experts said.

They said that promoting export of services seem to be a priority for the UK's Labour government and it will seek to negotiate standalone sector deals, such as digital, or mutual recognition agreements, to promote services exports.

International trade expert and Hi-Tech Gears Chairman Deep Kapuria said the new UK government will seek a new strategic partnership with India, including an FTA, as well as deepening co-operation in



They said that promoting export of services seem to be a priority for the UK's Labour government and it will seek to negotiate standalone sector deals, such as digital, or mutual recognition agreements, to promote services exports

areas like security, education, technology, and climate change.

"This is a positive indication for India but its goal to reduce net migration may cause some hin-

drance in FTA signing," he said.

Kapurja said while it is too early to draw any definitive conclusion on the future of India-UK FTA negotiation, it

all depends upon how soon the new Labour government spells out its priorities and more importantly on the promised action to reduce net immigration.

"For India, undoubtedly, the UK is an important market for both goods and services export as well as an important source of FDI. A comprehensive FTA with the UK will deliver win-win results for both the economies," he added.

Ludhiana-based exporter SC Ralhan said the UK is a key export destination for Indian businesses and a free mutually beneficial trade agreement will help increase India's out-bound shipments to Britain.

Ralhan added that the negotiations for the agreement will now get a renewed push as the new government has taken charge in the UK.

Residential launches decline 11pc in first half of 2024: Report

PNS ■ KOLKATA

India's residential real estate market thrived in the first half of 2024 with a 55 per cent increase in new launches to 159,455 units, while Kolkata exhibited a contrasting trend, according to a report released on Friday.

The eastern metropolis witnessed an 11 per cent decline in new launches during the period.

Kolkata launched 4,388 units in the January-June period of 2024, as compared to the 4,942 in the corresponding months of 2023, realty consultant JLL said in the report.

Kolkata accounted for only three per cent of the new launch inventory among the top seven cities. Cities, like Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi NCR and Hyderabad led the surge nationally, contributing to a total of 159,455 units launched.

SIAM seeks sops for EVs, addL incentives for vehicle scrapping

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Auto industry body SIAM on Friday sought sops to promote EVs and suggested the government to bring in additional incentives for scrapping of vehicles in the upcoming Budget.

The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers emphasised on a growth oriented Budget with focus on greater allocation for capital expenditure.

"We are expecting that the government should come up with a FAME 3 like policy... good schemes like PLI are already in place, which we are sure will continue," SIAM President Vinod Aggarwal told reporters here. The FAME 3 (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) scheme, if unveiled, is expected to offer financial incentives to electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers as well as government-owned buses.

The FAME 3 scheme will



succeed Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS), which was introduced when FAME 2 scheme ended on March 31, 2024.

"We are also expecting that the government could do something more on the incentives for the scrapping of vehi-

cles, because the scrappage policy is already in place but we have not seen much impact of that," Aggarwal said.

He further said, "And so therefore, to give further boost to the scrapping of old polluting vehicles, I think something needs to be done."

IIP grows to 7-month high of 5.9% in May: Govt data

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's industrial production grew to a seven-month high of 5.9 per cent in May 2024, mainly due to good showing by power and mining sectors, according to official data released on Friday.

The factory output growth, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), was 5 per cent in April, 5.4 per cent in March, 5.6 per cent in February and 4.2 per cent in January 2024. The IIP was 4.4 per cent in December and 2.5 per cent in November 2023.

Sensex, Nifty rally nearly 1% to scale fresh highs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty soared nearly 1 per cent to hit new lifetime highs on Friday, fuelled by intense buying in IT and tech stocks after robust TCS earnings.

A rally in Reliance Industries and Infosys also boosted investor sentiments, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 622 points or 0.78 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 80,519.34. During the day, it zoomed 996.17 points or 1.24 per cent to hit an all-time high of 80,893.51.

The NSE Nifty surged

186.20 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at a record closing high of 24,502.15. Intra-day, it jumped 276.25 points or 1.13 per cent to hit a new lifetime



peak of 24,592.20.

Among the Sensex pack, Tata Consultancy Services climbed nearly 7 per cent after the country's largest IT services player reported 8.7 per cent

growth for the June quarter net profit at Rs 12,040 crore.

Infosys, HCL Technologies, Tech Mahindra, Axis Bank, Reliance Industries, JSW Steel, Bajaj Finance and Larsen & Toubro were the other major gainers.

Maruti, Asian Paints, Titan, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bharti Airtel and ICICI Bank were among the laggards.

In Asian markets, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled higher, while Seoul and Tokyo ended lower.

European markets were trading higher in mid-session trade. US markets ended mostly lower on Thursday.

Rupee settles 1 paisa higher at 83.52 against US \$

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 1 paisa at 83.52 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, as the support from firm domestic equities was negated by elevated crude oil prices.

Forex traders said the rupee inched higher as domestic equities touched fresh all-time highs and a weak tone in the US dollar supported the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit traded in a narrow range. It opened at 83.53, and touched an intraday high of 83.49 and a low of 83.55 against the American currency during the session.

It finally settled at 83.52

(provisional) against the dollar, 1 paisa higher than its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee settled 2 paise lower at 83.53 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias on the weak US dollar as cooling inflation raises expectations of a September rate cut by the US Fed," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Odd of a September rate cut rose to around 90 per cent post inflation data.

"Positive tone in the domes-

tic markets and fresh foreign inflows may also support the rupee. However, a surge in crude oil prices may cap sharp upside. Traders may take cues

from India's IIP and CPI data," Choudhary added. US\$-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.25 to Rs 83.80.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.05 per cent lower at 104.39.

"The US dollar declined as inflation cooled more than

expected. US CPI rose 3 per cent y-o-y in June 2024 versus forecast of 3.1 per cent. Core CPI rose 3.3 per cent y-o-y in June 2024 versus forecast of 3.4 per cent," Choudhary said.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, were trading 0.94 per cent higher at US\$ 86.20 per barrel. In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended the day 622.00 points, or 0.78 per cent, higher at 80,519.34 points. The broader NSE Nifty settled 186.20 points, or 0.77 per cent, up at 24,502.15 points.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,137.01 crore, according to exchange data.

Fitch Ratings revises outlook on Tata Steel to negative

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fitch Ratings on Friday revised its outlook on domestic steel major Tata Steel to negative on account of uncertainty surrounding the turnaround of the company's operations in the UK.

However, the expected robust growth in Tata Steel's India operations and likely earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) profits at Dutch operations in FY25, may offset any losses at UK operations, Fitch Ratings said in a report.

"Fitch Ratings has revised the Outlook on India-based

Tata Steel Limited's (TSL) Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to Negative, from Stable, and affirmed the IDR at 'BBB-'.

"We have also affirmed the rating on the US\$ 1 billion notes due July 2024 issued by TSL's subsidiary ABJA Investment Co. Pte. Ltd, and guaranteed by TSL, at 'BBB-'," the statement said, adding that the negative outlook reflects uncertainty surrounding turnaround of the UK operations.

The rating agency further said that the change in the UK government and labour union's actions to save job losses at TSL's UK operations may delay its plan to reduce losses

through FY25.

Tata Steel owns 3 million tonne per annum (MTPA) at Port Talbot plant in South Wales and employs around 8,000 people across all its operations in that country.

As part of its decarbonisation plan, the company is shifting to a low-emission electric arc furnace (EAF) process from the blast furnace (BF) route which is nearing its end of life cycle.

In September 2023, Tata Steel and the UK government agreed on a joint investment plan of 1.25 billion pounds to execute decarbonisation plans at Port Talbot steel making facility in Britain.

Haryana: ED seizes property documents, cash in bogus input tax credit claims

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate Friday said it seized documents of properties worth Rs 40 crore, bank lockers, and more than Rs 16 lakh in cash after conducting searches against some Haryana officials and private persons in a money laundering case related to alleged bogus input tax credit claims.

The raids were undertaken on July 9 at 14 locations in Haryana and neighbouring Punjab.

The money laundering case stems from multiple FIRs filed by the Haryana Police in 2020 where it was alleged that false input tax credit (ITC) was shown and refunds obtained by



claimants in connivance with Excise and Taxation Department officers, causing loss to the exchequer worth crores of rupees, the agency said in a statement. "Bogus firms were incorporated by syndicate members and the sales in these bogus firms were claimed at concessional rate of tax against 'C' forms, resulting into claim of false input tax credit and ultimately getting

fraudulent refunds with the help of officers of Excise and Taxation Department."

"These fraudulent refunds have been withdrawn in cash and utilised for acquisition of movable and immovable properties worth several crores of rupees," it claimed. The raids were conducted at the business and residential premises of three retired state government officials -- former excise and taxation officer (ETO) Ashok Sukhija, former deputy excise taxation commissioner Narendar Ranga and Gopi Chand Chaudhary -- and "syndicate" members identified as Mahesh Bansal, Padam Bansal, Amit Bansal, Monil Bansal, Rishi Gupta, Harish Biyani.

Tata Communications board to consider fundraising proposal via NCDs on July 18

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Communications board will consider a proposal to raise funds through Non-Convertible Debentures on July 18.

Tata Communications said as part of its debt management framework, the company refinances its debt from time to time, and at times ahead of scheduled maturities, to achieve the objectives stated in the framework. "Accordingly, a proposal to raise funds through the mode of issuance of Non-

Convertible Debentures (NCDs) will be placed for consideration before the Board of Directors at its upcoming scheduled on July 18, 2024," the company said in a regulatory filing.

Tata Communications manages its balance sheet stability through a debt management framework, which aims to balance the need for financing

with the long-term goal of maintaining financial stability, cost-effective financing, and minimising risks associated with debt.



TCS shares climb 7% after earnings update

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of TCS on Friday surged nearly 7 per cent, adding Rs 94,866.26 crore to its market valuation, after the country's largest IT services player reported an 8.7 per cent growth in the June quarter net profit at Rs 12,040 crore.

The massive rally in the IT bellwether stock also took its market valuation to above the Rs 15 lakh crore mark. The stock jumped 6.68 per cent to settle at Rs 4,184.90 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it surged 7 per cent to Rs 4,199.

On the NSE, it rallied 6.59 per cent to Rs 4,182.45 per share.



The company's market valuation jumped Rs 94,866.26 crore to Rs 15,14,133.45 crore. The stock emerged as the biggest gainer among the Sensex and Nifty pack

The company's market valuation jumped Rs 94,866.26 crore to Rs 15,14,133.45 crore.

The stock emerged as the biggest gainer among the Sensex and Nifty pack.

Meanwhile, other IT stocks, including Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies and Wipro, were also in high demand. Infosys, HCL Technologies and Tech

Mahindra rallied over 3 per cent each, while Wipro soared 4.81 per cent on the BSE.

Tracking the rally in IT stock, the BSE Information

Technology index ended with a jump of 4.32 per cent at 39,828.91.

Massive buying in IT stocks fuelled a rally in the equity market. In the broader equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 622 points or 0.78 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 80,519.34. During the day, it zoomed 996.17 points or 1.24 per cent to hit an all-time high of 80,893.51.

The NSE Nifty surged 186.20 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at a record closing high of 24,502.15. Intra-day, it jumped 276.25 points or 1.13 per cent to hit a new lifetime peak of 24,592.20.

DGCA allows IndiGo to carry pre-flight briefing data in digital form

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Aviation regulator DGCA on Friday said it has allowed IndiGo to carry pre-flight briefing data in electronic form, a move that will help in reduction of overall weight of aircraft and fuel consumption.

With the adoption of the Electronic Flight Folder (EFF), the airline can carry pre-flight briefing data such as flight plans and weather charts in the digital form instead of hard copies.

The move is expected to

reduce the cost as well as other benefits like improved safety and increased efficiency in pre-flight preparations, the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) said in a statement.

EFF consists of data such as operational flight plans, weather and NOTAMs (Notice to Airmen) weather charts, airfield data, and ETOPs (Extended Range Twin Operations), among others.

Electronic flight folder is updatable and forms the

basis of pilots' digital briefing pack on their EFB (electronic flight bag) device, which is an intuitive interface, enabling pilots to access and process the information they need swiftly.

According to the DGCA, the use of EFF technology allows airlines to use the latest data to optimise flight paths thereby reducing fuel consumption, and ultimately, lowering emissions. 'This would potentially lead to a large amount of fuel saving per annum.

ISHAAN KHATTER MAKES H'WOOD DEBUT WITH THE PERFECT COUPLE



The Perfect Couple, an upcoming murder mystery series on Netflix that stars Nicole Kidman and Liev Schreiber with a diverse cast that also features Indian actor Ishaan Khatter, unveiled its trailer. The new video, which teases the show's peril-in-paradise premise based on Elin Hilderbrand's blockbuster novel, features a brief but memorable appearance.

Renowned Danish director Susanne Bier, who directed Bird Box, the first season of The Night Manager and The Undoing, is directing the six-part series. A number of rich personalities gather in anticipation of a wedding in the picturesque coastal resort of Nantucket, the setting for The Perfect Couple. However, everybody is made a suspect when a dead corpse is discovered on the beach. There are references to both the genre classic Broadchurch and Kidman's own Big Little Lies in the teaser. In addition to Kidman and Schreiber, The Perfect Couple includes Jack Reynor, Dakota Fanning, Eve Hewson from Bad Sisters, Meghann Fahy, an alum of The White Lotus and Ishaan Khatter, who makes a brief appearance worthy of his own title card.

Randeep Hooda broaches on his relationship to money post-marriage

Filmmaker and actor Randeep Hooda stated that he is attempting to challenge preconceived ideas about what it means to work because he is a married guy with extra responsibilities as a producer. He claimed that he no longer needed to engage in self-promotion or take part in films that cater to the masses because his work should speak for itself. However, he feels that he needs to give up his previous "socialist" attitude toward money now that he has directed his first movie and gotten married. A few months prior to the premiere of his first film as director, *Swatantrya Veer Savarkar*, the actor married Lin Laishram in 2023. Appearing on Bharti Singh and Haarsh Limbachiya's podcast, the actor joked, "I've lost all my money on fast women and slow horses." Asked how he decides which projects to take on and which to turn down, he said, "The most important thing is whether I'll be able to tolerate the people who are working on it." He added with a laugh, "But I've now decided that I will." He explained, "Before marriage, I was living a carefree life. But now that I'm married and also a director-producer, I've learned the importance of money."

He said that, as an actor, he was always a little childlike. "But there's a sense of responsibility now, as a producer and as a married man. I'm not alone any more. She also has desires and needs. I'm trying to change my path now. *Us jaats* have always had a socialist outlook towards money, that it's 'wrong' to make money, but that's changing over time. And it's important, because I never paid much attention to it. But now that I am, I'm sure it'll come."



Sonakshi opts for quality over quantity approach for her films

Sonakshi Sinha is back at work following her wedding to Zaheer Iqbal last month. In an interview, the actress discussed her latest release, *Kakuda*. She added that she is open to accepting work in diverse genres but would not perform parts in films with only two songs and four scenes. During the interview, Sonakshi was questioned about whether it can be tough for actresses to perform less work in mainstream films. She said, "*Toh acchha hai na* (It is good then)! I would like to do big roles, important roles. It is a good thing. *Akira* (2016), where I was the hero, it was like tasting blood. I never want to go back to doing two songs and four scenes in a film. So, I am enjoying this phase. Bring it on!"

She further spoke about *Kakuda*, saying, "*Kakuda* came to me and I just found it to be such a fun read. I was very entertained while reading the script. Although I don't like horror films, there was so much humour in this film. Aditya (Sarpotdar) is someone who has understood this genre so well. I think his grasp on it is fantastic. He kind of knows where to scare people, where to make them laugh—the punches, the beats—he gets it bang on. It was a pleasure to work on a genre like this for the first time with a director like him who is so well versed in it. So, I had a blast. It was me stepping out of my comfort zone, trying out something I hadn't done before. I'd love to do it again because it was so much fun."



Rohit is undaunted by Ishq Vishk Rebound's collections

After starring with Pashmina Roshan, Jibraan Khan and Naila Grrewal in *Ishq Vishk Rebound*, Rohit Suresh Saraf seems undaunted by the film's lackluster box office performance, earning about 4 crores in a week and its poor reviews. Saraf feels optimistic about the favourable feedback his performance has received, even in spite of the lackluster financial results.

"I don't understand box office numbers and I don't get the math behind it. I only care about the fact that people liked my performance," says the 27-year-old, adding, "I am very happy; I have received a lot of love. My family, fans and people from the industry have liked my work. I am using all of that positivity to do better in a project that I am currently working on."

When asked about the varied responses to the film, Saraf says, "No matter how good the work is, you could make the greatest thing and somebody would still not like it. It really depends from person to person and it's absolutely okay. Everything doesn't have to appeal to everyone. I respect that and still appreciate that they took out the time to go and watch it."



CHANNING'S REACTION TO SCARLETT JOHANSSON WORKING WITH HUSBAND COLIN

The new space race movie *Fly Me To The Moon* has Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum as a passionate couple, but Tatum could not help but gush about Johansson's real-life chemistry with her husband Colin Jost. Jost, who has a small part in this movie, used to be a regular on *Saturday Night Live*, where he met his future wife.

Tatum told Johansson, "I was like, 'Oh, you guys are cute,'" in an interview conducted before the movie's premiere. The comic plays Senator Cook in a little part of the movie. As the title suggests, *Fly Me To The Moon* revolves around the United States' Moon Landing mission of the 1960s. Scarlett Johansson plays Kelly Jones, a public relations specialist employed to monitor the agency's public relations, while Channing Tatum plays Cole Davis, a NASA flight director in charge of the project. Concerns about possible failure are prevalent as mission day draws near, particularly in light of the Soviet Union's competitive threat. Kelly, determined to keep the mission moving forward, is given a huge task: planning a fictitious lunar landing. Kelly and Cole have a love past; thus, Kelly needs to keep the operation a secret from Cole.

The well-known Marvel star recently made an appearance on Jimmy Fallon's *Tonight Show*, disclosing how Jost was cast as a guest star in this romantic comedy set in the 1960s. "Our director was Greg Berlanti. Johansson revealed that "[He's] a huge fan of Colin's," indicating that the two of them have a similar love for comic writing. Johansson shared her thoughts with Berlanti when the actress asked her to make a cameo. She said to Fallon, "Yeah, I'm sure if you ask him, I'm not going to ask him."

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



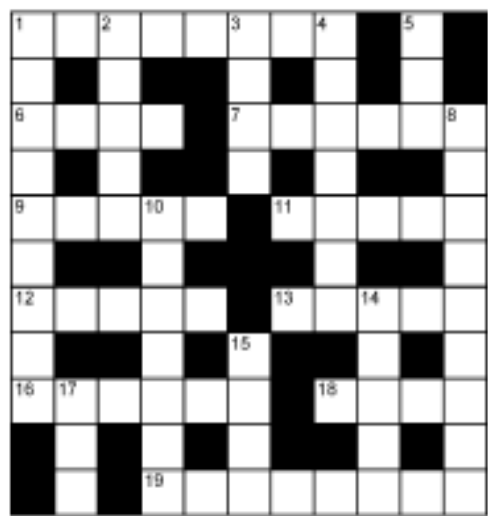
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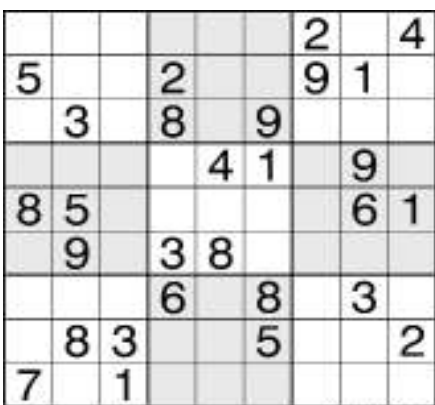
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Sick people in hospital
- A feeling that makes you scratch
- Ran after trying to catch
- One of your five senses
- Pimples on the face
- Requires
- Opposite of winner
- Attend classes here
- Young child
- Studied closely
- Wash your hair with this
- Frozen water
- Smashed to pieces
- This turns into a frog
- The country of the Spanish
- A biting insect
- A popular pet

DOWN

- See these at an art gallery
- Small nails for carpets
- Pleasant



‘Chefs in Hyd need to educate their guests more on the newly introduced dishes’

TEJAL SINHA

The days when Hyderabad’s cuisine was solely focused on Mughal and Nawabi dishes, are long gone. You can enjoy a variety of cuisines these days, including Andhra, Italian, Chinese and even Korean.

But Chef Sanjeev Kumar believes that there’s still a not-too-long way to go for the city in terms of the food culture. Hailing from a family from the Indian Navy, hospitality was never something he thought he’d get into. However, destiny had a different plan!

While enjoying cooking with his mumma in the kitchen, the young Sanjeev found his friends doing well in the hospitality industry, making him get into IHMCTAN in Mumbai. Learning under the guidance of Chef Varun Kohli, Chef Aaron and Chef Maithreyi, he joined the Management Training (MT) program at TAJ Hotel, Mumbai and did an internship for ITC Grand Central. Over the years, he has also had the opportunity to closely associate and work with the renowned chef Ranveer Brar. Later on, he also travelled to the US for his other skill development programs.

However, the pandemic in 2020 came as a twist in his career. “During COVID-19, when hospitality in Mumbai were shut, I was home for 7 months. I then got an offer from Hyderabad. My then-boss offered me to travel to Hyderabad and join her restaurant. I came here and started working with Tiger Lily.” Before shifting to Hyderabad, he was a part of Novotel Mumbai Juhu Beach and Novotel Maimi.

Born in Patna and mainly brought up in Mumbai, also travelling to other cities due to his father’s posting, Hyderabad, he says, has given him love, name and fame. “It was unbelievable how Hyderabad has shaped my career. I’m out of words to express the gratitude I have for the city. I will always be grateful for the kind of work culture and the type of skill development I got from here. I definitely started my career in Mumbai, but the development of my career happened in Hyderabad.”

Though Hyderabad has been one of the top cities when we talk about its hospitality, on the contrary, he says, “I’ll be very honest with this. When it comes to hospitality, Hyderabad is definitely a good place. However, I feel it’s still going to take some time for Hyderabad to reach the level of cities like Mumbai, Delhi and the US. People are understanding of the authenticity of the food

here. Now people are enjoying cuisine worldwide.” Over the years, he shares that Hyderabad has now become more than just about Hyderabadi Biryani when it comes to food. “Today, if you see, people are trying different cuisines that tantalise their taste buds. There have been so many restaurants with different cuisines and concepts. When you open a new restaurant with a new concept, people here in Hyderabad will surely try it.”

While, he does give much of his career’s development credits to the city and is also a member of the World Indian Culinary Association (WICA) and Telangana Chefs Association (TCA), he shares, “There’s a lot to love about the city and I can’t just name one. However, if you ask about the dislikes when it comes to introducing a new dish, it does take a little time as compared to other cities. For that to change, the chefs here in the city need to educate and make the guests understand more about the new cuisines for people to be aware of.”

At present, he works as a corporate chef for Mondo Foods Jubilee Hills Hyderabad and has also been a part of Tiger Lily Bistro, Taro, Fat Pigeon and Resign Sky Bar, all in the city, on a concluding note, he says, Hyderabad holds a special place in his heart.

CHEF SANJEEV KUMAR, WHO WAS BORN IN PATNA AND SPENT MOST OF HIS CHILDHOOD IN MUMBAI, JOINS **THE PIONEER** FOR A SPECIAL EDITION OF **HYDERABOND**. HE SHARES HOW HIS CONNECTION TO HYDERABAD HAS CHANGED THE COURSE OF HIS CAREER



USING HIS TRADEMARK MUSICAL TOUCH TO EXPRESS HIS FEELINGS!

AARTI SREENATH

Savneet Singh, a rising musical star in the world of romantic music, has captivated audiences once again with his latest release, *Tu Hai Sab Hai*.

Produced by T-Series, the song is not merely a catchy tune, but a soulful exploration of the profound impact love has on our lives.

Singh’s musical style has garnered him a loyal following. He’s known for weaving simple yet impactful lyrics into memorable melodies that resonate deeply. *Tu Hai Sab Hai* is a testament to this signature style. The song’s melody is a gentle caress, drawing the listener in with its warm embrace. Each note feels carefully chosen, building a soundscape that perfectly complements the lyrical message of all-encompassing love. Sharing his inspiration behind the song, he said, “I’ve always been a hopeless romantic. For me, love is all-encompassing and I’ve closely observed how it transforms lives. Your world revolves around that one person who becomes everything. This song is an ode to that feeling.”

His burgeoning fanbase is evident in his impressive Spotify statistics. The Punjabi pop star’s music is demonstrably resonating with a global audience.

In a heartfelt message, he expressed his profound gratitude to his listeners. “While some may see these as mere numbers, for me, these stats carry immense value,” he shared. The knowledge that over 8,00,000 times listeners have chosen his music for their personal journeys is a deeply humbling experience. He also acknowledges the significance of each individual who has incorporated his music into their lives, whether it’s a single song or a full playlist. He emphasises, “I am immensely grateful to every single listener.” This genuine appreciation for his audience further underscores Savneet’s sincerity and his connection with his fans.

The true beauty of the song lies in its ability to transcend mere words. The lyrics, translated as “You are everything,” paint a vivid picture of a love so profound that it becomes the very foundation of one’s existence.

In this interview, he further delved into the creative process behind *Tu Hai Sab Hai*. He spoke of his keen

observation of how love acts as a transformative force, shaping and influencing every aspect of our lives. He describes his world as revolving around that one special person, a sentiment beautifully captured in the song’s central theme.

The *Khoya tha* artist added, “If you’ve listened to my previous songs, you’ll notice I place my lover on a pedestal, writing about how being with her makes me feel complete. *Tu hai toh sab hai, tu na kuch nahin*, encapsulates that sentiment.” He has a history of crafting songs that celebrate the feeling of completeness that comes with being with the one you love. *Tu Hai Sab Hai* continues this tradition, offering a fresh yet familiar exploration of this universal theme.

One key element that distinguishes his music is his ability to create a lasting impression with simple yet impactful lyrics. He doesn’t rely on complex metaphors or flowery language. Instead, he chooses words that resonate with raw emotion, allowing his message to connect with listeners on a deeper level.

Another defining characteristic of his music is the unique way he delivers his vocals. He explains how listeners recognise his songs by specific nuances in his singing style. These signature vocal inflections add another layer of depth to the music, creating a memorable experience that lingers long after the song has ended. “People recognise my songs by the unique way I sing certain lines. My music has a signature touch that stays with listeners long after they’ve heard it,” he explained.

While creating music that resonates with his audience is important for him, his primary focus remains on personal connection. His dedication to pouring his heart and soul into his music allows listeners to connect with the sincerity of his emotions. “I make music for myself first. If I can’t listen to my own creations, I can’t expect anyone else to. This honesty and purity are what connect people. Audiences today are discerning; they can sense sincerity and will resonate with genuinely heartfelt music,” he shares.

The excitement in his voice is palpable as he talks about his upcoming projects. He has three more songs waiting to be unleashed upon the world that he believes represent some of his best work yet.

This anticipation from the artist himself is a testament to the passion and dedication he pours into his music.

WITH HIS MOST RECENT SINGLE, **TU HAI SAB HAI**, SINGER SAVNEET SINGH ENTHRALLED THE CROWD ONCE AGAIN. IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH **THE PIONEER**, HE TALKS ABOUT THE SONG AND OTHER ASPECTS OF HIS MUSIC

Road to recovery from shoulder injuries

The shoulder joint is very flexible, allowing lots of movement, but this also makes it prone to injury. Many parts, like muscles and bones, can be hurt from accidents, overuse, or even everyday activities, which can lead to shoulder problems like torn rotator cuffs, stiffness, and arthritis.

Even activities like lifting heavy weights or repetitive tasks can stress the shoulder and make it absorb a lot of shock. This can lead to stretched or torn ligaments, especially around the arm, chest and back. These injuries can cause pain, tightness and difficulty moving the shoulder.

SOME TREATMENTS FOR INJURIES

• **Cold compress and heat therapy:** One of the best methods for treating shoulder discomfort is to use a cold compress. The affected area can be treated with ice packs. This could reduce severe discomfort. By limiting blood flow, the cold packs can worsen the damage already done to the muscles and ligaments. When used consistently throughout the day, the cooling

impact can aid in improving the situation. Heat therapy works best when applied 72 hours after the injury, in contrast to ice therapy, which is applied within the initial few hours following the accident. Like cold therapy, it relieves pain and allows muscle relaxation.

• **Usage of Medications (NSAIDs):** NSAIDs, or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicines, can help relieve shoulder pain and swelling and speed up the healing process. These over-the-counter pain relievers and muscle relaxants can aid in recovery by reducing inflammation and speeding up the healing process. One should seek a doctor’s advice before using them. To ensure that there are no serious adverse effects, they should only be taken under medical supervision.

• **Physical Therapy:** The primary mode of care for shoulder injuries is physical therapy. Strengthening muscles, increasing flexibility, and restoring range of motion are all helped by a structured exercise schedule. Physical therapists modify exercises based on the individual injury, ensuring a gradual and controlled

rehabilitation process for the shoulder. For conditions where muscle weakness and stiffness are major problems, such as tendinitis and frozen shoulders, this treatment can be extremely helpful. Significant improvements in shoulder function can be achieved with the constant use of recommended exercises and regular therapy sessions.

• **Exercises for strengthening and extending:** Exercises for strengthening and stretching the shoulders can be useful in treating shoulder pain. Pain can be relieved by reducing joint pressure and inflammation by strengthening and stretching the muscles, tendons, and ligaments that surround the shoulder joint.

• **Surgical Interventions:** Surgery could be the solution necessary for more serious shoulder problems that fail to improve with conservative measures. Techniques like arthroscopic surgery enable minimally invasive repair of injured cartilage, tendons and ligaments. Chronic conditions such as arthritis might require consideration of shoulder replacement procedures. A thorough rehab-

ilitation programme is generally implemented after surgery to regain strength and function. Patients with complex shoulder injuries now have far better recovery periods and outcomes due to advancements in surgical treatments.

Suffering from the shoulder can be mild or severe. However, there could be instances where things get worse quickly, and there can be several underlying issues at play. As soon as the pain worsens, such as when there is a “locked feeling” in the chest and shoulder, severe back, chest, or shoulder pain, or difficulty moving the shoulder, then it is important to visit a doctor.

(The author, Dr. Vinay Kumar Gautam, is a Consultant - Orthopaedics, at Manipal Hospital.)



Young Indian stars look to translate dominance into series victory over Zimbabwe

PTI ■ HARARE

Back to their collective best, a clutch of young Indian stars will be eager to usher in a new era in the shortest format with a series victory when they face Zimbabwe in the fourth T20I here on Saturday.

After an unexpected defeat in the first match, the Shubman Gill-led side rediscovered its mojo in the second and third games to take a 2-1 lead with comprehensive wins.

Under the existing cricketing landscape, a series win over Zimbabwe will not rank high in the pecking order, but it will certainly spark ambitions inside some young players who are keen to take the team forward post the retirement of some modern-day greats. None provide more compelling cases of that scenario than Washington Sundar and Abhishek Sharma.

Post the retirement of Ravindra Jadeja from T20Is, Washington is eyeing the spin-all-rounder slot and the Tamil Nadu man has shown some promising signs against Zimbabwe, taking six wickets at a fine economy of 4.5.

Whenever the selectors sit together to pick the Indian squad for the upcoming white-ball tour to Sri Lanka, they now will have to consider Washington's name seriously.

The 24-year-old has given this Indian side the option of a bowler flexible enough to operate inside and outside the Power Play, and a handy lower-order batter, who if the need arises, has the technique to come up the order as well.

Abhishek bludgeoned a 47-ball hundred in the second T20I here, underscoring the hope around him as a long-term India material.

India will no longer have the services of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the ultra-abridged version, and Yashasvi Jaiswal is the frontrunner to occupy one of those top-order slots. Abhishek will hope to further buttress his claim for the other vacant top-order spot, for which there are other strong contenders in Shubman Gill and Ruturaj Gaikwad, with a bruising knock against the African side here on the morrow.

But this is not to say that some of the more established names such as



Sanju Samson and Shivam Dube have nothing to gain from this series.

They linked with the squad here after taking part in India's victory parade in Mumbai post the T20 World Cup triumph, where they had limited or little role in that epochal run.

So, the remaining two matches of this series will be an opportunity for Dube and Samson to keep themselves in the front row of players who will carry India into the future, producing some valuable efforts.

Indian management will also be pleased by the outing of their bowlers, particularly that of leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi, whose googlies were indecipherable for the home batters.

Bishnoi has six wickets, numbers similar to Washington and pacer Avesh Khan, who proved a nippy customer in this series.

Mukesh Kumar might come in place for left-arm pacer Avesh Khan after getting a rest in the previous match, but the pacer, though he has taken four wickets, will certainly like to be more economical.

On other hand, Zimbabwe have slipped a few rungs below after beating India in that match.

There have been lonely sparks in their line-up like searing spells by impressive pacer Blessing Muzarabani and a well-paced fifty by Dion Myers.

But they need to harness them to meaningfully challenge this Indian unit, which is currently operating at one level higher.

TEAMS:

India: Shubman Gill (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Abhishek Sharma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (wk), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Shivam Dube, Riyan Parag, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Deshpande.

Zimbabwe: Sikandar Raza (c), Akram Faraz, Bennett Brian, Campbell Johnathan, Chatarata Tendai, Jongwe Luke, Kaia Innocent, Madande Clive, Madhevere Wessly, Marumani Tadiwanashe, Masakadza Wellington, Mavuta Brandon, Muzarabani Blessing, Myers Dion, Naqvi Antum, Ngarava Richard, Shumba Milton



India showed resilience to win T20 WC and celebrations told that story: Laxman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Batting great VVS Laxman hailed India's "resilience" while winning the recent T20 World Cup "from the jaws of defeat", and said the passionate celebration by players and former head coach Rahul Dravid exemplified the value of that triumph to them.

India won their first ICC trophy after 11 years and their second T20 title after 17 years when they beat South Africa by seven runs in the final in Barbados on June 29.

"The kind of finish we had after we were under pressure with South Africa batters needing 30 runs off 30 balls. And from there to show character, resilience and self-belief to pull off the match from the jaws of defeat, it shows the character of the entire team," Laxman said in a video posted by the BCCI on its 'X' handle.

"The amount of hard work they put in, the celebrations (by the players and support staff) told the bigger story behind this victory."

The 49-year-old Laxman, who is currently heading the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru, said the fervent celebrations by the team showed how much the victory meant to each of the players and the support staff.

"Obviously, it is a special feeling winning the World

Cup. When you are playing against the best and win the trophy, it means a lot to all the players participating in the tournament.

"Everyone showed their emotions and it showed how much it meant to each and every player in the squad, as well as the support staff, the emotions were really high. You saw Hardik Pandya breaking down once he bowled the last delivery. You saw Rohit Sharma on the ground.

"The entire country is rejoicing this win. It was a special feeling keeping in mind we had come close (to winning the title) six months back (ODI World Cup). We should have won the 50-over World Cup, dominating the entire tournament but not being able to cross the final hurdle," he said.

Laxman made a special mention of the expressive celebration of Dravid, who generally abhors public show of emotions.

"Someone like Rahul with whom I have played so much cricket, knew him for so many years, but for him to show that emotions, first when the last ball was bowled and then the various conversations he was having with the team members and when he lifted the trophy.

"I thought it was a great gesture by Rohit and Virat Kohli to hand over the trophy to him (Dravid) and the way he

celebrated by lifting the trophy, it showed how much it meant to each one of them," said Laxman who paired with Dravid in a memorable Test win against Australia in Kolkata in 2001 when they stitched that famous 376-run partnership after following-on.

Laxman, who has 8781 runs from 134 Tests at an average of 45.97, lauded captain Rohit, star batter Virat Kohli and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja for their contributions in the T20 format.

The trio announced retirement from the T20Is after the T20 World Cup win.

"My message to these stalwarts of the game, Virat, Rohit and Ravindra Jadeja, an extremely talented player who has contributed immensely to the progress of the Indian team. Congratulations for the contributions you have made to this great game and set an example to the youngsters to follow. The passion and the pride with which they had played this game is exemplary.

"While they have retired from this format, I am sure they will continue to prepare the way they did so far in their career and continue to bring laurels to the country.

"Big congratulations for an excellent T20 career and I am sure they will continue to contribute in the longer version of the game and in the 50-over format."

We are very greedy to win every game: Harmanpreet ahead of women's Asia Cup

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian women's team is entering every match with an unquenchable thirst for victory and there will be no deviation from that set path during the highly-anticipated Asia Cup match against Pakistan later this month, reckoned captain Harmanpreet Kaur.

The Indian women are high on confidence after beating South Africa in a three-match ODI series and in the one-off Test while drawing the T20I series 1-1 recently at home.

"The kind of approach we have right now, every day whenever we are going to play the matches, we are giving equal importance to all matches," Kaur told Star Sports.

"We all are very greedy to win every game, and that is something we feel should be in a team, and this is what everyone in the team is feeling," she added.

India's next assignment is the Women's Asia Cup, set to begin on July 19 in Sri Lanka, with Kaur and Co. Opening



their campaign against familiar foes Pakistan at Dambulla.

Kaur said it is her responsibility as a leader to calm her team's nerves during such pressure games.

"When you play against Pakistan, there is a different atmosphere in both the countries. Both the countries want their team to win.

"As a player, there is a lot of pressure for us. But as a leader, it is my responsibility

to make my team feel light in that environment, so that they don't think that we are playing against Pakistan or it's a pressure game," she said.

India-Pakistan rivalry is one of the most sought after be it in men's or women's game. But for Kaur, it is imperative for her side to forget the outside noise and treat the match as any other game.

"It will be important for me to make

everyone feel that this is also just another game. We have to do well for the team and make the team win.

"Other than thinking about what is going on in the stadium, who are the other people cheering for? Who are they talking about? Just focus on the main things. Don't think about the things that we can't control," she added.

Middle-order batter Jemimah Rodrigues said the team is enthusiastic about its chances at the Women's Asia Cup.

"The enthusiasm is really high, and that's always been the scene. It's a nice feeling, but more than that, it's very inspiring to know that every time we walk out on the field, we know we have the support of every single person backing us.

"It's just about how well we prepare rather than thinking too much ahead of ourselves. About the results, it's always about preparation.

"We know if we prepare well, we are going to go out there and do well," she added.

Sable says he can win medal in Paris Olympics

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's top 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable does not want to be just a participant at the Olympics and believes he can win a medal at the Paris Games beginning later this month.

The 29-year-old Sable, who recently broke his own national record, will be competing in his second Olympics. He had failed to make it to the finals at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

"I don't want to just participate, I believe I can win a medal. I am working hard with my eyes set on that goal, if everything falls into place I win a medal," Sable said when asked about the Paris Olympics.

"I used to think Olympic medallists had a unique and difficult approach to training, but my experiences over the past two years have boosted my confidence," he said in a



JioCinema release.

Sable had clocked 8 minutes and 9.91 seconds to break his earlier national record while finishing sixth at the Paris Diamond League earlier this month. At the Paris Olympics, he will face at least seven competitors who have run at better time than him this year.

The likes of legendary Indian athletes like Milkha Singh, Sriram Singh and PT Usha have inspired Sable to aim for an Olympic medal.

"Their performances at the world level have deeply inspired me. If my role models

can excel globally, so can I. I've been taught to focus on my own progress rather than others. My competition is with my timing," he said.

"My goal has always been self-improvement rather than focusing on the competition. This mindset has allowed me to break the national record ten times," said the reigning Asian Games gold medallist.

He said his silver medal winning performance at the 2022 Commonwealth Games gave him the confidence that he can compete against the best in the world.

"My aim at the Commonwealth Games was to compete against the Kenyan athletes. Finishing second by a fraction of a second gave me the confidence that we can compete against the best in the world," said Sable, who had broken Kenyan medal monopoly in 3000m steeplechase in the CWG.



704 wickets and out: England great Jimmy Anderson bows out of test cricket in win over West Indies

AP ■ LONDON

It's 704 wickets and out for Jimmy Anderson.

The most prolific fast bowler in test history bowed out of international cricket by helping England complete a win by an innings and 114 runs over the West Indies at Lord's on Friday.

The 41-year-old Anderson's 188th and last test ended with him taking 3-32 in the West Indies' second innings as they were dismissed for 136 a little over an hour into the third day's play.

One of those wickets came on Friday, with Anderson enticing an edge behind off Joshua Da Silva with a delivery that seemed away. It was classic Anderson - unlike the caught-and-bowled chance he dropped off Gudakesh Motie with England needing just one more wicket for victory.

He fell to his knees and covered his face with his hand.

Soon, he was walking off the

field at the home of cricket to a standing ovation after Gus Atkinson took the final wicket.

The morning had started with Anderson, who doesn't like being the center of attention, looking emotional after being given a guard of honor from both teams - and a first standing ovation from the crowd - when he came out at the start of the day's play.

Atkinson, who represents the future of English pace bowling, took two of the wickets after the Windies resumed on 79-6 - still 171 runs adrift of making England batting again - and had match figures of 12-106.

He became the first England bowler to get a 10-wicket haul in a test at home since Alec Bedser in 1946.

Anderson finished his test career four wickets behind the late Australia legspinner Shane Warne's tally of 708 wickets. Only one bowler has more than them: former Sri Lanka spinner Muttiah Muralitharan with 800.

Indian hockey defender Jarmanpreet, who once served doping ban, geared up for Olympics debut

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Frustrating doping ban jolted Jarmanpreet Singh's career in 2016, but he has long forgotten that bitter episode and the defender is all geared up for his Olympics debut in Paris later this month.

Jarmanpreet, a regular member of the Indian hockey team in the last few years, was picked in the 16-member Indian team for the Paris Games.

"It was not easy. It was one of my darkest phases, with many uncertainties," said Jarmanpreet on the doping ban from 2016 to 2018.

"Players don't usually emerge from a setback like this. To sit out of matches for two years is a big gap in the sport," he recalled.

Jarmanpreet was then a promising player on his way



to playing for India at the Junior World Cup 2016 when he was slapped with the doping ban.

The Punjab player did not

give up and served out the two-year period in exile before making a return to competitive hockey and then to the Indian senior team.

"But I was persistent and I knew I had to bounce back. I don't think I could have done this without a strong domestic structure where I

could show the selectors that I still had it in me," said Jarmanpreet, who is now an Income Tax officer, in a Hockey India release.

"In 2018, after the Hockey India Senior Men National Championship, I was among the 50 probables in the camp. Hockey India gave me a chance to rebuild my career. I was selected for the national programme for senior men where I was given an opportunity to catch up with my peers and make my senior India debut.

"They saw that potential in me and I didn't give up on my dream to play for India at the Olympic Games," he noted.

The 27-year-old has played in 98 international matches since making his India debut at the 2018 Champions Trophy in


Breda, the Netherlands, where India won the silver medal.

He was a part of the Indian team that won a gold medal at the Hangzhou Asian Games in 2023 and silver-winning squad at the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Now in Switzerland where the Indian team is going through a mental conditioning camp, Jarmanpreet is excited and eager to experience his first outing in the Olympics.

"The journey so far with this team has been incredible. We have gone through the highs and lows as one strong unit. Now, we are focused on our goal and we are in the last block of our preparations.

"I am super excited and eager to start our campaign at the Paris Olympics," he said.



Shiva Rajkumar joins Ram Charan's next

The global success of *RRR* has elevated Global Star Ram Charan to international fame. For his 16th film, Ram Charan is teaming up with the sensational director Buchi Babu Sana, who made a significant impact with his debut film, *Uppena*. This highly anticipated project, *#RC16*, is proudly presented by the Pan India production powerhouse Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings. Venkata Satish Kilaru is making his grand entry into film production with this large-scale venture, which promises to deliver a high-budget, high-quality cinematic experience under the banner of Vriddhi Cinemas.

Exciting news for fans: Kannada superstar Karunada Chakravarthi Shiva Rajkumar is joining the cast in a powerful role. The announcement was made today on Shiva Rajkumar's birthday, adding to the celebratory mood. Fans of both actors are eagerly anticipating seeing these two superstars together on screen.

The film will feature a musical score by Academy Award-winning composer AR Rahman, with Janhvi Kapoor cast as the leading lady opposite Ram Charan. The cinematography will be handled by R Rathnavelu and Avinash Kolla will serve as the production designer.



INDIA FILES UNVEILS CULTURAL MILESTONE

In a vibrant showcase of cinema and cultural pride, Dr. Bommakuru Murali's *India Files* held its much-anticipated audio launch at Prasad Labs in Hyderabad. Under the banner of Bommakuru Creations and the presentation of Bommukuru Himamala, this film marks a significant milestone as the first to delve into the theme of cultural DNA in Indian cinema.

The event saw prominent figures from various spheres come together to celebrate this groundbreaking project. Telangana State Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkata Reddy graced the occasion as the chief guest. In his address, Minister Reddy reflected on his past engagements with the film industry, noting how he had been unable to attend many events due to time constraints. However, he expressed his enthusiasm for *India Files* and praised its relevance and ambition. He also lauded the film's lead actor, Addanki Dayakar, for

his depth of understanding on social issues, while acknowledging the contributions of other notable personalities like Gaddar and lyricists Chandra Bose and Suchitra Chandra Bose.

Music director MM Keeravani also made a significant appearance at the event, where he spoke about the musical elements of the film. Keeravani, renowned for his work on films like *Baahubali*, expressed his excitement about composing the soundtrack for *India Files*, highlighting the quality and depth of the music that he believes will elevate the film.

Dr. Addanki Dayakar, who plays the protagonist, shared his gratitude towards Dr. Murali for offering him the lead role. He emphasised the film's pan-India aspirations and its aim to spread the concept of cultural DNA to a global audience. Dayakar also praised the collaborative efforts on set, particularly the synergy with fellow actors Suman and Ravi Prakash.

Global acclaim for Gopal Bodepalli's film Hunger

In the world of filmmaking, some create for financial gain, others seek accolades, while a select few craft their art driven by pure passion. It's often those fueled by genuine love for the craft who achieve both critical acclaim and recognition. Gopal Bodepalli, a software engineer based in New York, is a shining example of this passion-driven success.

Gopal Bodepalli, who both produced and directed the film *Hunger*, is receiving international acclaim for his dedication to filmmaking. The film has garnered significant



recognition, including an Honourable Mention Award at the International New York Film Festival. Additionally, *Hunger* has won awards at prestigious film festivals in Paris, London, and ten other global locations.

Previously, Gopal's short film *Maranam* also achieved notable success, winning awards at 34 international film festivals. Both *Hunger* and *Maranam* have been nominated for official selection at the Dada Saheb Film Festivals, further underscoring Gopal's remarkable contribution to cinema.



SARDAR 2 SHOOT TO BEGIN FROM JULY 15

Following the massive success of *Sardar* in Tamil and Telugu, the makers have officially announced the sequel, *Sardar 2*. The auspicious pooja ceremony for the film was recently held, and regular shooting is set to commence on July 15th, 2024, with grand sets in Chennai. Directed by PS Mithran, who helmed the prequel, and produced by Prince Pictures, *Sardar 2* promises to build on the success of its predecessor.

As revealed towards the end of *Sardar*, the new mission will unfold in Cambodia. The sequel will be produced on a larger scale with a substantial budget, featuring top-notch technical expertise across various departments.

The music for *Sardar 2* will be composed by Yuvan Shankar Raja, with George C Williams handling the cinematography. Dilip Subbarayan will serve as the stunt director, Rajeevan Nambiar as the production designer and Vijay Velukutty as the editor. AP Paal Pandi will act as the production executive, A Venkatesh as the co-producer, and S. Lakshman Kumar as the producer.

Chaitanya Rao's Dear Nanna wins Remy Award at Houston International Film Festival

Since its premiere on the OTT platform Aha, *Dear Nanna*, featuring Chaitanya Rao and Yashna Chaudhary in pivotal roles, has garnered acclaim from both audiences and critics. Directed by Anji Saladi and produced by Rakesh Mahankali under the Black Pepper Cinemas banner, the film also boasts a script written by Mahankali.

Launched on Father's Day as a tribute to unsung heroes, *Dear Nanna* has not only enjoyed a strong reception on Aha but has now achieved a prestigious milestone. The film has won the 2024 Remy Award at the Houston International Film Festival, marking a significant achievement in its journey.

Since its release on June 14, *Dear Nanna* has resonated deeply with viewers through its poignant Father-Son narrative set against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. Chaitanya Rao's performance as an aspiring chef has been particularly well-received, showcasing his ability to capture the emotional depth of his character.

Under Anji Saladi's direction, the film intricately explores the life and struggles of its characters, focusing on the critical role of medical shops and the unsung sacrifices of the Pharmacy professionals during the pandemic. The screenplay, also crafted by Rakesh Mahankali, brings to light the profound impact of these unsung heroes, highlighting their vital role as Corona Warriors.

With its compelling storyline, engaging screenplay, and standout performances, *Dear Nanna* has not only won the 2024 Remy Award but continues to captivate audiences on the Telugu OTT platform Aha.

Santosh Soban's next film is Couple Friendly

UV Creations, a prominent name in Tollywood known for high-budget projects and unique storylines, is currently working on the highly anticipated film *Vishwambhara* with megastar Chiranjeevi. The production house has now unveiled their next venture, starring the talented Santosh Soban.

Santosh Soban, recognised for his versatile performances in content-rich films, is set to collaborate with debutant director Ashwin Chandrasekhar for this new project. The film will feature Miss India Manasa Varanasi as the leading lady.

The announcement was made on Friday on Santosh Soban's birthday, with the title of the film revealed as *Couple Friendly*. The first look suggests a charming romantic comedy, with the film scheduled for release on Valentine's Day, 2025. The title poster adds a touch of intrigue with its simple yet striking design, showcasing bikes with Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu number plates. In addition to the title reveal, a fresh and rugged look of Santosh Soban was unveiled. *Couple Friendly*, produced by UV Concepts and presented by UV Creations, promises to be an engaging entertainer. The film will feature cinematography by Dinesh Purushothaman and music by Aditya Ravindran. The release date is set for February 14, 2025, with more details to be announced soon.

Indian 3 set for January 2025 release!

The long-awaited sequel *Indian 2*, directed by S Shankar and starring Kamal Haasan, premiered on July 12, 2024, to much anticipation. Now, fans of the blockbuster franchise have even more reason to celebrate as the release date for the next installment, *Indian 3*, has been officially announced.

Indian 3 will hit theatres worldwide in January 2025. During the promotional campaign for *Indian 2*, the filmmakers confirmed that a third part was in the works. In one of his latest interviews, Director S Shankar revealed that, if all goes according to plan, *Indian 3* will be released within six months of the sequel.

Excitingly, viewers who stay through the credits of *Indian 2* will be treated to a special preview of *Indian 3*. This exclusive teaser, lasting 2 minutes and 30 seconds, aims to build anticipation for the next chapter of the saga.

As for *Indian 2*, early reviews on Twitter (now X) present a mixed bag. While many fans have praised the film and Kamal Haasan's performance, some have expressed disappointment. Reactions vary from blockbuster acclaim to criticisms labeling the film a letdown.

The sequel, produced by Lyca Productions, continues the story of Senapathy, Kamal Haasan's iconic vigilante character. The film also stars Rakul Preet Singh, Siddharth, and Kajal Aggarwal in key roles. Following the dramatic conclusion of the first installment, which saw Senapathy promising to return if his country needed him, the saga will indeed continue with *Indian 3*, as confirmed by the production team.

SHIVAM BHAJE WORLDWIDE GRAND RELEASE ON AUG 1

Aiming to bag the expectations on Ait, Producer Maheswara Reddy Mooli announced on Friday that Shivam Bhahe, this new-age intriguing divine suspense thriller will release worldwide on August 1. Ashwin Babu and Digangana Suryavanshi are playing leads in this film, directed by Apsar.

Bollywood actor Arbaaz Khan, Hyper Aadi, Sai Dheena, Tanikella Bharani, Murali Sharma, Brahmaji, Tulasi and other senior actors played crucial roles.

While the producer, director and the team are extremely confident on the output, post-production works are closing in on the final step.

Speaking on the occasion, director Apsar said, "With immense support from our producer Maheswara Reddy garu, hero Ashwin Babu, technicians and actors, we've achieved what we envisioned. The response to our teaser made us understand the excitement in everyone and so our producer announced its grand release on August 1. Looking forward to a thrilling response from audiences in theaters."

Meanwhile, hero Ashwin Babu says, "We're confident that our *Shivam Bhahe* will thrill everyone beyond bounds of age and region."

RRR, Sita Ramam steal the show at 68th Filmfare Awards

BELOW ARE THE AWARDS TELUGU CINEMA BAGGED



Filmfare has unveiled the winners of the 68th Filmfare Awards South, honouring the best in South Indian cinema for the year 2022. After a hiatus last year due to unforeseen circumstances, the prestigious awards have returned to celebrate the exceptional talent and significant contributions across Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada film industries.

In Telugu cinema, *RRR* emerged as a standout, clinching the Best Film Telugu Award. The film's leading stars, N.T.R. Jr. and Ram Charan, were recognised as the Best Actors in a Leading Role (Male) for their powerhouse performances. Mrunal Thakur was awarded Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female) for her acclaimed role in *Sita Ramam*, while S. S. Rajamouli secured the Best Director Award by Popular Choice for his visionary work on *RRR*.

Tamil cinema saw a monumental achievement with *Ponniyin Selvan Part 1* being honoured as the Best Film Tamil. Renowned director Mani Ratnam received the Best Director Award by Popular Choice for his



masterful direction. Kamal Haasan was awarded Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male) for his powerful performance in *Vikram* and Sai Pallavi won Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female) for her role in *Gargi*.

In Malayalam cinema, Darshana Rajendran was recognised as the Best Actress for her compelling performance in *Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey*. Kunchacko Boban won Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male) for *Nna Thaan Case Kodu*, which also took home the Best Film Award in the Malayalam category. The Best Director Malayalam Award went to Ratheesh Balakrishnan Poduval for his work on *Nna Thaan Case Kodu*.

Kannada cinema saw Kiranraj K awarded Best Director for his acclaimed film *777 Charlie*. *Kantara* was celebrated as the Best Film Kannada. Chaithra J Achar won Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female) for her role in *Taledanda*, while Rishab Shetty was honored as Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male) for his blockbuster performance in *Kantara*.

Rohit Gopakumar, Director of Worldwide Media and CEO of ZENL



BCCL TV & Digital Network, congratulated all the winners, stating, "Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada cinema have profoundly influenced us with their stellar performances and creative brilliance, setting new benchmarks for Indian cinema. Filmfare remains committed to honoring this exceptional talent, and with the continued support of our audiences, we will uphold this dedication. Congratulations to all the winners for their outstanding contributions."

Jitesh Pillai, Editor-in-Chief of Filmfare, expressed his delight, saying, "We are beyond thrilled to honor the exceptional artistry, creativity, and dedication within Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada film industries. Filmfare takes immense pride in celebrating these brilliant performances, and I extend my heartiest congratulations to all the winners for their well-deserved victories."

The 68th Filmfare Awards South has indeed highlighted the remarkable achievements in regional cinema, reaffirming the vibrant and diverse landscape of Indian filmmaking.



Best Film: *RRR*
Best Director: SS Rajamouli (*RRR*)
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male): Jr NTR and Ram Charan (*RRR*)
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female): Mrunal Thakur (*Sita Ramam*)
Best Film (Critics): *Sita Ramam* (Hanu Raghavapudi)
Best Actor (Critics): Dulquer Salmaan (*Sita Ramam*)
Best Actress (Critics): Sai Pallavi (*Virata Parvam*)
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Male): Rana Daggubati (*Bheemla Nayak*)
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Female): Nandita Das (*Virata Parvam*)
Best Music Album: MM Keeravani (*RRR*)
Best Lyrics: Sirivennela Sitarama Sastry for *Kaanunna Kalyanam* from *Sita Ramam*
Best Playback Singer (Male): Kaala Bhairava for *Komuram Bhemudo* from *RRR*
Best Playback Singer (Female): Chinmayi Sripada for *Oh Prema* from *Sita Ramam*
Best Choreography: Prem Rakshith (*Naatu Naatu* from *RRR*)
Best Production Design: Sabu Cyril (*RRR*)



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