

There are no Reddy names in Ande Sri's song. So Chief Minister Revanth Reddy might have removed the names of other castes from the song. Ande Sri has lost his image. If the CM thinks that the Kakatiyas killed Sammakka and Sarakka and that is why the Kakatiya Kalathoranam is being removed from the emblem, then what about the killings of tribals by the then Congress government.

- Manda Krishna Madiga, MRPS founder president



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Uphold Constitution if results throw hung parliament

SENSEX, NIFTY LOG BIGGEST SINGLE-DAY GAIN IN 3 YRS



Rakul takes a trip down memory LANE



# Super Tuesday showdown

## Modi eyes record-equalling feat, Oppn hopes for rebound

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi eyes a record-equalling third straight term in power amid the INDIA opposition bloc's hope of springing a surprise as the counting of votes for the Lok Sabha election is set for Tuesday, bringing an end to a marathon polling exercise stretching over 80 days.

While most experts have long seen the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) as the favourite in the polls, a lot is at stake for the ruling combine in terms of the scale of victory it can pull off and new territories it can conquer. The opposition's stakes are higher still amid its reducing national footprint.

Exit polls have been, however, unanimous in their prediction that the NDA is closer to realising Modi's ambitious target of "400 paar" for his alliance than the INDIA bloc is to crossing even the 180 mark, one-third of the total number of seats. Though electoral verdicts have historically been accepted, even though grudgingly, by all parties, there has been a sharper edge to the questions being raised by opposition parties this time over the polling process, including the Election Commission (EC).

In the run-up to the counting, the campaign acrimony between the two battling camps has spilled over into



### Overview of counting process

- Under Rule 54 A of the Conduct of Elections Rules 1961, the counting of postal ballot papers shall be started first at the Returning Officer's (RO) table.
- After 30 minutes of the commencement of counting of postal ballots, the counting of votes from EVMs should be started.
- Only Control Unit (CU) of the EVM used in polling station is required for counting of votes along with Form 17C.
- The result of the control unit shall be noted in Part-II of Form 17C after showing it to counting supervisor, micro observer and counting agents of candidates.
- In case of non-display of results in the display panel of the control unit, VVPAT slips of the respective VVPAT shall be counted after completion of all CUs count.
- Counting of VVPAT slips shall start only after completion of counting of votes from CUs.

In the run-up to the counting, the campaign acrimony between the two battling camps has spilled over into the post-poll trading of accusations after the exit polls predicted a massive win for the incumbent alliance, a forecast summarily dismissed by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as "Modi media poll".

INDIA bloc leaders, who have been raising doubts over the electronic voting machines (EVMs), have accused the prime minister of sending a signal to the bureaucracy through these "fantasy" exit polls and marched to the EC, urging the poll watchdog to follow the counting

guidelines. In its counter-attack, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has accused its rivals of trying to undermine the integrity of India's electoral process and asked the EC to prevent any attempt of "violence and unrest" during the counting of votes.

Modi framed the BJP's campaign around the opposition's "appeasement politics", accusing the Congress and its allies of handing over a chunk of the reservation meant for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) to Muslims and allegedly eyeing people's family assets to further its "redistribution of wealth" agenda.

### DON'T MISS...

Southwest monsoon enters some...

Southwest monsoon entered Telangana on Monday with entries in Nagarkurnool, Gadwal and Nalgonda. As per TGDPS, southwest monsoon advanced into some parts of Telangana on Monday. Conditions are favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Telangana during next four or five days. The State witnessed light to moderate rains at a few places. According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), southwest monsoon advanced into some more parts of central...

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LS polls: 2,572 crorepati; 1,643...

As India braces for Lok Sabha election results on Tuesday, there are 2,572 candidates who are crorepati while 1,643 candidates have criminal cases registered against themselves, according to poll rights body ADR. An analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch has shed light on the profiles of the candidates. Out of the 8,360 candidates contesting, 8,337 have been analysed, revealing significant insights into their backgrounds, including criminal records...

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Coop Min reviews progress of pilot...

The National Level Coordination Committee (NLCC) for India's ambitious grain storage project, chaired by Cooperation Secretary Ashish Kumar Bhutani, held its inaugural meeting here on Monday and reviewed the progress of the pilot project launched last year in 11 states. The initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Cooperation, aims to create a decentralised network of warehouses and other agricultural infrastructure at the Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) level across the...

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Rahane underlines importance of...

Mumbai skipper Ajinkya Rahane on Monday underlined the importance of working on fitness and exhorted the players of his state side to utilise the off-season training camp for getting better. The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) launched the three-month long camp on the theme titled "Home of the Champions" for the upcoming season. Rahane, who led Mumbai to their record-extending win in the Ranji Trophy last season, said work behind the scenes is critical for players to deliver on the field...

-SPORTS

Radha Kishan gets interim bail for 28 hours



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Nampally court granted escort bail to Radha Kishan Rao, an accused in the phone tapping case, for two days from 2 pm on June 3 to 6 pm on June 4 to perform the final rites of his dead mother Sarojini Devi (98). The police have shifted Radhakishan Rao from Chanchalguda jail to the Pallagutta village of Jangaon district where the funeral was held.

The court ordered the police to stay at Radha Kishan Rao's village till 6 pm on June 4. The Superintendent of the Chanchalguda prison should ensure that Radha Kishan Rao does not use mobile phones during his stay outside the jail, the court said.

A source said that Radha Kishan Rao filed an application for interim bail for 13 days but the court granted only two days.

Radha Kishan Rao had got bail to see his ailing nonagenarian mother for a day on April 21.

DELHI EXCISE CASE

'Over Rs 1,100 crore laundered' Alleges ED in supplementary charge sheet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has alleged in its supplementary charge sheet filed against BRS leader K Kavitha before a court here that more than Rs 1,100 crore was laundered in the alleged Delhi excise scam.

According to the ED, out of Rs 1,100 crore, Kavitha was involved in proceeds of crime (PoC) worth Rs 292.8 crore.

The allegations were made in a supplementary prosecution complaint, ED's equivalent to a charge sheet, filed before Special Judge Kaveri Bewaja, who on Monday extended Kavitha's judicial custody till July 3.



The judge extended the custody after Kavitha was produced before the court in pursuance of its earlier order issuing a production warrant against her.

CM to make Secretariat Vaastu-complaint

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has reportedly decided to carry out some modifications at the Secretariat. One significant change involves changing the main entry point for the Chief Minister's convoy. The convoy will enter through

the West Gate and exit via the North East Gate. IAS, IPS and other officials will use the South East Gate for entry. Vaastu-linked changes are being made at the Secretariat including relocation of the Chief Minister's Office from the sixth floor to the ninth floor.

Continued on Page 2



Buy cotton seeds only from authorised dealers: Tummala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Agriculture and Marketing Minister Tummala Nageshwara Rao has once again asked farmers to buy cotton seeds only from authorised dealers and not to buy seeds from private individuals who sell them by giving false promises. He said that sufficient cotton seeds are available in the market. Tummala spoke to officials con-

cerned and District Collectors on Monday and asked them to be alert as the weather department had warned that there would be rain in the next three to four days across the state. The Minister asked officials to ensure that the packets of Pachirota seeds and cotton seeds which have already been supplied to all districts are delivered to farmers.

Continued on Page 2



B'luru cops arrest Telugu film actress Hema in drug case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) of the Bengaluru Police arrested Telugu film actress Hema on Monday in connection with a rave party.

She was summoned to appear before the Anti-Narcotics Wing of the Central Crime Branch (CCB). When she went to the police she reportedly wore a burqa to hide her identity.

CCB personnel had already arrested six people in connection with the rave party, which was held on May 20 in Bengaluru Electronic City. The FIR said that there were 73 men and 30 women at the party including two Telugu film actors. The blood samples of 59 men and 27 women tested positive for nar-



cotic drugs.

Earlier, the Bengaluru Police had confirmed Hema's presence at the farmhouse rave party. Bengaluru Police Commissioner B. Dayananda said that Telugu film actress Hema was present at the rave party in Bengaluru where drugs were seized.

Hema had released a video saying that she was not part of the party as she was in Hyderabad.

'Mediterranean diet may lower risk of death in women'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Women consuming the largely plant-based Mediterranean diet were found to be at a 23 per cent lower risk of dying prematurely, according to a new research.

The study following more than 25,000 US women for up to 25 years found that adhering to the diet reduced cholesterol, obesity and insulin resistance, all of which are known risk factors for developing metabolic disorders, including diabetes and heart disease.

The Mediterranean diet is rich in nuts, fruits and vegetables, along with whole grains and legumes. The dishes are mainly cooked in olive oil and also include a moderate intake of fish, poultry, dairy and eggs. Red meat and sweets are rarely consumed.

Adopting this diet pattern was also found to lower risk of death due to cancer in the women studied. The

findings were published in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA).

"Our research provides significant public health insight: even modest changes in established risk factors for metabolic diseases can yield substantial long-term benefits from following a Mediterranean diet. This finding underscores the potential of encouraging healthier dietary habits to reduce the overall risk of mortality," said lead author Shafqat Ahmad, a researcher at the Division of Preventive Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital, US.

The researchers included participants aged at least 45 years at the start of the Women's Health Study. The women responded to questionnaires and provided information on their weight, height and body mass index, along with details about their lifestyle, medical and social history. Their blood pressures were also taken.

The Mediterranean diet is rich in nuts, fruits and vegetables, along with whole grains and legumes. The dishes are mainly cooked in olive oil and also include a moderate intake of fish, poultry, dairy and eggs. Red meat and sweets are rarely consumed.

For understanding possible biological mechanisms that could explain the diet's health benefits, the researchers assessed over 30 biomarkers of metabolism and inflammation, including lipids and insulin resistance. "In this large-scale cohort study of 25,315 initially healthy US women who were followed up for 25 years, we observed that higher adherence to the Mediterranean diet was associated with a 23 per cent relative risk reduction in all-cause mortality," the authors wrote.

The researchers acknowledged

that the study was limited to middle aged and older well-educated female health professionals who were predominantly non-Hispanic and white.

However, the study's strengths included its large sample size and a long follow-up duration, they said. "The health benefits of the Mediterranean diet are recognised by medical professionals, and our study offers insights into why the diet may be so beneficial," said senior author



Sama Mora, a cardiologist and the director of the Center for Lipid Metabolomics, Brigham and Women's Hospital.

# Today is going to be a big day in Telugu politics

**SNCN ACHARYULU**  
HYDERABAD

Today, that is, Tuesday is going to be a big day in Telugu politics. Ending all the speculations created by exit polls the results of the Lok Sabha election in Telangana and that of the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls in Andhra Pradesh will be declared on Tuesday.

The counting will start at 8 pm in both the Telugu states and trends will be known by afternoon.

The fate of all political parties and their candidates will be known by evening. Many political leaders spent

every minute in high tension all these days. The Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections have never created this kind of tension in the past.

In both Telugu states all eyes are on Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. They are waiting eagerly to know whether Jagan will continue as the Chief Minister or Chandrababu will become the CM again.

In Telangana, the Congress and the BJP are waiting to know which party will get more seats in the Lok Sabha elections. Ahead of the counting of votes in the Lok Sabha

elections, the victory in the MLC by-election came as a big relief to the BRS. The victory in the MLC by-election in the local bodies' quota in erstwhile Mahbubnagar, the home district of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, has boosted the morale of the BRS.

In these circumstances, if the BRS wins a handful of seats in the Lok Sabha election there will be no more threat of anyone leaving the party. However, the BJP will try to occupy the BRS's slot in Telangana.

The Congress may also try to weaken the BRS. Fighting the Congress and the BJP

simultaneously the BRS has to regain its old glory. If the BRS fails to win even a single LS seat as predicted by some exit polls the party leadership will face a tough time.

In Andhra Pradesh, if the YSRCP retains power, the TDP's future will be in danger. If the TDP comes to power, the YSRCP leadership will have to face vengeful acts from the TDP government.

The results of the AP Assembly and the Telangana Lok Sabha elections will decide the future of Chandrababu Naidu in AP and that of KCR in Telangana respectively.

## INDIA now on ventilator: Chugh

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

BJP General Secretary Tarun Chugh said that after polling INDIA is on ventilator while the Modi-led BJP is on accelerator.

In a scathing attack on INDIA's false optimism on Monday, Chugh said its bubble will burst soon. He said the entire country has reaffirmed its faith in the Modi government's policies.

The opposition's misleading propaganda stands rejected by voters and after the election results are declared the nation will enter a new era of development and progress, he added.

BJP State President G. Kishan Reddy will conduct a Pooja on June 4 at 7 am at the Bhagalakshmi Temple in Hyderabad before going to the vote counting centre.

## Manda Krishna for all-party meet on 'Jayajayahe Telangana'

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

MRPS founder President Manda Krishna Madiga said that he will meet all political parties including BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao regarding the State Anthem 'Jayajayahe Telangana' to try to convene an all-party meeting. Speaking to the media on Monday, Manda Krishna said the Ande Sri song 'Jayajayahe Telangana' has been changed and that Telangana will not accept the song released on June 2. He asked Panchayatiraj Minister Seethakka how she had accepted the song without the names of Sammakka, Sarakka and Kumaram Bheem. He asked why there were no names of poets like Kancherla Gopanna in the song. "Will Transport Minister



Ponnam Prabhakar accept the song without Kancherla Gopanna's name? Will IT Minister D. Sridhar Babu accept the song without the names of Brahman poets?" he said. "There are no Reddy names in Ande Sri's song and the CM might have removed the names of other castes from the song. Ande Sri lost his image by listening to the CM," Manda Krishna said. He said that Ande Sri's orig-

inal song is in the hearts of the people already. However, the new song goes against that. In this context, he said he would meet KCR, Manda Krishna said. He also asked the government why it removed the Kakatiya Kalathoranam from the Telangana State Emblem.

"If you think that the Kakatiyas killed Sammakka and Sarakka and that is why you are removing Kakatiya Kalathoranam from the emblem then what about the killings of tribals by Congress governments," Manda Krishna asked. He said that Charminar is a hereditary asset. He said the government should accept the full song of Andesri and that Revanth Reddy should change the name of the Kasu Brahmananda Reddy Park to Martyrs Park.

## HC to hear suo motu PIL on phone-tapping case today

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The High Court took over suo motu the phone-tapping PIL on Monday citing a report published in a newspaper. A High Court Bench is likely to take up this PIL suo motu for hearing on Tuesday.

The Union Home Ministry, the Chief Secretary, the DGP, the Principal Secretary of the Home Department, the Additional DGP (Intelligence) and the Hyderabad Commissioner of Police are the respondents in the suo motu PIL.

The report said that the phone of a Judge of the Telangana High Court,

Justice Sarath, was also illegally tapped during the phone tapping operation conducted during BRS rule.

Former ASP N. Bhujanga Rao said in his confession that the phones of individuals who criticised KT Rama Rao, the then IT Minister

and the BRS Working President, in the TSPSC question paper leak scam including that of HC Judges, were tapped as per the orders of the then SIB chief T. Prabhakar Rao.

The police officials who constituted a team to illegally tap the phones of politicians, judges and others are Mekala Tirupathanna, D. Praneeth Rao (SIB DSP), and former Task Force DCP G. Radha Krishna Rao.



## Grouting starts at Annaram Barrage

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The repairs of Kaleshwaram Project-linked barrages are going on as per the NDSA report.

At the Annaram Barrage in Madhavdevpur, grouting has

started. Sand is being removed and at Gate 38 of the barrage, grouting is going on. Repairs are being done to stop seepage.

Grouting is going on at the Medigadda Barrage too. As the monsoon is approaching work is being expedited.



## Jeevan Reddy's disputed land now with govt

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Revenue officials of Chevella division have taken over the disputed lands of former Armour MLA A. Jeevan Reddy. On June 1, the Revenue Department ordered both parties to keep off the land. Four cases have been registered by

Sama Damodar Reddy and A. Rajitha, the wife of Jeevan Reddy, in Chevella and Mokila police stations regarding the ownership of the lands in Chevella and Shankarpally mandals. As both parties are alleging physical assault, threatening, trespass and damage to property against each

## 'It is predictions versus predictions'

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The D-Day, June 4, Tuesday, has come at last. The counting of votes of the Lok Sabha elections will be held on June 4 across the nation. The big question here is who is going to have a good day this Tuesday in Telangana. Most people do not consider Tuesday as a good day to start anything new. However, Human Resources

(HR) Managers consider Tuesday as the most productive day of the week. Politicians, voters and others are waiting to see which political party is going to gain this Tuesday in Telangana.

All political parties had claimed victory after the Lok Sabha elections. Later, the exit polls came out. Everyone is now waiting to see whose predictions (that of political leaders or exit polls) will become

true on Tuesday.

Congress leaders including Chief Minister Revanth Reddy have been saying that the Congress will win 10 to 14 LS seats in Telangana. However, the BJP has been saying that it will win 10 LS seats easily in Telangana. The BRS claimed that it would win 10 LS seats.

However, exit polls said that the main battle in the LS polls in Telangana would be between the Congress and the

BJP.

Many exit polls predicted that the Congress will win between four and nine LS seats in Telangana. The BJP will get between seven and 12 LS seats and the BRS will get one or nothing.

Some betting enthusiasts started a different bet this time. The new bet is whether 'exit polls predictions will become true or that of political parties'.

## FSSAI TO FOOD BIZ Remove claim of 100% fruit juice from ads, packaging labels

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Food regulator FSSAI has asked food business operators to immediately remove claims of 100 per cent fruit juices in advertisements as well as labels on packaged products.

According to an official statement, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued a "directive mandating all Food Business Operators (FBOs) to remove any claim of '100% fruit juices' from the labels and advertisements of reconstituted fruit juices with an immediate effect.

All the FBOs have also been instructed to exhaust all existing pre-printed packaging materials before 1st September 2024. "It has come to the attention of FSSAI that several FBOs have been inaccurately



marketing various types of reconstituted fruit juices by claiming them to be 100 per cent fruit juices," the statement said.

Upon thorough examination, FSSAI has concluded that, according to the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018, there is no provision for making a '100% claim.

"Such claims are misleading, particularly under conditions where the major ingredient of

the fruit juice is water and the primary ingredient, for which the claim is made, is present only in limited concentrations, or when the fruit juice is reconstituted using water and fruit concentrates or pulp," FSSAI said.

FBOs have been told to comply with the standards for fruit juices as specified under sub-regulation 2.3.6 of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards & Food Additives) Regulation, 2011.

## 'Follow Constitution, serve nation without fear'

**Kharge writes open letter to bureaucrats**

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday wrote an open letter to the country's bureaucracy on the eve of counting of votes for the Lok Sabha elections, urging officers to adhere to the Constitution and serve the nation "without fear, favour and ill-will against anybody". "Do not get intimidated by anyone. Do not bow down to any unconstitutional means. Do not be afraid of anyone and discharge your duties, based on merit, on this counting day," he wrote.

"We owe it to future generations, a vibrant Democracy and a long-lasting Constitution, as penned by the makers of modern India," he said. The counting of votes polled in the Lok Sabha elections will be held on Tuesday.

"In this hope that India remains truly Democratic in nature, I extend good wishes



to each one of you, and expect that our eternal ideals of the Constitution remain untarnished," the Congress chief said.

In his appeal to all civil servants and officers, he said he is writing in his capacity of the Leader of the Opposition (Rajya Sabha) and as the president of the Indian National Congress.

He congratulated the Election Commission of India, the Central Armed Police Forces, state police forces, civil servants, district collectors, volunteers and all in the bureaucracy who were involved in the smooth conduct of the mammoth general elections.

"Our inspiration and India's First Home Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel famously called the civil servants as the 'Steel frame of India'.

## Counting to start at 8 am in all LS constituencies

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

All arrangements have been made for the counting of votes polled in the election to the 17 Lok Sabha constituencies in Telangana. Around 10,000 officials are fully geared up for the counting exercise on Tuesday, officials said.

The counting will begin at 8 am on Tuesday at 34 centres. The counting of both postal ballots as well as votes cast in EVMs would start at 8 am in all constituencies. Postal ballots would be counted separately.

A three-layer security cordon has been put in place and 12 companies of Central forces have been deployed to guard strong rooms.

The counting of votes polled in the by-poll held in the Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly constituency would also begin at



8 am on June 4. Polling for the 17 Lok Sabha seats and the Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly by-poll was held on May 13.

Telangana had recorded 66.3 per cent per cent voter turnout in the Lok Sabha polls.

The main contest is between the ruling Congress, the BRS and the BJP.

In the 2019 LS polls, the BRS won nine seats, the BJP four, the Congress three and the AIMIM one.

Union Minister G. Kishan

Reddy and sitting MPs Bhandi Sanjay Kumar and D. Arvind are the prominent BJP candidates in the fray.

The key contenders are former Union Minister Balram Naik of the Congress, former IPS officer RS Praveen Kumar of the BRS and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy held a teleconference on Monday with the party's candidates and gave them instructions regarding the counting process.

## CM to make... 'Over Rs 1,100 cr...'

**Continued from page 1**

Renovation is underway on the ninth floor to house the new CMO. Revanth's lucky number is 9.

It may be recalled that similar Vaastu-linked modifications were made at the Gandhi Bhavan when Revanth took over as TPCC President.

These changes by Revanth Reddy remind one of similar ones made by KCR during BRS rule. After the BRS defeat, KCR made some changes at the Telangana Bhavan.

Vaastu-linked modifications continue to play a significant role in Telangana's political landscape. After becoming the Chief Minister, Revanth had been making changes in his style.

**Continued from page 1**

The court had issued the warrants after taking cognisance of a charge sheet against the BRS leader in the case on May 29. The court also granted bail to three co-accused persons -- Prince, Damodar and Arvind Singh. The three accused were charge sheeted without being arrested during investigation by the ED. "As per the investigation so far, the total proceeds of crime identified is Rs 1,100 crore, out of which PoC of Rs 292.8 crore is being dealt with in this Prosecution Complaint.

Through activities of the accused persons i.e. Kavitha, Champreet Singh, Prince Kumar, Damodar Sharma and Arvind Singh, huge proceeds of crime have been generated," the charge sheet alleged.

The charge sheet claimed that Kavitha was involved in PoC (money generated and laundered in crime) of Rs 292.8 crore, out of which kickbacks of Rs 100 crore were given to AAP leaders.

"Kavitha conspired with the members of the South Group and the AAP leaders through accused Vijay Nair (who was acting on behalf of the top leaders of the AAP) to pay kickbacks to the tune of Rs 100 crore and receive undue benefits," the documents claimed.

Kavitha, by paying kickback to the government functionaries through their middleman, has participated in the generation of PoC of Rs 100 crore, the charge sheet claimed, adding that she then participated in the transfer of this PoC to the government functionaries.

## Buy cotton seeds only from authorised...

**Continued from page 1**

The officials informed the Minister that 84,43,474 cotton seed packets have been supplied across the state by June 3. 10,43,474 packets were supplied on Sunday and 25,10,430 cotton seed packets have already been made available by farmers, they said.

Tummala ordered a review of company-wise supply and to ensure that packets of cotton

seeds which are yet to be supplied are made available to farmers within these three days as per the government plan.

Around 37,959.60 quintals of Pachirota seeds were purchased by farmers last year, while 97,109 quintals have already been made available this year. Farmers have purchased 84,412 quintals of Pachirota seeds, the officials said.

Tummala said the seeds supplied by the government will be made available to farmers in four to five days. It has come to the attention of the government that in some areas large quantities of Pachirota seeds are being bought and transported to neighbouring states. The Minister directed officials to take strong action against them.

Around 33 people selling packets of cotton seeds without

permission have been booked and 118.29 quintals of seeds worth Rs 200.49 lakh have been seized from them. Two dealers have been booked for black marketing, the officials said.

The Minister once again told farmers that sufficient cotton seeds are available in the market and that all farmers should buy seeds only from authorised dealers and not from private individuals.

# Gurukula degree colleges entrance test results released

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The results of Gurukula degree colleges entrance test were released on Monday on the official website <https://tgrdcet.cgg.gov.in>. The examination was conducted on April 28 for filling up the seats in BC Welfare, Social Welfare, Tribal Welfare Gurukula Degree Colleges in the State.

According to TGRDC Set-2024 Convener Badugu Saidulu, the students who have been allotted seats based on the marks obtained in the entrance examination should report to the respective colleges with their original certificates from June 5 to 13.

He said that while there are 30 BC Gurukula Degree Colleges in the State, 9,220 seats will be filled through this exam. Similarly, 7,080 seats in 26 Women Social Welfare Gurukul Degree Colleges and 4,040 seats in 21 Tribal Welfare Gurukula Degree Colleges (15 women, 6 men's colleges) will be filled. Apart from regular courses in BC degree colleges, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Cloud Technology, Nutrition Food Technology, Fashion Technology, Textile Technology, BBA, BCom Computers, MPCs, MSc courses are available. For more details the candidates can contact <https://tgrdcet>.



# People protest at Boduppal sub-station over power cuts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A series of power disruptions occurred at the Boduppal sub-station, near Saibhavani Colony, leading to significant outages for local residents on Sunday who protested at the sub-station. BRS MLA KT Rama Rao said on X, "CM Revanth says no power cuts and 24 hour uninterrupted, quality power is being supplied. Then why are these people protesting at sub-station?"

At 5:20 pm, the Uday Nagar 11kV feeder, emanating from Boduppal sub-station, tripped due to tree and tree-branch falls at multiple locations. This initial outage affected a wide area, leaving many residents without power. The Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSPDCL) reported that power was restored on the Uday Nagar 11kV feeder by 8:10 pm.

However, further complications arose at 9:15 pm when a thunderstorm caused an insulator failure on the incoming 33kV line from Maula Ali to NGRI. This interruption led to a complete power loss in the area. In response, TSPDCL provided an alternative power supply to the sub-station from the 33kV Bandlaguda to Uppal feeder at 9:25 pm.

As per TSPDCL, unfortunately, this solution was short-lived. At 9:40 pm, a single-phase power interruption occurred on the incoming 33kV Bandlaguda to Uppal feeder due to a jumper cut. TSPDCL crews worked diligently to resolve the issues, and



People staging a protest near the Boduppal sub-station

by 10:25 pm, three-phase power supply was fully restored to the entire area under the Boduppal sub-station. The series of interruptions and prolonged outages prompted residents of Saibhavani Colony to visit the sub-station, seeking answers and expressing their concerns.

# Southwest monsoon enters some parts of Telangana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Southwest monsoon entered Telangana on Monday with entries in Nagarkurnool, Gadwal and Nalgonda.

As per TGDPS, southwest monsoon advanced into some parts of Telangana on Monday. Conditions are favourable for further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Telangana during next four or five days. The State witnessed light to moderate rains at a few places.

According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), southwest monsoon advanced into some more parts of central Arabian Sea, some more parts of Karnataka, Rayalaseema, Coastal Andhra Pradesh, some parts of Telangana and some more parts of West, Central and Northwest Bay of Bengal on Monday. Telangana witnessed thunderstorms accompanied with lightning and gusty winds (30-40 KMPH) that occurred at isolated places in all the districts of the State. The State is likely witness heavy rains in the southern districts for three days from Tuesday.



According to Telangana Development Planning Society (TDPS), Kamareddy recorded the highest temperature with 44.5 °C followed by Nizamabad with 44.4 °C, Siddipet and Peddapalli with 44.2 °C while Serlingampally records the lowest temperature with 22.4 °C followed by Patancheru with 22.6 °C, Kapra with 22.9 °C, Chandrayangutta with 23.0 °C. Maximum temperatures are expected in the range of 37 to 40 degrees C, while the minimum temperatures to be in

the range of 24 to 27 °C. Dr A Sravani, scientist, IMD Hyderabad said, "A cyclonic circulation is situated over coastal Andhra Pradesh. It has extended upto 2.1 km while in Telangana State, nearly 17 stations have received heavy rainfall. In the next five days, heavy rainfall is expected in Telangana. Today, scattered rainfall is expected especially in the southern parts of Telangana. In the next five days in Hyderabad, cloudy weather conditions are expected, showers can be expected tomorrow.

# TGRTC starts issuing bus passes to students in State

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Zone (GHZ) of the TGRTC made elaborate arrangements for smooth issuance of student bus passes for the academic year 2024-25 on June 1. Students have to apply for all types of bus passes such as free, route, student general, student greater, student special, student exclusive and district route passes online in the TGRTC official website <https://tgrtcpass.com>.

Students can avail bus passes at opted bus pass centre. The bus pass centres are in Abids, Afzalgunj, Aramghar, Balanagar, Borabanda, CBS, Charminar, Dilsukhnagar, ECIL X Roads, Feroz Nagar, GHMC head office, Ghatkesar, Hayathnagar, Ibrahimpatnam, JBS, Kachiguda, Koti Terminal, KPHB, Kukatpally Bus station, L B Nagar and Lingampally.

Students have to apply for the required bus pass online in the TGRTC official website

<https://tgrtcpass.com>. Further, they have to ensure that his/her online application form has been forwarded to TSRTC by the Head Master/Principal/Director/Dean of the institution and submit the attested application form in the nearest opted centre and obtain the bus pass on or after the date specified in the application form.

The TSRTC has provided the facility of online payment of administrative charges by the educational institutions and for online submission of required documents for renewal of existing bus pass code to reduce the difficulty of approaching the bus pass section in Secunderabad.

The procedure for online payment of administrative charges for renewal of existing bus pass code is that the institution has to log in to the website <https://mis.tgrtcpass.com> with the user name as its bus pass code and password used for the previous year 2023-24.

The institution will be directed to the page where the provision has been given for uploading of proforma sheet, required affiliation copies and previous year payment receipt. After uploading prescribed documents the institution will be directed to the page for payment of administrative charges online by using debit/credit cards or through UPI or scanning a QR code provided.

All the private institutions have to pay the administrative charges for the academic year 2024-25 in the form of Demand Draft, drawn in favour of Dy.CAO, TSRTC, Secunderabad, payable at Hyderabad and submit the requisite documents along with the proforma sheet available in

<https://tgrtcpass.com> under the name "Administrative Charges Details" along with the payment receipt of the administrative charges at Bus Pass Section, Rathifile, Secunderabad.

# New photo for hall ticket a must for Group I candidates

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) has directed candidates who are appearing for Group I services exam to paste a passport size photo that was captured not before three months at the place provided in the printed hall ticket before entering the examination centre.

The provision for downloading hall tickets is already available to the candidates on the Commission's website from June 1. They can download it till the commencement of the exam. TSPSC also informed the candidates to sign in the space provided on the hall ticket in the presence of the invigilator only in the exam hall. The hall ticket must be presented for entry into the test centre along with one original valid photo identification card (in physical form) issued by the government i.e., passport, pan card, voter ID, Aadhaar card, government employee ID or driving licence.

# OU conducts TG LAW CET, TG PGLCET for admissions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University conducted the Telangana Law Common Entrance Test (TG LAW CET-2024) and TG PGLCET-2024 on Monday for admission to LLB and LLM courses offered in the university or constituent private colleges in Telangana State for the academic year 2024-25 on behalf of the Telangana Council of Higher Education. About 79.45 per cent of students appeared for the exam.

As per the schedule issued, TG LAW CET and PGLCET were conducted on June 3. The first session was conducted in the forenoon from 9:00 am to 10:30 am, while the second session in the afternoon (AN) was conducted from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm. The third session in the evening (EV) was conducted from 04:00 pm to 5:30 pm.

About 50,684 students registered for the exam, out of whom 49,231 students regis-



tered in Telangana and 1,453 students registered in Andhra Pradesh. In all, 40,268 students attended the exam, out of whom 39,228 were present in Telangana, while 1,040 attended the exam in Andhra Pradesh.

The officials present during the initial configuration drive of the TG LAW CET and PGLCET-2024 are M Dana Kishore, I/C Vice-Chancellor, OU, and Chairman, TG LAW CET and PGLCET - 2024. Prof. R Limbadri, Chairman,

Telangana Council of Higher Education. Prof. SK Mahamood, Vice-Chairman, Telangana Council of Higher Education, and Prof. P Laxminarayana, Registrar, Osmania University, Prof. B Vijayalaxmi, Convener, TS LAW CET and PGLCET-2024, Director, Legal Cell.

The preliminary key will be released on June 6 on the website <https://lawcet.tsche.ac.in/>. Candidates can submit objections on preliminary key up to June 7.

# CASHe to set up new Tech Centre in Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AI-based financial platform CASHe on Monday announced that it will set up its new Technology Excellence Centre in Hyderabad. The facility is touted to create 150 jobs in the city by the end of 2024.

The new facility will serve as a centre of excellence. It will drive and support the technology needs of the FinTech company, which currently hosts teams from its lending, insurance and wealth management verticals. Concurrently, the company also announced its plan to ramp up hiring across various experience levels and domains such as Technology, Data Sciences, Machine Learning, DevOps, TechOps, Product development, credit and collections.

The firm is focused on strengthening its presence in India's FinTech sector. It employs 550 people across its Hyderabad and Mumbai centres and intends to add up to 300 people by the end of this calendar year. In all, 150 of these hires are slated for the new centre, aligning with the firm's planned talent acquisition strategy.

# TSICET on June 5 for MBA, MCA admissions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHÉ) announced that it would conduct the Telangana State Integrated Common Entrance Test (TSICET) 2024 at Kakatiya University, Warangal, for admission to MBA and MCA courses for the academic year 2024-25 on June 5.

The Common Entrance Tests (CETs) are scheduled to be held on June 5, 2024, in two sessions from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm for the Forenoon (FN) session, while for the Afternoon (AN) session, the timings are from 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm. On June 6, 2024 (Thursday), in one session from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm for the Forenoon (FN) session. TSICET is being conduct-

ed in 116 test centres, out of which 111 are in Telangana and five are in Andhra Pradesh. The total number of candidates registered is 86,184. Out of them, 41,203 are male, 44,980 are female, and one is transgender.

The test will be conducted in English and Telugu and English and Urdu. The registered candidates can download their hall tickets from the official portal: <https://icet.tsche.ac.in>.

The candidates are informed that, as per the TSICET rules, even a one-minute delay in reaching the examination centre will result in denial of entry and admission into the examination hall.

They are advised to visit or ascertain their test centres in advance and to report one hour before the commencement of the examination.

# Hostel owner overpowers two; averts phone snatching

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In an incident reported from Vengal Rao Colony on Sunday, an alert hostel owner averted a phone-snatching attempt.

The hostel owner, identified as Joshua Kumar, was on the street near his hostel when two individuals, Balbir Singh and Ram Singh, approached him, asking to make a call. Joshua handed them his phone, but they attempted to run away with it.

Realizing their intention, Joshua quickly grabbed their bike keys to prevent their escape. In response, Balbir Singh and Ram Singh attacked Joshua.

Students from the hostel came to Joshua's aid and called the police.

# Rs 200 crore cash & other items seized in MCC period

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Since the implementation of the Model Code of Conduct on March 16 in view of the Lok Sabha elections 2024, the police have seized Rs 200,27,60,036 in cash, liquor and drugs among other items in Telangana.

On Monday, Telangana Director General of Police Ravi Gupta released data pertaining to seizures; according to it, total cash seized is Rs 99,16,15,968 and liquor worth Rs 11,48,00,955 has been seized so far.

The value of narcotic drugs seized during the MCC period stands at Rs 14,52,53,412. Among the drugs, quantity of ganja is 5068.889 kg; 266.510 grams of MDMA; 7.666 kg of

Alprazolam; 17.588 liters of hash oil; 10.80 grams of Ecstasy pills; 243 ganja plants; 69 grams of heroin; 120 grams of OPM paste; 0.09 Kg of charas; 0.428 kgs of ganja chocolates; 5 LSD blots; 10 e-cigarettes (vapes) vmsn disposable devices.

So far, 92,271 kgs of gold and 178,657 kgs of silver, total worth Rs 63,19,83,040 and other freebies worth Rs 11,91,06,661 have been seized. Among the total seizures, the Flying Surveillance Teams seized Rs 50,73,17,696 and the police seized items worth 149,54,42,340.

A total of 7,272 licenced arms and 20 unlicensed arms have been deposited during this period.

# Two kids die in wall collapse, three injured

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two children died in a wall collapse in Hyderabad on Monday, police said.

Three children were also injured in the incident that occurred in Babulreddy Nagar in the Mailaredevally area.

Police and the personnel of the Disaster Response Force (DRF) of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) rushed to the spot. Rescue workers shifted the injured to Osmania Hospital, where the condition of two of them was stated to be critical.

Officials said an old wall collapsed following overnight rain. Five children playing near the wall were buried under the debris. Two girls, aged eight and three, were killed. The victims are children of migrant workers from Bihar.

# Girls outshine boys in TS POLYCET

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Girls outshined boys in the Telangana State Polytechnic Common Entrance Test (TS POLYCET) 2024 as per the results declared on Monday.

The State Board of Technical Education and Training (SBTET) officials said out of 92,808 candidates who registered for the exam, 82,809 appeared for the exams. In all, 69,728 (84.20 per cent) candidates have qualified.

A total of 36,496 girls recorded a qualifying percentage of 84.20 per cent in MPC and 86.63 per cent in MBIPC stream, while 46,313 boys secured a qualifying percentage of 80 per cent in MPC and 77.90 per cent in MBIPC stream.

The POLYCET-2024 entrance test is for candidates seeking admission to all diplo-

ma courses in engineering/non-engineering/technology offered at Polytechnics / institutions (including Aided and Unaided Private Polytechnics / Institutions running in Private Engineering Colleges) in Telangana State and Diploma in Agriculture, Agriculture Engineering, Seed Technology and Organic Agriculture Courses offered by Professor Jay Shankar Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU), Diploma Courses offered by Sri Konda Laxman Telangana State Horticulture University (SKLTSU).

Meanwhile, the State Board of Technical Education and Training has earlier released the POLYCET 2024 admission counselling schedule and for more details candidates can visit <https://www.polycet.sbtet.telangana.gov.in/#/index>

# Drugs seller nabbed, 4.1 gram of MDMA seized

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State Task Force of the excise department nabbed a drugs seller on Sunday under the Balanagar police station limits in Kukatpally. On credible information the police arrested Sheikh Farooq and seized 4.1 grams of MDMA drug from him.

STF Circle Inspector Sridhar said that after arresting him, the police produced him before the Judicial First Class Magistrate Court on Monday.

# Over 8,000 visitors expected at Hyd Jewellery Pearl and Gem Fair

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Over 8,000 trade visitors will be attending the 16th edition of the Hyderabad Jewellery Pearl and Gem Fair (HJF) organised by Informa Markets in India, to be held from June 7 and 9 at Hall 4 at HITEC. This event promises new horizons and opportunities, perpetuating its legacy of excellence in the jewellery industry and fostering growth in southern India.

In 2023, the Indian gem and jewellery market was valued at

\$43.71 billion, with a projected CAGR of 17.35 per cent from 2024 to 2030, reaching \$133.96 billion. This growth illustrates the sector's dynamic potential and its crucial role in the economic landscape.

HJF 2024 will feature over 350 exhibitors showcasing more than 700 brands, over 2,00,000 designs and collections, and the latest trends. Some of the key exhibitors include Abhay Pearls, Chintamani Gold, Dantara Jewellers, Kanchan Jewels, VS

Gold and many more. With 15 years of unparalleled success, HJF continues to highlight exceptional creativity and innovation in jewellery, drawing participants from major cities and Tier-II towns across India.

HJF 2024 has received support from the HITEC City Jewellery Manufacturers Association (HJMA) and the Telangana Bullion Gems & Jewellers Federation (TBJA). Additionally, HJF extends its reach globally through its international partnership with the

Hong Kong Jewellery and Gem Fair.

Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director of Informa Markets in India, emphasised, "India, known as the 'factory for the world' in the jewellery segment, has the potential to lead globally. The domain, a mix of organised and unorganised sectors, is a central hub for jewellery manufacturing, supported by progressive government policies and initiatives that promote investment, technology and skills.

## LS POLLS

# Restrictions imposed ahead of counting

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Police on Monday imposed restrictions on various activities in the city ahead of the Lok Sabha election results on June 4.

The order prohibits the assembly of five or more persons and any kind of processions within a radius of 200 meters from the counting centres.

The order prohibits, carry-

ing sticks either with or without flags, firearms, or any other items that can be used as weapons for offence or defence by persons in processions, large gatherings, or meetings within a radius of one kilometre from the counting centre.

It also prohibits the use of mikes or public address systems by anybody or parties. Restrictions are also placed on music, singing, speeches, or broadcasting through speakers

or any other instruments. The restrictions also include the prohibition of erecting temporary structures like shami-anas, pandals, khannaths, etc., on thoroughfares, public places and all other places where the public may gather.

The Hyderabad Police also issued a notification informing that bursting or throwing fire-crackers on public roads and at public places is strictly prohibited.



# Why people want Modi to come to power again and again?

“We are on the verge of coming to power again for the third time in a row. The BJP is certain to get majority of the seats. I know the sentiments of the people of the nation. We are going to take several crucial decisions during the third term. The decisions will lay a strong foundation for the nation for at least 1,000 years. The country is going to become the third largest economy during the third term”, remarked PM Narendra Modi during a discussion in Rajya Sabha in February this year.

There is no wonder almost all exit polls predicting triumphant majority for Narendra Modi bringing the BJP to the power for the third time in a row. Either PM Modi or the BJP did not have any qualms about the NDA coming to power for the third time on the strength of a huge majority.

The people of the country have clearly told their views

to the representatives of the organisations that conducted the exit polls. Surprisingly, the Opposition parties have spun a concocted story and took the message of BJP not going to get the number of seats this time like it got earlier to the people rather forcefully.

The Opposition promised to deliver social justice and distribution of resources free of cost among the people. It also approached the people saying that democracy and the Indian Constitution are in peril. In each and every State, some pseudo-intelligentsia launched anti-BJP propaganda and intensified it. Hundreds of books have been written, articles have been published, but the people did not believe in them as evidenced by the BJP about to come to power with a huge majority of seats.

The Congress in its first page of the election manifesto released a dart aiming the

**There is no wonder almost all exit polls predicting triumphant majority for Narendra Modi bringing the BJP to the power for the third time in a row. Either PM Modi or the BJP did not have any qualms about the NDA coming to power for the third time on the strength of a huge majority.**

people. It questioned whether the lives of the people are far better now compared to their lives prior to 2014. The question prompted the people to ponder deeply. Atrocities perpetrated and several unsavoury incidents that had taken place prior to 2014 flashed across their minds. These include starvation deaths, spate of suicides by farmers, incidents of outraging modesty of women,

communal riots, lynching of the Sikhs, pulling the rug under the feet of the democratically-elected governments, lodging those who questioned the atrocities of government behind bars, honouring those who played the second fiddle to a single political family with plum posts, large-scale scams right from the Bofors scandal to 2G scam involving several lakhs of crores, appeasement politics and los-



**Y SATYA KUMAR**  
BJP National Secretary

ing the self-respect as Indians. The people recalled all these incidents.

If everything is right prior to 2014, why should Modi approach the people in 2014 like a tsunami? Why should the people set aside coalition governments and give full majority to the BJP and vote it to power? Why did the people give mandate to Modi with a huge majority in 2019 elections too? Finally, people

have elected blemish-free leader who is capable of honouring the self-respect of India and find it a suitable place on global map.

During the Corona pandemic situation, Modi did what the people wanted him to do to keep the nation united and to boost the morale of the people. As 140 crore people of the nation have reposed their faith in Modi's leadership, he took several bold decisions. He lent largescale support to the business and industrial organisations and to the MSME sector. He did away with the outdated laws and introduced digital economy and made people part of the banking system. At a time the economies of the global nations are showing recession, Indian economy developed as the fifth largest economy.

Modi taught a bitter lesson to Pakistan as it encouraged

sneaking of terrorists into the country through porous points on border. The Indian Army crossed into the Pakistan territory and taught a lesson to it. China also attempted to undertake a misadventure towards the nation, but at last it had to backtrack.

There were many instances of leaders of super powers like Putin, Biden have extended their hands of friendship to Modi and praised his foreign policy. He tightened his belt to integrate Jammu and Kashmir, a problem which has attained cancerous proportions since India became independent, with the rest of the nation. Abrogation of Article 370 applied brakes on the misdeeds of Pakistan in Kashmir. The building of Ram temple at Ayodhya ended the historic blunder committed 500 years ago. He rendered justice to Muslim

women, who have been rendered injustice for over several decades, by annulling triple talaq.

Modi, who knows the people's pulse approached them with the slogan of Modi's guarantee to exploit the regard the people have for him for the benefit of the party. In fact, Modi dedicated his life to serve the public desiring his spouse. Like Sankaracharya developed strong bond towards his mother, Modi also shared good bond with mother. But, he is always above the familial relations.

This is the objective behind Modi declaring that he is able to take bold decisions as the Almighty wants to use him as a medium to achieve major accomplishments. Showing the Opposition parties their right place is also the wish of the God. However, it would be the collective decision of the people.

**TRULY SPEAKING**

## Body found in Nalgonda water tank sparks row

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A body was discovered in a water tank in the 28th ward of the Old City area of Nalgonda, prompting a scathing critique from BRS MLA KT Rama Rao against the Congress government.

The incident unfolded on Monday when the Municipal Assistant Engineer and water line staff of Nalgonda Municipality, during a routine inspection, found the body. The deceased has been identified as 27-year-old Avula Vamsikrishna, a resident of Nalgonda Old City. Municipal staff had inspected and released water from the tank on May 30 and June 1, with no signs of a body at that time.

The water tank is cleaned regularly every two to three days according to the schedule, and a mandatory cleaning schedule is followed every three days. Preliminary medical examination suggests that the body had been in the tank for two to three days. A full post-mortem examination is ongoing, and the body showed



Body in water tank (Insert Avula Vamsikrishna)

signs of injuries in various places. The deceased was reported missing on May 24 and was known to have had mental health issues.

Police are investigating the case from various angles, including possible homicide and suicide.

Following the discovery, the District Medical and Health Officer of Nalgonda visited the 28th ward of Nalgonda Old City and inspected 50 houses, confirming that there were no issues with the drinking water for the residents. In response to

this incident, KTR launched a strong criticism of the Congress government, accusing it of gross negligence and incompetence in handling public services and safety. "This is not People's governance but it's a regime that plays with people's lives."

He highlighted several issues including "The inability to provide uninterrupted electricity. The failure to supply irrigation water to crops ready for harvest. The neglect of water tanks, even when there are deaths by drowning?"

KTR expressed outrage over the Nalgonda incident, stating, "Even with a body in a water tank for ten days, the authorities remain asleep." Drawing parallels to the Nagarjuna Sagar incident where monkeys were found dead in tanker, KTR noted that before the memories of that tragedy faded, the Congress government exhibited the same negligence and apathy. "This government can't even provide safe drinking water," KTR said. "It's a filthy administration that has completely neglected public health." He contrasted this with the Mission Bhagiratha initiative, which aimed to resolve decades-long issues with drinking water. "While Mission Bhagiratha addressed the perennial water scarcity, this incompetent government can't even manage water tank maintenance."

KTR concluded with a reminder, "Water is the foundation of life. If this government doesn't change its ways the people will certainly drive the Congress out."

## Villager killed after IED allegedly planted by Maoists explodes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 55-year-old man died after an IED (improvised explosive device), allegedly planted by a member of the banned CPI (Maoist), exploded in a forest area of Mulugu district of Telangana on Monday, police said.

The man was killed instantaneously when he stepped on the IED near Kongal village of Wazeedu mandal of the district, they said.

The villager, his son and three others were walking in the nearby forest to collect firewood when the explosion took place, a senior police official said.

According to police, the Maoists have been planting IEDs in the areas in which people commute regularly, in order to make their presence felt.

On May 30, the pet dog of another villager died in a similar blast, police said.

Separate cases have been registered at Wazeedu police station in connection with the two incidents, police added.

## Sub-Registrar and document writers in ACB net

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials apprehended Banoth Surender Naik, Sub-Registrar of Suryapet, along with two document writers, Kalluri Srinivas and Thangella Venkata Reddy, on Monday for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 99,200.

The incident occurred when the accused officer, Banoth Surender Naik, demanded bribe through Kalluri Srinivas and Thangella Venkata Reddy from the complainant, M Venkateswarlu, a resident of Venkateswara Colony, Suryapet town.

The bribe was demanded to facilitate the registration of an open plot measuring 1080 square yards in the name of the complainant's daughter, Meka Manasa, as a gift deed, and an additional 160 square yards in the name of Medipally Ravi Raju as a sale deed. The tainted bribe amount was recovered from Srinivas' possession, and both Srinivas and Venkat



Suryapet Sub-Registrar and document writers who were trapped by ACB in Suryapet on Monday

Reddy's fingers, which came into contact with the bribe, tested positive in a chemical test. Banoth Surender Naik was found to have performed his duty improperly and dishonestly to gain undue advantage. It is notable that this is not the first instance of misconduct by the officer; he was previously trapped by ACB officials in 2007 and 2018. Consequently,

all the three have been arrested and produced before the 1st Additional Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases Court at Nampally in Hyderabad.

The case is currently under investigation. The public is reminded to report any demands for bribes by public servants to the ACB's toll-free number 1064 for prompt legal action.



Marijuana seized by police at Mangunur in Bhadradi Kothagudem district on Monday

## 5 held, 477 quintals of marijuana seized

PNS ■ MANUGURU

The police on Monday seized 477 kg of marijuana worth Rs 1,19,35,000 and arrested five persons on charge of smuggling of the narcotic substance, Manuguru Circle Inspector Soma Satish said.

The narcotic substance is being smuggled to Zaheerabad

in Telangana from Sileru and Donkarayi in AP, the police said.

Besides taking five persons into their custody, the police seized the narcotic substance and two vehicles – a car and an Ashok Leyland lorry – from them.

The arrested were sent for remand.

## Will strengthen BRS at grassroots: Naveen Kumar

PNS ■ RANGA REDDY

The victory of BRS candidate Nagarakunta Naveen Kumar Reddy in the Mahabubnagar local bodies constituency MLC by-election has infused fresh vigor into the party ranks. Naveen Reddy secured a decisive victory over his closest rival, Manne Jeevan Reddy of the ruling Congress party with a margin of 111 votes. The loss was a significant blow to the Congress Party.

The victory celebrations were organised in Kothur where BRS members and supporters gathered in large numbers. The win was particularly surprising given the BRS party's recent losses in legislative assembly by-elections.

BRS leaders Devender Yadav, Kadempalli Srinivas Goud, and Emme Satyanarayana welcomed Naveen Kumar Reddy with enthusiasm as he arrived at



MLC-elect Naveen Kumar Reddy being taken in a procession in Ranga Reddy district on Monday

Kothur. Naveen Reddy, accompanied by party leaders and workers, paid homage to the statues of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and BR Ambedkar at Kothur's main square.

Speaking on the occasion, Naveen Kumar Reddy emphasised that BRS is truly a party of the people, attributing the victory to the welfare and development schemes imple-

mented by former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao. He expressed gratitude to everyone who contributed to his success, noting that the people recognised the positive impact of BRS governance compared to the ruling Congress. He reaffirmed BRS commitment to serving the public. He vowed to strive to strengthen the party at the grassroots.

The event saw the participation of numerous party officials and supporters, including Councilors Somla Naik, Anita Srinivas Goud, Madhavi Gopal Goud, Bagari Prasanna Latha Yadaiah, MPTC Jangagalla Krishnaiah, former Deputy sarpanch Srinivas Reddy, BRS leaders Govind Reddy, Shiva Chari, BRS Municipality President Jangagalla Shivakumar, leaders City Cable Venkatesh, Bandi Sravan, Tuppara Ravi, Krishna, Anil, Sagar, Uday, Charan, and many others.

## YSRCP heading for a big win, reiterates Sajjala

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP general secretary Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy has once again made it clear that the YSRCP is going to win with a huge majority and party president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is going to take oath as Chief Minister for the second time in a row in the port city of Visakhapatnam on June 9. Sajjala appealed to the party cadre and ranks to be ready across the State for the celebrations on Tuesday at 10.30 am.

Speaking to media persons at the party headquarters here on Monday,

Sajjala said that though the apex court has struck down the SLP, the mistake remains a mistake. He said that the EC has made a rule for postal ballot vote that attesting officer details should be either in the form of a seal or written in pen. The EC has issued GuideLines in July, contrary to that, without changing it, a rule has been made that signature is sufficient only in AP but not in the entire nation. Sajjala said these changes were

made after TDP's request which is a clear violation in it and this decision was taken after the polling was over in the state. Strangely it is implemented only in AP when the counting is nearing that raises suspicion and we raised the issue. Even though the EC and the court are independent, we have used our right as a political party, said Sajjala.

Sajjala lashed out at the TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu for undermining the electoral

process by "managing the systems." He expressed displeasure at the Election Commission of India's (ECI) memo on the validity of postal ballots, which says postal ballots should not be rejected if it was not stamped by the attesting officer. The Andhra Pradesh CEO had clarified that the postal ballots having the signature of the attesting officer but not having seal should be considered valid. Sajjala said the poll panel has brought a new rule for counting of postal ballots in Andhra Pradesh while this is not the case in the rest of the country.

## Sitakka assures martyrs' families of govt support

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development D Anasuya, known as Sitakka, on Monday expressed her gratitude to UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi for helping in achieving statehood for Telangana.

She was taking part as the chief guest at the 10th anniversary celebrations of Telangana State formation day held on Sunday here under the leadership of MLA Nayini Rajender Reddy, MLA of Warangal West constituency. Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Sitakka said that the sacrifices made by the Telangana martyrs were invaluable and extended the government's support to the bereaved families of the martyrs.

She alleged that the BRS regime during the past 10 years did not pay attention to



D Anasuya (Sitakka)

the protagonists of the Telangana movement and the martyrs' families.

However, the Congress regime, as part of the running of the people's government, felicitated those who had taken part in the movement for statehood to Telangana and family members of the martyrs

and came forward to honour them by allotting them a house-site.

But the Opposition parties were criticising the initiative of the government, she said, vowing to render justice to the martyrs' families in all respects.

The credit of implementing six guarantees within 100 days of coming to power by the Congress goes to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, she said. Later, she felicitated Prof Kodanda Ram and Telangana martyr Srikantacharya's mother and family members of those who took part in the movement for statehood to Telangana.

Government's advisor Vem Narender Reddy, Ministers Ponnampalabakur, MLAs from undivided Warangal district, chairmen of various corporations, leaders of JACs and others took part in the celebrations.

**INDIA CORNER**

**Four missing siblings from Mumbai traced, reunited with family**

The Mumbai police have traced four siblings from Andheri who went missing in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior last week and reunited them with their family, an official said on Monday. The police on Sunday traced three girls and a boy, in the age group of eight to 18 years, to a children's home in Gwalior and returned them to their family, an official from the MIDC police station said. The children left their home in Andheri with their mother on May 26 and boarded the Punjab Mail train from Kalyan station. When the train halted at Khandwa station, the mother alighted and missed the train, he said. The official said the children got down at Gwalior station, and a local resident took them to a children's home, the official said. Based on a complaint lodged by the children's family, a case of kidnapping was registered at MIDC police station, and a search was launched, he said.



**J-K: LeT commander among 2 terrorists killed in Pulwama encounter**

Two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including a self-styled commander of the outfit, were killed in an encounter with security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district on Monday, police said. Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, V K Birdhi said the ultras -- identified as Riyaz Dar and Rayees Dar -- were killed in the exchange of firing during a cordon and search operation in Nihama area of the south Kashmir district. Riyaz Dar was a "commander" of the banned LeT and was wanted in several terror cases. He had been evading security forces for many years. Security forces had launched the operation after receiving specific inputs about the presence of terrorists there, a police official said. The militants opened fire on members of a search party and the two terrorists were killed in the ensuing encounter, the official said.



**Badrinath pollution: NGT seeks fresh report from UKPCB**

The National Green Tribunal has sought a fresh report from the Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board (UKPCB) regarding solid and liquid waste management in the pilgrim city of Badrinath, including the complete sewage network and its carrying capacity. The NGT was hearing a matter regarding the improper functioning of the sewage treatment plant (STP) in Badrinath and the discharge of untreated sewage in the Alaknanda river. It had earlier directed the board to file a report. Noting the details of the report, a bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava said, "We have not got a satisfactory response on sitting and location of the STP which appears to be just on the bank of the river and (is) thereby discharging effluent directly (in)to the river along with other drains." Directing the UKPCB to file a new report, the bench asked it to disclose the figures relating to the carrying capacity of Badrinath and the number of visitors per day.



**CEC dares Oppn: Give proof of bid to influence poll process**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Monday dared the opposition to share evidence of allegations that returning officers and district magistrates were influenced to vitiate the poll process so the panel could take action against them. The opposition should also tell the Commission about those trying to influence the poll process before the counting of votes begins, Kumar said at a press conference. He was flanked by Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and S S Sandhu. "You cannot spread a rumour and bring everyone under a cloud of suspicion," Kumar said. The Commission had made preparations to deal with any foreign attempt to influence the poll process but these allegations have come from within the country itself, he said in an



apparent dig at the opposition. Taking exception to allegations that district magistrates were being influenced, the CEC said, "Those levelling allegations should say which DM was influenced and we will punish them. They should tell us before the counting process begins." Congress leader Jairam Ramesh had claimed that Home Minister Amit Shah had been calling district magistrates and collectors and indulging in "blatant and brazen" intimidation. District magistrates and col-

**India created world record with 64.2 cr people voting in LS polls**

India created a world record with 64.2 crore voters, including 31.2 crore women, participating in the Lok Sabha elections this year, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said on Monday. Addressing a press briefing, he said over 68,000 monitoring teams and 1.5 crore polling and security personnel were involved in the world's largest electoral exercise. "India created a world record with 64.2 crore voters, including 31.2 crore women, participating in the Lok Sabha elections this year," said Kumar. On social media memes calling election commissioners 'Laapataa Gentlemen', Kumar said, "We were always here, never went missing."

lectors are the returning officers of their respective districts during election. Ramesh claimed that Shah had already spoken with 150 district magistrates or collectors. Kumar had accepted all the demands made by the multi-party delegation that met the panel on Sunday, and asserted that the issues raised by them

**Count of postal ballots will commence first**

Counting the Conduct of Election Rules, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Monday said the count of postal ballots will start first across all counting centres and asserted that there was "no doubt about it". Responding to questions at a press conference here, he said after half-an-hour of the start of the postal ballot count, the counting of votes recorded in the electronic voting machines will commence. A delegation of the opposition parties had on Sunday met the Commission to demand that postal ballot count should start first and the results of postal ballots should be announced first. "Rules clearly state (Rule 54A) that postal ballot count will start first."

**Indian embassy in Myanmar cautions against fake job offers**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian embassy in Myanmar has called upon Indian nationals looking for jobs in that country to be careful so that they are not lured into fake or illegal employment. In an advisory, the embassy said an international crime syndicate is active in the Myawaddy region on Myanmar-Thailand border and urged Indians to exercise caution before taking up job offers in the region. "There has been an increase in the incidents of Indian nationals falling victim to the international crime syndicates active in the Myawaddy region on the Myanmar-Thailand border," the embassy said. "We would re-emphasise the importance of adhering to our advisories on the subject for not taking any such job offers without consulting the respective Indian embassies," it said. "A new location at Pha Lu area, South of Myawaddy town, is reported to have



emerged recently where most of the Indian victims are being trafficked into, via Thailand, after being recruited from India as well as from countries like Malaysia, the UAE, etc," it said. The embassy urged Indians not to take up job offers made through social media. "In view of the above, it is reiterated that Indian nationals should not accept such job offers floated through social media platforms or other

unverified sources," it said. "Indian nationals are advised to check/verify credentials of foreign employers through the Indian embassy," it said. The embassy said the antecedents of recruiting agents as well as companies should be checked before taking up any job offer abroad. The advisory came days after 13 Indians, who were lured into illegal work in Laos, were rescued and sent back home.

**TO PROBE POST POLL VIOLENCE REPORTS**

**NCW seeks approval from EC to visit Sandeshkhali**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma has sought permission from the Election Commission to allow an investigative visit to West Bengal by its team following reports of post-poll violence. The request by the Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW) was made in a letter addressed to Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar in view of the model code of conduct. The letter highlights concerns about "high-handedness and police atrocities against women" in the aftermath of recent elections in Sandeshkhali and other



regions of West Bengal. Sharma emphasised the urgency of addressing these reports, noting the NCW's mandate to monitor and investigate issues related to the deprivation of women's rights and the non-implementation

of protective laws. In her communication, Sharma requested an exemption from the Election Commission of Code of Conduct to facilitate the NCW team's visit. The NCW team, led by Sharma, intends to conduct an on-the-ground investigation and take necessary actions to ensure the protection and rights of women in the affected areas, Sharma said. Allegations of intimidation and attacks were raised by the BJP on Monday in different parts of south Bengal, including in Sandeshkhali, against supporters of the TMC, following the seventh and final phase of the Lok Sabha elections.

**Battle of nerves on in HP as Sukhu govt gets lease of life**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The battle of nerves between the ruling Congress and the BJP continues in Himachal Pradesh with the Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu government getting another lease of life and stability after the acceptance of resignations of three Independent MLAs, who had cross-voted in the Rajya Sabha polls. The decision of Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania of accepting the resignations of Independent MLAs K L Thakur (Nalagarh), Hoshiyar Singh (Dehra) and Ashish Sharma (Hamirpur) comes a day ahead of results of the bye-elections to six assembly constituencies on June 4. There has been a tussle for power in the hill state of Himachal Pradesh ever since the BJP won the Rajya Sabha election after six Congress and three Independent MLAs switched sides and cross-voted in favour of BJP candidate Harsh Mahajan. Ever since its victory in Rajya Sabha election, the BJP has been sniffing an opportunity and a change of government after some Congress MLAs have switched sides. The Congress currently has 34 MLAs in its favour and the BJP has 25 in the Himachal



Assembly whose strength has come down to 59 now. Six Congress MLAs were disqualified earlier and the resignations of three independent MLAs were accepted on Monday creating three more vacancies in the 68-member House. Once the results are out on Tuesday, the strength of the Himachal Assembly will rise to 65, but since its strength is 34 it will remain in majority irrespective of the outcome of the bypolls. Two sitting MLAs Vikramaditya Singh and Vinod Sultanpuri are also contesting the Lok Sabha elections from Mandi and Shimla constituencies and their victory may usher in fresh bye-elections in their constituencies of Shimla Rural and Kasauli. "By accepting the resignations of three independent MLAs, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has ensured that his government will survive for another few months. The decision comes as a reprieve for the Congress," a senior BJP leader said. Himachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri, however, accused the BJP of making all out efforts to destabilise the state government, which has just emerged out of the crisis created by last year's heavy rains during the monsoons that caused widespread devastation and loss of lives.

**7 EX-HC JUDGES WRITE TO PREZ**

**Uphold Constitution if results throw hung parliament**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Seven former high court judges on Monday wrote an open letter to President Droupadi Murmu urging her to follow the "established democratic precedent" and invite the largest pre-poll alliance to form the government to preempt horse trading if the 2024 general elections lead to a hung Parliament. The retired judges also urged Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and the chief election commissioner to uphold the Constitution by ensuring a smooth transition of power, if the present ruling dis-

pensation loses people's mandate. The open letter is signed by six former Madras High Court judges G M Akbar Ali, Aruna Jagadeesan, D Hariharanathanam, P R Shivakumar, C T Selvam, S Vimala and former judge of Patna High Court Anjana Prakash. They said there was "genuine concern" that if the present ruling dispensation loses people's mandate, the transition of power may not be smooth and there could be a constitutional crisis. Concurring with the May 25 open statement of



Constitutional Conduct Group (CCG) of former civil servants, the former judges said, "We are constrained to agree with the scenario envisaged in the above statement: 'In the event of a hung parliament,

onerous responsibilities will be placed upon the shoulders of the President of India. "We are sure that she will follow the established democratic precedent of first inviting the pre-poll alliance that garnered the largest number of seats. Also, that she would endeavour to preempt the possibilities of horse-trading..." It also urged the CJI and the CEC to uphold the Constitution in such an eventuality and ensure smooth transition of power. "We, former high court judges, having no affiliation to any political party, but strongly committed to the ideals

enshrined in the Constitution, and to the values of electoral democracy, write this open letter from a deep anguish at the recent and present goings-on with regard to the parliamentary elections of 2024," the letter, issued to media on June 3, said. "Several events over the past weeks are making for a very grim storyline; one that may possibly end in a violent conclusion. These are genuine apprehensions in the minds of the vast majority of our people. Reputed civil and human rights organisations and activists have also echoed the same apprehension," it said.

**SKM urges SDF leaders, workers not to flee Sikkim**

PNS ■ GANGTOK

After social media posts claimed that demoralised SDF leaders and workers were fleeing Sikkim following assembly poll defeat, fearing attacks by ruling party cadre in post-poll violence, the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) on Monday urged them to stay back, promising peace and security for all. The SKM bagged 31 of the 32 assembly seats, the results of which were declared on Sunday. The SDF managed to win only one seat and even its party supremo and five-term



former chief minister Pawan Kumar Chamling lost both the seats he contested. "Dear esteemed leaders and supporters of the SDF party, we have come to learn that many of you have left Sikkim fearing potential attacks. We wish to emphasise that the SKM, once

a victim of such violence, deeply understands the pain caused by these heinous acts. Our ethos strongly stands against indulging in any form of violence," SKM spokesperson Jacob Khaling said in a statement. He said Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang has strictly instructed all party workers to abstain from any anti-social activities in Sikkim. "We have vowed to maintain peace and harmony across our beloved state," Khaling said, urging those SDF workers and leaders who have fled the state to return.

**HP: Diarrhoea spreads to 12 villages of Hamirpur, over 200 affected**

PNS ■ HAMIRPUR (HP)

Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur is experiencing a resurgence of diarrhoea with over 200 people in 12 villages of the district falling ill in less than a week, officials said on Monday. A similar outbreak that affected more than 400 people in the district was reported in March. It took the administration around 10 days to bring it under control. The state's health department has sent its team to the affected villages falling under the Lambloo, Chamned, Gasota, Bafrin and Pander gram panchayats, they said. Forty-four new cases of diarrhoea, a water-borne disease, were reported on Monday out of which four have been admitted to hospital while over 160 people are at home, Chief Medical Officer, Hamirpur Dr R K Agnihotri said. The first case was reported on Friday and the numbers have been rising since, officials said, adding that Lambloo and Chamned panchayats had 120 patients.



**LS polls: 2,572 crorepatis; 1,643 with criminal cases**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As India braces for Lok Sabha election results on Tuesday, there are 2,572 candidates who are crorepatis while 1,643 candidates have criminal cases registered against themselves, according to poll rights body ADR. An analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch has shed light on the profiles of the candidates. Out of the 8,360 candidates

contesting, 8,337 have been analysed, revealing significant insights into their backgrounds, including criminal records, financial status, education, and gender representation. The analysis revealed that 20 per cent of the candidates have declared criminal cases against themselves, marking an increase from 19 per cent in 2019, 17 per cent in 2014, and 15 per cent in 2009. Of the 8,337 candidates analysed, 1,643 had criminal cases, while 1,191 (14 per cent)



face serious criminal charges, including those related to rape, murder, and crimes against women.

The financial profiles of the candidates show a substantial number of wealthy individuals running for office. Out of the total candidates, 31 per cent are crorepatis (millionaires), which translates to 2,572 candidates. This is a notable increase from previous elections, indicating a trend towards more affluent candidates entering the political fray. The average assets per candidate amount to Rs 6.23 crores, reflecting significant wealth among the contesting candidates.

The elections were conducted in seven phases, with varying candidate statistics for each phase. In the first phase, 16 per cent of the candidates had criminal cases, with 10 per cent facing serious charges. By the seventh phase, 22 per cent of the candidates had criminal cases, and 17 per cent had serious charges. The percentage of crorepati candidates also varied across phases, ranging from 28 per cent in Phase 1 to 39 per cent in Phase 6.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Green thumbs

### Unless reversed, the deforestation in Delhi will lead to its desertification, says HC

Mahatma Gandhi rightly said that what we do to forests is but a reflection of what we are doing unto ourselves. And this apathy to our environment is now causing us untold miseries. The Delhi High Court has issued a dire warning, observing that if the current deforestation trends continue, the city could become a barren desert. This alarming forecast highlights the urgent need for sustainable environmental policies and practices. As urbanisation, construction and pollution intensify, the green cover in Delhi and other metropolitan areas is rapidly depleting, leading to severe ecological and climatic consequences. Delhi's deforestation crisis is fuelled by several factors, including rampant construction, illegal logging and urban expansion. The city's green spaces are shrinking, leading to increased pollution levels, a rise in temperatures and a reduction in natural groundwater recharge areas. The adverse effects are already evident in the city's deteriorating air quality, with smog and particulate matter reaching hazardous levels during winter months. The reduction in tree cover also exacerbates the urban heat island effect, making Delhi increasingly uninhabitable during summer.



The High Court's stark warning underscores the broader implications of this environmental degradation. Trees play a crucial role in carbon sequestration, temperature regulation and maintaining biodiversity. Their removal disrupts these natural processes, leading to soil erosion, loss of habitat for wildlife and a decline in the overall quality of life. If the current trajectory continues, Delhi could face rising temperatures, severe water shortages, loss of biodiversity and a significant decline in public health due to worsening air quality.

Unfortunately, the general tendency is that the Government should do something about it, but the people themselves can bring about a substantial change. In stark contrast to Delhi's environmental challenges, the village of Piplantri in Rajasthan offers a beacon of hope and a model for sustainable development. Located near Udaipur, Piplantri has gained international acclaim for its unique initiative of planting 111 saplings every time a girl is born in the village. This practice, started by former village head Shyam Sundar Paliwal in the memory of his deceased daughter, has transformed the village's landscape and socio-economic fabric. Since its inception, Piplantri has planted over 350,000 trees, turning the once arid region lush green. This has had multiple benefits of improving air quality, increasing groundwater levels and fostering a sense of community ownership over local resources. The initiative also challenges the deeply rooted gender biases in rural India. The environmental benefits in Piplantri are manifold. The increased green cover has helped combat soil erosion, improved agricultural productivity and provided habitat for various species, thus enhancing biodiversity. Delhi's situation and Piplantri's success highlight the critical need for proactive environmental policies and community engagement. Urban areas like Delhi can draw several lessons from Piplantri's example.

### PICTALK



Children travel via a boat to reach their school that reopened after the summer vacation, in Thiruvananthapuram PTI

## Is it possible to restore the lost vigour of our planet?

### We have caused considerable damage to all our terrestrial as well as all aquatic ecosystems but some initiatives have shown promising results

Humans think about our planet only on two occasions: during celebrations of select days or when catastrophes happen. When everything is normal, we take our planet for granted. We exploit it to the core, and we forget that the resources on this planet are not only for us but for generations to come. At every stage in the history of Homo sapiens, we have caused considerable harm to the environment. But the quantum of destruction humans caused during the last two centuries has caused irreparable loss to the planet. This is mainly due to the advances in modern science and technology. We forgot the value of the Indian philosophy of living sustainably with nature, propagated by our forefathers for our greed. Today, we have fallen to the level that we don't even care about the future of our own children. We amass wealth and physical resources for our children, but what is the use if they don't have a clean and safe area to live? Can we restore the vigour of our planet? Restoring the lost vigour of our planet is essential for



ensuring our environment's long-term health and sustainability. While the challenges are substantial, numerous examples and strategies demonstrate that significant progress can be made with concerted effort, innovative solutions, and global cooperation. We have caused considerable damage to all our terrestrial as well as all aquatic ecosystems. To bring it back to normal is a challenging task. Initiatives such as reforestation, wetland restoration, and coral reef rehabilitation have shown promising results. For instance, reforestation projects in regions like the Amazon, Africa, and Southeast Asia are helping to restore vital forest ecosystems, sequester carbon, and provide habitats for diverse species. Wetland restoration efforts in places like the

Mississippi River Delta and the Danube Delta are improving water quality, reducing flood risks, and supporting rich biodiversity. One successful example of land restoration is the Loess Plateau in China. Over several decades, intensive soil erosion had turned this once-fertile region into a barren landscape. The Loess Plateau has been transformed through large-scale interventions, including terracing, reforestation, and sustainable agricultural practices, resulting in increased agricultural productivity, reduced erosion, and improved local livelihoods. After nearly four decades of pollution and neglect, the Khushal Sar Lake in Srinagar has been restored to its former glory, providing a habitat for thousands of migratory birds. Thanks to a community effort supported by the local administration, the lake has been brought back to life. These examples showcase the potential of comprehensive land restoration strategies in reversing degradation and fostering sustainable development. Every year on June 5th, we Celebrate Environmental Day.

This year's World Environment Day campaign focuses on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience. This year, we have realised the impact of climate change in India through scorching heat wave conditions and unprecedented rains and snowfalls. But when we feel the situation has become normal, we forget our environmental concerns and start harming it. The government must take stringent measures to safeguard the remaining tracts of agricultural lands, wetlands, forests, grasslands, coral reefs etc. No developmental activities should be allowed in these areas. We should carry out tourism-related activities within the region's carrying capacity. The government of Tamil Nadu's recent e-pass system to control tourist influx to Nilgiris is a commendable policy decision. We should implement a similar system in other ecologically sensitive regions of the country, especially those surrounding the Himalayas. (The is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru; views are personal)



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

## Epic election festival concludes smoothly

### The 2024 general election campaign has been marked by intense mudslinging, media misrepresentations and sharp ideological battles



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

With the conclusion of the 7th phase of the voting on Saturday, the long drawn-out Great Election Festival has come to an end. The results of the polls would be announced on Tuesday and the winner would be asked by the President to form the new Government. If a party fails to cross the halfway mark on its own, we will see a coalition government consisting of parties with different ideologies but united in their hatred for Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The electioneering of 2024 was nothing other than calling names and distortion statements made by Prime Minister Modi. The misrepresentation of facts by the media has fueled anger among various communities. When the bugle for the electoral battle was sounded by the Election Commission of India, there was no agenda in the BJP's game plan to amend the Constitution. But its rivals were unanimous in their aggressive campaign that if the BJP wins this time, there would not be any more elections in the country and the Constitution would be thrown to the dustbin. Rahul Gandhi, the Prime Minister in waiting, went one step further and declared that the BJP would cancel once and forever the reservation meant for scheduled caste/scheduled tribe and the OBC. Though this was refuted by the BJP camp, the notion in Kerala and Tamil Nadu was that Modi was against reservation of any kind. Meanwhile, leaders of Congress, CPI(M) and like-minded parties blamed Narendra Modi and the Sangh Parivar for the scorching summer as well as the draught that has struck South India. Then came the heavy downpour and upper-level cyclonic circulation in Kerala. The Congress and CPI(M) found Modi as the scapegoat for this too. The contents of the interview given by the Prime Minister to a TV channel too were distorted by the Opposition leaders who accused the former of claiming himself as God. But what he told in the interview was that he saw the 140 crore Indians as his Gods and he was worshipping them. These are



unpardonable sins. Election speeches were a learning process for ordinary mortals. The national and State level leaders of various political outfits enlighten the voters about the failures committed by the parties that ruled the country in different times while the party that was born to rule India would shock the electorate with what they have done to make India what it is now. Though the eminent historian R C Majumdar has edited an XI volume series "The History and Culture of Indian People" which was published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan at the instance of Kulapati Dr K M Munshi, the same has been declared as an "untouchable product" by the Leftist historians of the country. The Leftists and the GOP have a lot to hide and we will come back to that on another occasion. The 2024 General Election was an event that the voters would prefer to forget at the earliest. The electioneering should never be a name-calling exercise and the media should know its role as an observer. The guiding principle of journalism, as coined by C P Scott, late editor of The Guardian,



NOW THAT THE LAST VOTE HAS BEEN CAST, THE ONLY OPTION IS TO WAIT TILL JUNE 4 TO KNOW WHICH WAY THE WIND HAS BLOWN. NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS CHANNELS SHOULD NOT TAKE SIDES IN THIS CONTEST OF DEMOCRACY

was "facts are sacred but opinions are free". But in present-day journalism, this law has degenerated and it has become facts and opinions are free. If one is to go by the news and opinions of most newspapers, the INDI Alliance has already won the election and it is a matter of time before the new government is sworn in. The opinion polls and surveys have become a butt of jokes. Now that the last vote has been cast, the only option is to wait till 4 June 2024 to know which way the wind has blown. Newspapers and News Channels should not take sides in this contest of democracy. No doubt, the claim "my kurta is whiter than his" extends to politics. But it should not lead to an exercise of abusing and belittling the rivals. The speeches delivered by some of the leading lights of the main political parties were deplorable and despicable. The portrayal of Mukhtar Ansari, a dreaded criminal and mafia don, as Shaheed by Asaduddin Owaisi, the president of AIMM was a shocking incident. We address Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad as shaheeds but this is the first

time a mafia don has been accorded the status of Shaheed. Some of the leaders who constitute the INDI Alliance applaud a person convicted to life imprisonment in the fodder scam as the most honest politician in the country even though the latter is out on bail claiming serious medical ailments. The Porsche car mishap that claimed two lives in Pune is further proof that the BJP cannot escape from the allegations of favouritism. The Hindutva brigade is the alliance partner of the government in Maharashtra in which the NCP has a major stake. Only people with knowledge, wisdom and a clean image should win the election and assume power at the Centre. Convicts and mafia dons should not have any place in this electoral battle. Above all, it is for the Election Commission to elevate the quality of the electoral game to that of a royal event. There is no space for anti-social and anti-national elements in this jamboree where people are the masters. Let the electorate have the last word. (The writer is a special correspondent with the Pioneer, views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### DELHI FIGHTS VECTOR-BORNE DISEASES

Madam — Regarding the news story "MCD intensifies efforts to control vector-borne diseases," published on June 2, here is my response. As a daily reader of the newspaper, I find the Municipal Corporation of Delhi's (MCD) intensified efforts to control vector-borne diseases commendable. The deployment of Domestic Breeding Checkers (DBC) has been notably effective, with over 1.35 crore inspections and on-the-spot treatments for more than 25,000 mosquito-breeding sites. The strategic approach, including intersectoral meetings and community awareness campaigns, underscores the importance of collective action. MCD's consistent anti-larval spraying and fogging are critical in curbing the spread of diseases like dengue. However, the real challenge lies in sustaining these efforts and ensuring public cooperation. The civic body's appeal to residents to maintain cleanliness and manage water storage responsibly is vital. With Aedes mosquitoes breeding in stagnant clean water, community involvement in eliminating potential breeding sites is crucial. It's heartening to see such proactive measures, but continuous vigilance and public engagement are essential to prevent future outbreaks. Jiya Patel | Ahmedabad

#### ELECTION DYNAMICS IN INDIA

Madam — Apropos the news story "Now, count your blessings on June 4," published on June 2, this is my response. As a regular newspaper reader, witnessing the culmination of the largest festival of democracy in India is a remarkable experience. The recent Lok Sabha elections, with a voter turnout of 60 per cent, underscore the vibrancy and resilience of Indian democracy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking a third consecutive term, campaigned vigorously, reflecting the intense political landscape. West Bengal's impressive 70 per cent turnout contrasted starkly with Bihar's 49.12 per cent, highlighting regional

#### INDIA bloc optimistic despite exit polls



Regarding the news story "Cong Assured of 295+ Seats for INDIA Bloc," published on June 2, here are my thoughts. As a daily reader of The Pioneer, I am deeply impressed by Deepak Kumar Jha's coverage of the INDIA

Bloc's confidence in the 2024 general elections. The detailed account of Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge's assertive claims of winning over 295 Lok Sabha seats highlights the coalition's robust strategy and optimism. It's particularly notable how Jha captures the strategic planning and unity among diverse opposition leaders, including Sonia Gandhi, Arvind Kejriwal, and Akhilesh Yadav. This article sheds light on their collaborative efforts and preparation for the vote-counting process, reflecting a significant political moment. Jha's thorough reporting provides readers with an insightful glimpse into the political landscape, emphasising the Bloc's readiness to challenge the BJP and form a stable government. His articulate narration is both informative and engaging, making it a commendable piece of journalism. Shaker Kumar | Delhi

differences in electoral engagement. Despite incidents of violence and complaints about EVM glitches, the overall peaceful conduct of the elections is commendable. Modi's call for robust voter participation resonates deeply, emphasising the importance of every vote. The predicted return of the Modi-led NDA, according to exit polls, suggests continuity but also invites reflection on the opposition's strategies. This election underscores the dynamism of Indian politics, where every voter, regardless of background, plays a pivotal role in shaping the nation's future. The real victory, as the Election Commission aptly put it, belongs to the Indian voter. Dhruv Gupta | Mumbai

field and promoting Indian classical dance on a global stage. Starting her dance education in Bharatanatyam and later mastering Odissi under Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, she has become a luminary in the arts. Despite societal challenges, her unwavering commitment has not only preserved India's cultural heritage but also brought it to the forefront internationally. Mansingh's involvement in politics as a Rajya Sabha member further emphasises the importance of integrating cultural advocacy within governance. Her efforts to use dance as a medium for social commentary and her work with the Centre for Indian Classical Dances highlight her multifaceted contributions. Sonal Mansingh's life and work remind us of the enduring relevance of our cultural roots and the transformative power of art in bridging divides and fostering dialogue. Ishika Verma | Jaipur

#### LEGACY OF SONAL MANSINGH

Madam — Apropos the news story "The Living Legend of Sonal Mansingh," published on June 2, this is my response. Reading about Sonal Mansingh's remarkable journey is truly inspiring. Her story is one of dedication and resilience, breaking barriers in a male-dominated

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN CRIME AND CONSCIENCE

Spiritual resilience through meditation can help reform criminal behaviour



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI

The whole nation was jolted by a recent hit-and-run tragedy, where in a teenager, reportedly intoxicated behind the wheel of a luxury car, collided with a motorbike, claiming the lives of two promising young IT professionals. As per criminal psychologists, before a crime can be said to have occurred, it has to be committed. So, without action, there can be no crime. Hence, they say that in most of the cases, a person commits a crime in a moment of high tension, irresistible temptation, uncontrollable passion, deep infatuation, extreme provocation or utter frustration or in answer to an undying call of conviction or conscience. So, according to them if he/she could withstand the pressure of these conditions of restlessness for even a couple of minutes or perhaps, even for a few seconds, he/she would have, perhaps, been out of the crime zone and be free at least from any charge of a cognisable offence. Considering it from another perspective, it could be said that, if a man's rational sense, his self-respect, his control over the emotions, his sober judgement, his noble sentiments and his spiritual or ethical sense had not forsaken him, then, perhaps, the blinding storm of negative forces would have subsided and subdued and he would have refrained from the actual committal of crime and would thus have been saved from the traumatic experience that generally follows the crime. Once a gory crime has been committed, the gentle spirit in man has to go through a humiliating and excruciating experience even before he is jailed for a criminal offence or has to pay a heavy amount as punishment, under the relevant act for his civil offence, or has to suffer both. Not only does he feel depressed and carry a heavy burden on his chest but also, he is unable to face his conscience, stand before a mirror and



see his face as before. We have to consider does the law cover all acts that may cause injury to public welfare? Hence one can say that there is no objective, simple definition of crime. Because the meaning of crime is affected by the particular society in which we live.

Like, there are crimes that occur within strict legal definitions and those that relate to codes or conventions known as normative definitions. They are usually formal moral codes such as religions, or informal codes such as socially acceptable behaviour. The acts of crime and the punishment by the court go on as usual. However, one important question to which no government or judiciary has seriously and assiduously addressed itself lingers on. The question relates to the state of mind of a person before he commits the crime and after he has done the act. It is common knowledge that the forces that goad a person to committal of crime are none other than the maddening feelings of anger, consuming fires of hatred, jealousy, rivalry, vengeance or enmity, expanded greed, aroused strong passion, inflated or injured ego, surge of emotional attachment or grave fear of the unknown. We cannot reduce crime or have a crimeless society unless and until we have greatly reduced or fully removed these negative traits from the minds of the citizens.

It is unfortunate that pre-natal and post-natal aspects of crime have never been adequately dealt with by our society. It is hardly realised that what is required, in fact, are such measures that increase the psychological and spiritual immunity of the citizens to situations of stress and strain or to tempests of greed, ego and passions. This cannot be done except by spiritual education and guidance in Meditation. Because it is meditation which can burn the hidden roots of anger, hatred and other negative and criminal tendencies in a person. The over-all expenditure and the manpower and effort required for this will be "far far less" than is involved to keep the cogged wheels of law oiled and moving.

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

# Uncertainties dwindle investors' confidence



SHIVAJI SARKAR

Global uncertainties over rising interest rates, jittery noises of LS elections surpass the RBI's ₹2.10 lakh crore dividend boons, pushing down the Sensex



From its highest 76,010 in the beginning of the week it plunged to 73,866 as the BSE and Nifty indices close in the last six sessions. The RBI forecast of 7 percent growth too has not boosted the spirits as the equity market has been pining for a higher growth. However, RBI claims that even at 7 percent the country would be one of the fastest growing economies in the financial year 2025. The Asian Development Bank and Fitch also concur. But IMF, S&P and Morgan Stanley put it at 6.8 percent and World Bank, Moody's and Deloitte put it at 6.6 percent. The RBI has set a target of inflation at 4.5 percent though the central bank repeatedly has said that for the last ten years average inflation hovered over 5.5 percent. The central bank also notes a slowdown in the last quarter of 2023-24. Global markets remained under pressure due to rising bond yields and denting hopes of a rate cut. A major concern is the spike in US bond yields pushing the 10-year yield above 4.6 per cent. Some of the top companies that raised dollar bonds include India Bulls HF-\$ 350 million; IRB Infra - \$ 540 million; Adani Green Energy - \$ 409 million and Sriram Finance - \$ 750 million, as per Bloomberg. The bond market can trigger continuation of the FII selling which will depress the prices of large stocks further. Volatility is likely to continue the next week as well due to the political uncertainty and global developments. This has been a phenomenon since the elections began in April and now it is spiking to 24.8 - a more than two-year high on the benchmark for volatility India VIX. Except for occasional rises, the stocks remained stagnant. In different phases the losses to investors have been heavy. In the present melee, foreign funds were major sellers at Rs



A PROLONGED ELECTION HAS SEEN INVESTOR CONFIDENCE BEING HIT. FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTORS PREFERRED TO UNLOAD MORE THAN BUYING. ELECTION IS A DEMOCRATIC NECESSITY. THE RULERS, HOWEVER, NEED TO SEE IT BEYOND POLITICAL COMPULSIONS.

3,050 crore. In earlier, trading also the FPIs sold stocks worth Rs 27,500 crore. The domestic funds were net buyers at Rs 53,600 crore. It means largely the PSU funds were the buyers. This has a risk to mutual fund investors. During the weekend the BSE sensex had a minor rise of 0.18 percent or 132.44 points and the NSE Nifty 50 closed 61.75 points or 0.27% higher. These minor movements are not capable of recovering the losses. It is found that some of the major corporates like the Tata Steel's profit slides 65 percent to Rs 555 crore down from Rs 1566 crore. It suffered a loss of Rs 594 crore. Of the 12 startups looking to launch IPOs in 2024, eight have incurred a cumulative loss of Rs 8,000 crore, including Swiggy, and Ola Electric. A prolonged election has seen investor confidence being hit. Foreign portfolio investors preferred to unload more than buying. Election is a democratic necessity. The rulers, however, need to see it beyond political compulsions. Ideally, an election could be held in far fewer phases stretched to not more than a fortnight. Most of the southern states had a one-day poll schedule. Only in states of northern and eastern India had multi-phase polls. Even Tripura, one of the tiniest states with two seats, witnessed polls being held in two phases. Longer an election stretches, the administrative cost multiplies. All political parties should sit together with the Election Commission of India (ECI) to

discuss how the modalities could be simplified to hold elections in the shortest possible time to take care of administrative, economic and trading activities. Apart, it also needs to decide whether announcing dividends by organisations like RBI or other PSUs could be announced during the elections. Such moves tilt the balance. Profit booking at higher levels in the stock market has been a synonym to political or economic uncertainties. This needs to be avoided to the maximum. Polls must not come in the way of policy decisions either at the government level or corporate and other institutional functioning. Election schedules are not a matter of mere political management. Polls are held to improve systems. If these affect any aspect of the governance, this must be corrected for all times and should be part of the standard operating procedures of the ECI. Overall, there are risks to the economy, RBI says in its annual report. It has asked banks to address trading norms, banking book risks, and diversify deposit sources to mitigate risks associated with interest rate fluctuations. This variation has also its impact on the stock markets. Its decision to review priority sector lending guidelines and work towards formulating norms for the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion up to 2030 could have wider impact on trading and businesses. The RBI functioning is also being discussed. Its dividend payment of Rs 2.10 lakh crore is linked to

17 percent rise in income, 56 percent drop in expenses due to a much lower transfer to contingency provisions during 2023-24. As against Rs 1.3 lakh crore in 2022-23, only Rs 42,819 crore was transferred to the contingency fund in 2023-24. Another matter that has drawn attention is the domestic assets made up 23.3 percent against 76.7 percent in foreign currency assets, including gold deposits and gold held in the country as also loans and advances to financial institutions outside India. The RBI holds, its annual reports says, 822.1 metric tonnes of gold. The value of gold held as asset increased by 16.9 percent to Rs 1,64,604.9 crore on March 31, 2023. It also mentions heavy liabilities other than deposits and notes issued at 92.57 percent. The recent trend in US inflation data could make an interest rate cut this year. This could cause further flight of capital from India even as rupee continues to fall against the dollar and further fall in the equities are not ruled out. The market awaits new policy formulations. Till such time the volatility is likely to continue. It would require innovative approach to the financial and budgetary policies to boost the overall market so that investors from across the globe are tempted to put their funds in Indian scrip and other instruments. The new government has to trudge cautiously and intelligently to rev up the contours of the market and economy. (The author is a senior journalist; views are personal)

# Total knee replacement is a quantum leap towards pain relief

TKR is a transformative solution for those with knee pain. By tackling the root cause of pain, it not only restores mobility but also improves overall health

A 46-year-old woman faced the challenges of bilateral knee degeneration due to a rare congenital condition. Her knees had deteriorated significantly, causing chronic pain and limited mobility. After careful evaluation of her condition and medical history, she was recommended bilateral total knee replacement surgery (TKR) as the most suitable option. Following the surgery, she experienced a remarkable transformation. Today, she enjoys a newfound sense of freedom and vitality. Whether it's walking, hiking, or pursuing her passions, she does so with confidence and ease. Knee pain affects millions of individuals in India, hinder-



VIPUL KUMAR GUPTA

ing basic activities like walking and stair climbing. However, TKR is a breakthrough revolution in this direction, and a study published in the Journal of Arthroplasty reports that over 90% of TKR patients experience significant pain relief and improved mobility post-surgery. TKR, also known as knee arthroplasty, is considered a quantum leap towards pain relief for patients suffering from severe knee pain, often due to arthritis or injuries. This surgical procedure involves replacing the affected parts of the knee joint with artificial components to normalcy. Women often face knee problems because of their body structure and changes

like menopause hormones. This can make everyday tasks harder due to joint weakness and extra knee pressure. That's why doctors suggest knee replacement surgery. It's a way to fix the knee for improved and painless functionality. Unlike conventional treatments, surgery tackles the root cause and enables the person to enjoy a normal and painless life. TKR isn't just for seniors anymore; it's also a lifeline for younger adults, addressing various conditions beyond sports injuries. It's also beneficial for patients with traumatic injuries or fractures leading to irreparable knee damage. TKR addresses these issues, provides long-term relief, and



restores knee function. Eventually, it empowers younger individuals to lead active lives. Factors such as activity level and implant durability are carefully evaluated to ensure optimal outcomes. TKR is a transformative solution for those with knee pain and coexisting health

issues like diabetes or obesity. By tackling the root cause of pain, TKR not only restores mobility but also improves overall health. Reduced pain and enhanced mobility support, increased physical activity, aiding in weight management and blood sugar control. Total Knee Replacement

involves replacing the whole knee joint with artificial parts, which is useful for widespread arthritis or severe damage. On the other side, Partial Knee Replacement (PKR) targets only the damaged part of the knee, keeping healthy tissue and bone intact. Both surgeries aim to reduce pain and improve movement, but they differ in how much of the knee they address. TKR is a comprehensive solution for serious knee issues, while PKR focuses on specific areas of damage. The choice between the two depends on the severity of the injury and the patient's overall health. Physical therapy is crucial before and after TKR. Before surgery, it strengthens muscles and improves flexibility,

preparing patients for the procedure. After surgery, therapy helps reduce swelling, regain mobility, and rebuild muscle strength. Continued therapy ensures optimal knee function, prevents stiffness, and enhances the quality of life. TKR offers hope to people regardless of age, gender, or health challenges. With advancements in medicine, TKR has become a game-changer in treating knee problems as a reliable solution for improving knee function and reducing pain. It's a choice that can truly change their lives for the better! (The writer is a senior Joint Replacement Surgeon at Shalby Hospital, Lucknow; views are personal)

**MONEY MATTERS**

**Lupin gets USFDA nod to market generic drugs in US**

Drug maker Lupin on Monday said it has launched a generic medication used to treat or prevent bacterial infections in the US market. The company has launched Doxycycline for Injection USP (100 single-dose vial) in the US post approvals from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), the Mumbai-based drug maker said in a statement. The company's product is a generic equivalent of Pfizer Inc's Vibramycin for Injection which is indicated to reduce the development of drug-resistant bacteria. As per the IQVIA MAT April 2024 data, Doxycycline for Injection USP had an estimated annual sale of US\$ 48 million in the US. Lupin said it has also received tentative approval from the USFDA for its abbreviated new drug application for Letemrovir Tablets, 240 mg and 480 mg. The product is the generic equivalent of Merck Sharp & Dohme LLC's Prevymis tablets (240 mg and 480 mg).



**ICRA revises domestic steel demand growth rate to 10%**

ICRA on Monday revised its outlook growth target for domestic steel demand to 9-10 per cent for the current fiscal on healthy government spending and demand from steel-consuming sectors. The domestic steel consumption registered a growth of 11.3 per cent between February to April 2024, the agency said in a report. It further said that government capex spending was also healthy until February 2024, and other steel-consuming sectors like housing and real estate contributed to the resilient demand thereafter. "Given these leading trends, the rating agency has revised its FY25 steel demand growth target to 9-10 per cent...compared to the earlier estimate of 7-8 per cent, leading to the sector's FY2025 earnings being revised upwards," the report said. Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice-President & Group Head, Corporate Sector Ratings, ICRA, said for the last three years, the steel industry has witnessed its fastest period of growth since the global financial crisis.



**Punjab National Bank, IIFCL sign pact for financing infra projects**

Punjab National Bank (PNB) and India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) on Monday signed an agreement to offer long-term financial assistance to viable infrastructure projects. With this, both the institutions will collaborate to fund the infrastructure projects wherein the parties can mutually participate under consortium/multiple lending arrangements to provide financial support to the prospective borrowers subject to due diligence and on a case-to-case basis, a joint statement said. A signing ceremony for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) took place in the presence of Atul Kumar Goel, MD & CEO of PNB, and Padmanabhan Raja Jaishankar, MD of IIFCL, it said. This MoU would be a milestone in finding new avenues of lending to the infrastructure projects of the country and they assured full participation from both sides in this endeavour, it said.



**Sensex, Nifty log biggest single-day gain in 3 yrs**

The 30-share BSE Sensex soared by 2,507.47 points or 3.39 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 76,468.78 points with 25 of its constituents ending in the green and five in the red. During the day, the barometer jumped 2,777.58 points or 3.75 per cent to hit a record intra-day peak of 76,738.89.

After the exit polls predicted the return of the Modi government for the third straight term, benchmark Sensex and Nifty zoomed more than 3 per cent on Monday, recording their biggest single-day gain in three years and closing at lifetime highs. The 30-share BSE Sensex soared by 2,507.47 points or 3.39 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 76,468.78 points with 25 of its constituents ending in the green and five in the red. During the day, the barometer jumped 2,777.58 points or 3.75 per cent to hit a record intra-day peak of 76,738.89. The NSE Nifty climbed

733.20 points or 3.25 per cent to finish at 23,263.90. During the day, it soared 808 points or 3.58 per cent to hit a fresh intraday all-time high of 23,338.70. Sensex and Nifty logged their biggest single-day gains since February 1, 2021, when indices had jumped nearly 5% after the budget presentation. Interestingly, Sensex and Nifty had spurred more than 3 per cent on May 20, 2019, after the exit polls predicted a major win BJP-led NDA in the 2019 general elections. Among sectors, PSUs, Power, Utilities, Oil, Energy, Capital Goods, and Realty indices soared up to 8 per cent. A sharp rally in blue-chip



stocks Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and State Bank of India propelled the indices to lifetime high levels. Strong GDP data also added to the buoyancy in equity markets. Shares of all Adani Group companies continued their

rally on Monday, taking their combined market valuation to Rs 19.42 lakh crore. Adani Power surged nearly 16 per cent, Adani Ports by 10 per cent and flagship Adani Enterprises by over 6 per cent. Exit polls on Saturday predicted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will retain power for the third straight term, with the BJP-led NDA expected to win a big majority in the Lok Sabha polls. The counting of votes will take place on June 4.

**'Strong growth, lower fiscal deficit may lead to India rating upgrade'**

Strong growth and a narrower fiscal deficit can lead to a sovereign rating upgrade for India, a German brokerage said on Monday. The government's commitments on fiscal deficit to 5.1 per cent in FY25 and further down to 4.5 per cent in FY26 "look more credible now", analysts at Deutsche Bank said, pointing out that the number came in at 5.6 per cent in FY24 as against the budgeted 5.8 per cent. Courtesy the higher than expected dividend announcement by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) at Rs 2.1 lakh crore, the fiscal deficit for FY25 can come down to 5 per

cent as against the budgeted 5.1 per cent. On growth, the note said it expects real GDP expansion to come at 6.9 per cent in FY25 and go down further to 6.5 per cent in FY26. "Strong growth, lower fiscal deficit opens up room for ratings upgrade," the note said. A faster-than-anticipated pace of fiscal consolidation could pave the way for a sooner-rather-than-later sovereign

rating upgrade for India," the analysts said. It can be noted that global rating agency S&P had last week revised up the outlook on its sovereign rating for India to "positive" from "stable" earlier. On Friday, official data suggested that the economy grew at a faster clip of 8.2 per cent in the March quarter, which takes the FY24 real GDP growth to 7.6 per cent. The note said the Indian economy has exhibited "remarkable resilience" despite higher rates for longer, the Russia-Ukraine war and Covid prior to that, though a strong pickup in real GDP growth during FY24 can be also attributed materially to a very low GDP deflator.

**NHAI's revised toll rates come to effect across highways**

The revised toll charges for motorists on national highways across the country have come to effect from Monday, an official said. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has hiked the toll charges by an average of 5 per cent. The hike is part of NHAI's annual exercise where the state-owned body calculates new rates factoring in several parameters, the senior NHAI official said. Every year, it is implemented from April 1 but this year the implementation was deferred due to gen-

eral elections. The average hike this time was 5 per cent. The revised user fee has been implemented from today, the official said. From Monday, motorists using national highways/expressways will have to shell out more money for their road journeys. "The fuel costs were already high. The increased toll rates will make road journeys costlier for people," said Ankur Saxena, an advertising professional who frequently travels through Delhi-Lucknow route. The toll fee is revised annually, taking into accounts the changes in the wholesale price index (CPI)-based inflation.

**RS 2000 BANKNOTES**  
**97.82% returned; Rs 7,755 crore worth notes still with public**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday said 97.82 per cent of the Rs 2000 denomination banknotes have returned to the banking system, and only Rs 7,755 crore worth of the withdrawn notes are still with the public. On May 19, 2023, the RBI announced the withdrawal of Rs 2000 denomination banknotes from circulation. The total value of Rs 2000 banknotes in circulation, which was Rs 3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on May 19, 2023, has declined to Rs 7,755 crore at the close of business on May 31, 2024. "Thus, 97.82 per cent of the Rs 2000 banknotes in circula-



**The total value of Rs 2000 banknotes in circulation, which was Rs 3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on May 19, 2023, has declined to Rs 7,755 crore at the close of business on May 31, 2024.**

tion as on May 19, 2023, has since been returned," the central bank said in a statement. The facility for deposit

and/or exchange of the Rs 2000 banknotes was available at all bank branches in the country till October 7, 2023. The facility for the exchange of the Rs 2000 banknotes has been available at the 19 issue offices of the Reserve Bank since May 19, 2023. The 19 RBI offices depositing/exchanging the banknotes are in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Belapur, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jammu, Kanpur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, New Delhi, Patna and Thiruvananthapuram. The Rs 2000 banknotes were introduced in November 2016, following the demonetisation of the then-prevailing Rs 1000 and Rs 500 banknotes.

**Rupee surges 28 paise to settle at 83.14 against US\$**

The rupee jumped to over two-month high closing level and settled with a gain of 28 paise at 83.14 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking over 3 per cent surge in domestic equity benchmarks after exit poll results predicted a firm comeback of the ruling BJP-led government for the third straight term. Forex analysts attributed the steep rise in the local unit to a number of positive factors such as strong domestic macroeconomic data, inflow of foreign funds and a weak American currency against major Asian rivals. Also, they said lower level of the crude oil prices after OPEC+ groupings decision to maintain the status quo in the oil output supported the Indian currency. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.09 and moved between the peak of 82.95 and the lowest level of 83.17 against the greenback during intra-day deals. The unit finally settled at 83.14 (provisional) against the

dollar, registering a gain of 28 paise from its previous close. On Friday, the rupee declined 13 paise to close at 83.42 against the US dollar. Earlier, the rupee had closed at 83.21 this year. It had breached the 83.00 level on March 18. Also, the local unit clocked the highest single-day rise since November 15, 2023 when it closed 24 paise higher. Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said the Indian rupee appreciated as domestic markets rallied after exit polls predicted a firm comeback of the BJP-led government for the third consecutive term. "This may lead to political stability and may result in fresh foreign inflows. Strong macroeconomic data also supported the rupee... However, disappointing manufacturing PMI capped sharp gains," he said. Besides, rise in risk appetite in global markets, a weak dollar and a decline in crude oil prices may also support the rupee even as investors are expected to remain cautious ahead of the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy later this week.

**Interest rates have peaked, moderation expected towards year-end, says PNB MD**

Days before RBI's monetary policy, Punjab National Bank (PNB) managing director Atul Kumar Goel said interest rates have peaked and are expected to see a reversal by the end of this year. The Monetary Policy Committee, which is expected to keep the policy rate unchanged for the eighth time in a row, is scheduled to begin its meeting on June 5. The decision of the rate-setting panel will be announced on June 7. "Interest rates are contingent upon so many factors like growth, inflation, monetary policy stance of other countries. I think rates have reached the peak. I think after some time maybe by the end of this year, we can see some reduction in the rate of interest," he said. There should not be an increase in the deposit rate as 95 per cent of deposits have already been repriced, he said. Goel said the Retail, Agriculture and MSME (RAM)

segment is going to be the focus area for the bank but would not shy away from financing good corporate loans. "RAM is about 55 per cent of total credit. We want to increase this number by around 60 per cent in the next four to five years. For this year, we have set a target to achieve 57 per cent. As I told you we are one of the largest banks in the country, although the focus is on the RAM but if an opportunity comes, we will not allow it to go out," he said.

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Monday launched a mobile app 'Saa'athi 2.0' on personal finance for investors with comprehensive tools aimed at simplifying complex financial concepts. "The updated 'Saa'athi' app introduces a user-friendly interface with comprehensive tools aimed at simplifying complex financial concepts," Sebi said in a statement. The app includes financial calculators and has modules that introduce and explain

**Sebi launches Saa'athi 2.0 mobile app on personal finance for investors**

Additionally, the app features a range of videos designed to assist investors in their personal finance planning. "In today's era, where social media sometimes provides biased or misleading information, there is a significant need for an unbiased, objective, and trusted source of investment information," Ananth Narayan G, Whole Time Member, said during the launch. "The Saa'athi app serves this purpose by empowering investors with reliable and essential insights into the securities markets.



KYC procedures, mutual funds, ETFs, buying and selling shares on stock exchanges, investor grievances redressal mechanism, and the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform.

**Coop Min reviews progress of pilot grain storage projects launched in 11 states**

The National Level Coordination Committee (NLCC) for India's ambitious grain storage project, chaired by Cooperation Secretary Ashish Kumar Bhutani, held its inaugural meeting here on Monday and reviewed the progress of the pilot project launched last year in 11 states. The initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry of Cooperation, aims to create a decentralised network of warehouses and other agricultural infrastructure at the Primary Agricultural Credit Society (PACS) level across the country. Speaking on the occasion, the Cooperation Secretary said



this is one of most ambitious projects undertaken by the government, envisaging creation of warehouses at a decentralised level for nationwide rollout, an official statement said. Implemented by the National Cooperative

Development Corporation (NCDC), with support from NABARD and FCI, the pilot project is now being extended to an additional 500 PACS. The plan leverages existing government schemes such as the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) and Agricultural

Marketing Infrastructure Scheme (AMI) to establish facilities including warehouses, custom hiring centres, processing units and fair price shops. States, Union Territories, and national cooperatives like NCCF and NAFED have identified more PACS for storage capacity creation under the project, the statement said. The committee also discussed strategies for nationwide expansion and potential godown linkages with stakeholders, it added. Secretaries from key ministries, including Agriculture, Food and Public Distribution, and Food Processing Industries, along with heads of FCI, NABARD, and WDRA, were present.

**Adani ventures into fin sector, launches co-branded credit card with ICICI Bank**

Adani Group on Monday announced a venture into the financial sector, launching with ICICI Bank a co-branded credit card with airport-linked benefits as it looks to leverage customer touchpoints across businesses. The group's Adani One, an app to help users book tickets, check flight status, access lounges, shop duty-free products, get cabs and avail parking, and ICICI Bank launched India's first co-branded credit cards with airport-linked benefits in collaboration with Visa. "The cards come with a plethora of benefits designed to enhance the cardholders' lifestyle and elevate their airport and trav-

el experience. They offer up to 7 per cent Adani Reward Points on spends across the Adani Group consumer ecosystem like the Adani One app, where one can book flights, hotels, trains, buses, and cabs; Adani-managed airports; Adani CNG pumps; Adani Electricity bills, and Trainman, an online train booking platform," a company statement said. In December 2022, Adani Group launched the Adani One app as a 'step forward' in the company's digital journey. The co-branded card would also offer an array of benefits, including welcome benefits like free air tickets and airport privileges like premium lounge access, Pranaam Meet & Greet Service, porter, valet and premium car parking.

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
**'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**  
NIT No. 02/IDB/E/OUTCI/CIRCLE-25/GHMC/2024-25 Date: 03.06.2024  
Name of Work: Providing chain link mesh at various locations of Qutubapur Circle-25, GHMC (Item No.01) Completion Period: 01 month, Estimate Amount: Rs. 18.5 Lakhs, Start Date & Time: 04.06.2024 @ 3.00 PM, Last Date & Time for receipts of Bids: 07.06.2024 @ 3.30 PM, Name & Address of EE: Executive Engineer, Qutubapur Circle-25, GHMC, 9649065778(EE), 7331186855 (HO), Further details can be seen at e-procurement@www.tender.telangana.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, G.O.No: 12-PP/CLAD/11/2024-25, Dt: 03.06.2024 Qutubapur Circle-25, GHMC.

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
**'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**  
NIT No. 03/GHMC/MP/EE/2024-25 Date: 03-06-2024  
Name of Work: Monsoon works, Estimate Amount / ECW: Rs. 57.40 Lakhs, Start Date/ Last Date & Time for receipts of Bids: 04.06.2024 @ 11.00 AM / 07.06.2024 @ 11.15 AM, Name & Address of Officer: Sri. P.Satyaj Narayana, Executive Engineer, GHMC, Moosapet Circle-23, Cell: 9889930362. For Further details can be seen at e-procurement@www.tender.aprocurement.gov.in Sd/- Executive Engineer, G.O.No: 12-PP/CLAD/11/2024-25, Dt: 03-06-2024 GHMC, Moosapet Division - 23



Real-life IPS officer Simala Prasad, who gracefully follows her passion for acting, will be seen in *The Narmada Story*. *The Pioneer* quickly made a call to her over an exclusive chat as she opened up about portraying an investigative officer in the film and also spoke of the portrayal of the police force in cinemas.



## ‘PEOPLE SHOULD SEE POLICE IN A POSITIVE LIGHT & NOT AS A PUNCHING BAG’

TEJAL SINHA

Whether it's cult classic cop dramas or new-age cop flicks with comic dialogue, Bollywood has successfully made the most of the demographic's preference for cop dramas. But how many have uncovered the veracity of the struggles of the cops, especially the women in the force?

Unlike the other cop dramas dominated by superstars, a true supercop has now made her mark on the world. Simala Prasad, a real-life IPS officer from MP, portrays the investigating officer in the newly completed thriller film, *The Narmada Story*. According to the makers, the film is based on true life incidents, defying the pattern of Bollywood's larger-than-life masala movies. This distinct technique lays the groundwork for a picture that will have viewers on the edge of their seats.

So without further ado, *The Pioneer* rang a call to the police officer to gather more insights about the films and get onboard. She is also the daughter of Padmashri awardee Mehruhnisa Parvez and Dr. Bhagirath Prasad, a IAS officer from the 1975 batch. She was never forced to take up any of the fields that her parents were in. “We are here serving people and making the place we are a better place to live,” begins the real-life IPS officer on an exclusive note.

“However, there are certain aspects we feel as a civil servant; there are limitations. Our society has a stereotypical mindset that encourages a person to indulge in criminal activity. I feel cinema is a big medium because even an illiterate person can watch it without being restricted to a particular audience. The message a film wants to give is taken in a big way.”

Well, moving ahead, as we talk of *The Narmada Story*, initially, as she got to know that she was going to play the lead role in the film alongside Raghuraj Yadav and Mukesh Tiwari, among the rest, she was certainly a little nervous and was not sure if she'd be able to deliver it or not. “Of course in real life, I'm a police officer, but in the film, I'm playing a sub-inspector, a different rank of an officer, which is low from my real-life rank. We are portraying all the traumas that the person goes through and what all the mental baggage is carrying when anyone joins the service. She has to prove herself; she has to come out of it,” she says.

Her character is a small-town girl who is of the mindset that being in the police force is a very powerful position and that it's very important to be in uniform. Irrespective of her family constraints, like her father not being willing to send her into the police force, she has a negative mindset about the police, but she wants to be in the police. “As she gets into the forces, she faces a lot of issues, and with the day-to-day work that she tries to manage, the story unfolds. She overcomes the obstacles, and I feel the film shows solutions to certain things

that the police are facing,” further shares the IPS officer and actor.

*The Narmada Story* marks her third collaboration with the director. Both her previous films also highlighted some important messages. Her mother and director, both of them writers, led her to her passion for acting. “I wanted to be a part of this project highlighting a very important aspect of police, and as a police person, we want people to see police in a positive light. For the public, the police are like a punching bag! So far, how police have been portrayed in maybe the cop universe in Bollywood is very larger-than-life, and the issues they show are one person fighting with 20 people or criminals. It is like a superhero in a uniform. This film aims to highlight the real issues the police are facing that even the public needs to be aware of.”

Speaking of managing her passion and her duty, she highlights, “I don't indulge in recreational activities like going on vacation, and so for me, acting is just like a hobby that I pursue. It's less management on my part and more management on Zaigham Ji's part in this case. I was not called for any reading sessions or any look tests. It was the team that came over, and we had discussions over the script and my role. The schedule was also such that I could easily manage.”

When the shooting began, she revealed that she did not feel as if she was working with them for the first time. However, there were certain limitations for her due to her job, and she couldn't afford to be present in the reading session. So, it was on the sets that she got to interact with the NSD grads and people who are polished in their work. It was all about having a learning experience for her.

The film beautifully portrays all the hardships a person has to go through, especially in a rural police station. Moreover, she shares that as a woman in the force, she goes through constraints, be it the infrastructure or the stereotypical mindset of the colleague, because though many women are joining the forces, she feels there's still a long journey ahead.

“The film is thus beautifully portraying these small issues. I feel it was an eye-opener for me also because one of the things the film highlights is about times when washrooms were not available for women in the police stations. On the other hand, she has family issues and attends regular phone calls. Like I said, I am playing a sub-inspector, and there's another constable also in the police station. I haven't seen any of the films highlighting these issues because police are either portrayed in a negative light in Bollywood or portrayed as a superhero who can give solutions to each and every problem, who can jump from anywhere or appear anytime when anyone is in distress.”

Though there's a long way for women police officers to go, these films, she shares, are going to change the stereotypical mindsets of the people that have been formed over the years.

## Creating a distinct genre by combining inspiration from South Asian music

SHIKHA DUGGAL

British DJ, producer, and singer born and raised in East London, Lyan is a multi-faceted, contemporary musician who combines inspirations from South Asian and Western music to create his own distinct genre.

Juss Nandhra and Khushi K, two of the UK's most exciting and upcoming Punjabi stars, have collaborated on a massive, garage-infused single, which we learn all about in this exclusive interview. However, let us start at the beginning, because it can be exciting to discover where everything started!

The DJ discloses, “Growing up in a multicultural environment, I was exposed to a diverse range of musical traditions from a young age. My family loved classical and modern South Asian music at home, but I grew up listening to Western genres like hip-hop outside. I was inspired to establish this own genre by a desire to honour my heritage while also embracing the numerous musical influences I encountered. I understood that music has a great ability to link individuals from different cultures, and I wanted to create a sound that expressed my dual identity.”

The instantly recognisable instrumental pays tribute to the UK Garage classic *Body Groove*, skillfully reinvented by the DJ as a modern-day mega-hit. It finds the ideal mix between preserving the oldies that many people grew up with and embracing the new sounds and abilities that appeal to the younger generation.

“When composing a track, I never adhere to a set procedure. Inspiration comes from everywhere. I might hear a cool tune on the radio, hear an outstanding soundtrack or instrument in a Bollywood film, or even notice a distinct rhythm in common sounds such as glass clinking or city traffic. These moments create ideas, which I enjoy playing with in the studio. This method of working keeps things new and allows me to naturally merge different musical influences, resulting in a unique sound that combines both traditions.”

A mesmerising music video filmed in the heart of London immerses viewers in the contagious energy of the single as Juss, Khushi, and Lyan groove to the rhythm. The music producer continues, “East London is a great cultural hotspot, and the different noises that surround me influenced my work. You have neighbourhoods with a large South Asian population where the stores and streets are alive with the tunes and rhythms of my origin.” At the same time, he was engrossed in the UK music scene, particularly UK grime and UK Garage, as well as any American music he came across, which all had a significant impact on his track. You can hear that in his music, especially in the percussions and bass lines, which are heavily influenced by gritty, intense vibes!

What else has this vocalist got in store for us? Well, “Working with both Juss and Khushi was incredibly essential to me since I believe in their potential so much, and all three of us are at the beginning of our musical careers. Khushi and I met at a friend's wedding, along with her team, and we instantly clicked. When I came up with the original idea, she was the first person that sprang to mind. She has the perfect tone that cuts through and is almost nostalgic for UKG. Juss, I met him at one

of my film sessions and have been following him since. He has a ridiculous voice that sounds like a traditional Punjabi vocalist, which lends an authentic sound to the record. I filmed them in various studios on different days, and they met for the first time during the video shoot. But, honestly, the connection is incredible, and it seems like we've been working on music together for years.”

When it comes to paying homage to legendary music, he makes it a point to say, “If you grew up in the 2000s like I did, *Body Groove* is one of those tracks that instantly brings back memories. South Asians have a strong affinity for UK Garage, so it seemed like the ideal opportunity to create a song that reflects my heritage while also appealing to a new generation that may be unfamiliar with the original. I consider myself fortunate to be alive at a time when society and worldwide music are fast expanding, and UK Garage is regaining popularity. All of this contributes to the record's feeling of freshness and excitement, connecting the past and present in a way that everyone can enjoy.”

When working with director Sameer on the video, their objective was to capture the essence of three budding UK artists having fun while doing what they love. They both agreed on the significance of creating a true feeling in the video. For Lyan, a music video should elicit a specific sensation, and in this case, it was all about authenticity and making viewers feel as if they were right there with them on the shoot.

Furthermore, in the interview, he tells us, “For individuals who aren't South Asian and have never heard these sounds, I want to bring them to a whole new universe of tones, melodies, and rhythms that will make them feel something new while also feeling relatable. Dance music is fantastic because everyone loves to dance, and incorporating these ethnic elements may create a whole new palette of sound. For South Asians, I want to

bring an expensive feel to our music; the globe is constantly looking to the West for inspiration, and being able to reflect our culture with a western sound would make the people feel seen, heard, and represented. On the most recent *Desi Trill Brown Is Everywhere* night, I played *Body Groove* into Kokka with both Juss and Khushi live on the mic; that moment felt special since the crowd was a diverse mix of nationalities, and everyone felt connected to what the music and movement represented.”

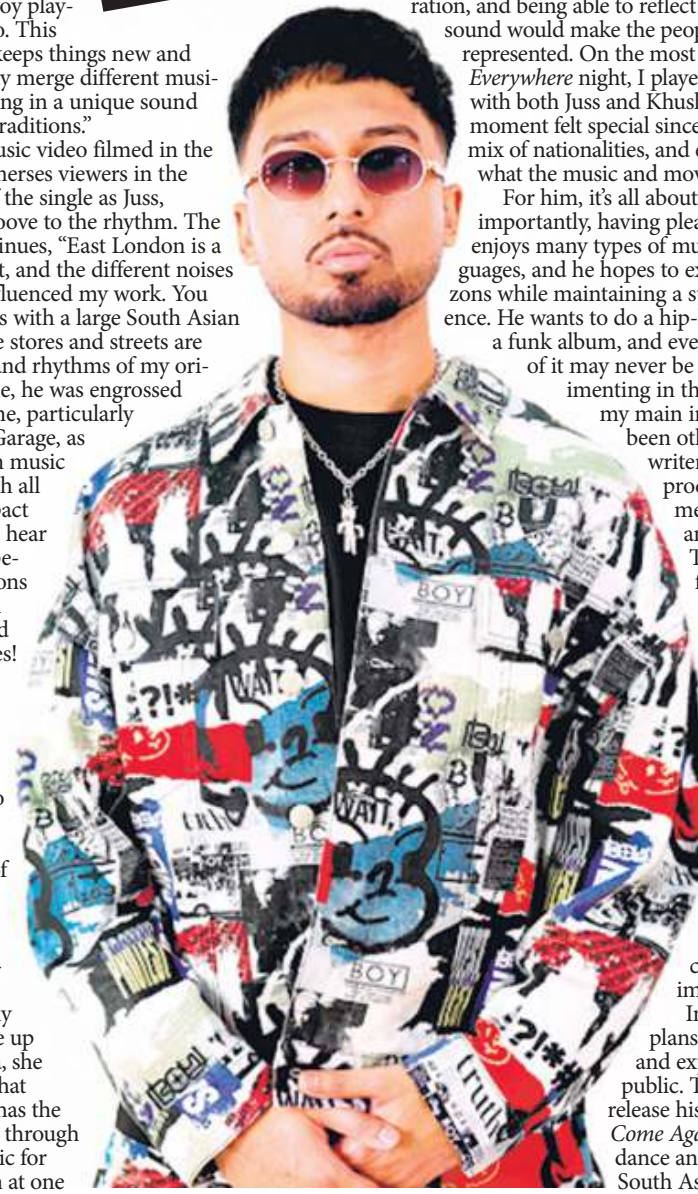
For him, it's all about progress and, most importantly, having pleasure while creating. He enjoys many types of music, genres, and languages, and he hopes to expand his musical horizons while maintaining a strong South Asian influence. He wants to do a hip-hop album, a pop record, a funk album, and everything. And while some of it may never be released, he is now experimenting in the studio. “As a producer, my main influences have always been other producers and songwriters. I've always respected producers who have experimented with their sound and made bold decisions.

Throughout my work, I've faced several problems, ranging from creative blocks and financial constraints to the necessity of continuously delivering material. It's important to remember to pick yourself up and keep going.

Overcoming these challenges necessitates perseverance and always giving your all, even while confronting mental blockages. These trials have taught me significant lessons and helped me improve as an artist.”

In the coming years, he plans to focus on consistency and exposing his creativity to the public. This summer, he will release his new project, *Thank You Come Again*, which combines dance and electronic music with South Asian influences!

British DJ and musician DJ Lyan, who has collaborated with Khushi K on a massive garage-infused single, speaks to *The Pioneer* about honouring his heritage, his method of working, insights of his music among more.



## Thriving fashion scene among Gen-Z

In an exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer*, the CEO and co-founder of Newme, Sumit Jisoria, spills some beans about the intriguing idea of Girl Dome, including vivid and imaginative interiors that resonate with a youthful and dynamic audience.



SUBODHINI PUROHIT

Newme can make anyone appear lovely by glamorising whatever it chooses! Even though we know this to be true, being reminded of it on a regular basis might be beneficial. Because the good news for Hyderabad is that a fashion-tech line targeting Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012) women has announced its move into Telangana. It recently acquired substantial recognition after their sleek collection was featured on *MTV Splitsvilla*, a show popular with Gen Z fans. This exposure has strengthened its appeal to its target demographic!

In an exclusive conversation with us, the CEO & co-founder, Sumit Jisoria, spills all the beans about the intriguing idea of Girl Dome, including vivid and imaginative interiors that resonate with a youthful and dynamic audience, and much more. They began their journey online because they believed it was the simplest way to understand the market, but they soon realised that customers want to touch and feel. Sumit, on the launch day, said, “We don't call it offline; we call

it a phygital experience setup, which is a mix of offline and physical setups plus online, and the entire technology of merging the online and offline in this manner is what makes us unique. I believe the south Indian markets are evolving.”

The Hyderabad store stands out because it depicts a girl's hostel life. It is designed to give an aesthetic feel to college life, catering to the cosmopolitan crowd and the many students who study in Hyderabad. “The theme and layout are all designed to reflect the hostel setup, making it a unique experience. Hyderabad location is no different, with its individual style features, lighting, and overall design.” He believes that their approach to creating things is extremely unique. Their manufacturing technique reduces waste and maintains a low-inventory approach by releasing new collections every week. When it comes to design, they have a trend technology team that monitors global trends. Next, their design team generates designs based on these trends, which are

then put into production. When they originally decided to create a store, they thought about what makes them distinctive. The CEO says, “We discovered that the uniqueness lies in the design and aesthetic. The trial room, particularly in India, receives insufficient attention. We can improve young girls' lives by empowering them to picture how our products look in an artistic setting, possibly even allowing them to post content on Instagram. That's why we designed the store to be visually appealing while being minimalist.” They are always learning and are really thrilled about the positive impact they can have on the lives of young women. “The feedback we get about our designs is amazing, as buyers frequently mention feeling comfortable wearing our outfits to college parties and even to work.”

The Gen Z is still evolving in India, and no one knows how they will evolve, shape, and pattern in this country. Newme has no boundaries, and fashion has no boundaries! So, in today's fast-paced fashion market, Gen Z fashion is redefining it. From varied streetwear to bold statements that turn heads, this generation's fashion craze and infatuation are hard to ignore. If you don't keep up with the latest trends, you can miss out on what's going on in the world right now, especially in Hyderabad.



# what's brewing?

**Wings Spartans Song Launch**

The first-ever Telugu reality game show for common youth, titled *Wings Spartans... I Can... I Will*, is being hosted by Wings Model Hub. Manoj Bargav, the founder, expressed delight at the overwhelming response to the auditions, where many boys and girls from South India participated.

Participants shown: Saniya, Aki and Gagan vihar, Muskar, Anju, Manoj Bargav, Nikita, Sneha.

**InteriYour 2024**

Hamstech successfully concluded its annual interior design event InteriYour 2024, which was held at N-Convention. The event was indeed a celebration of 200+ aspiring designers showcasing their creativity. The event also provided a dynamic platform for students to network with industry experts.

Participants shown: Ajetha Reddy, Sapna, Ishrath, Shanaya, Harshitha, Rajani, Sankeerthana.

**National Silk Expo-2024 Inauguration**

Tollywood actress Radhika Rayavarapu, inaugurated the 9-day National Silk Expo-2024 at Kalinga Cultural Hall, in Banjara Hills Road No: 12, which is being organised by Gramina Hastakala Vikas Samiti.

Participants shown: Daliya, Dr.Swathi.

**New Life Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Center 4th Anniversary**

Sangeet Sadhana staged a live concert titled *Ye Waada Raha...* at Sri Thyagaraya Gana Sabha in Chikkadpally, Hyderabad. Sangeet sadhana vocalists Subhra Mahanta, Dr. Kazim Ahmed, Dr. B. Balaji, Fayazuddin, Shaik Vazir, Janki Vallabh, Sasmitha Nayak, Richa Choudhary, Soma Dasgupta, and Sridhar Kumar sang some wonderful Bollywood songs.

Prega News, has partnered with Kajal Agarwal for the Southern region. Speaking during the event, Kajal Agarwal, regional brand ambassador (South), emphasised the importance of early pregnancy detection in protecting the health and well-being of both mother and baby.

PARTY

Photos by - SV Chary

## FUN

**ARCHIE**

WON'T VERONICA BE MAD THAT YOU EXCHANGED THE SCARF SHE GAVE YOU? I DIDN'T LIKE THE COLOR! I DON'T CARE IF SHE SEES IT! I'M NOT SCARED OF HER!

THAT'S GOOD, 'CAUSE HERE SHE COMES!

I KNOW THAT'S YOU, ARCHIE!

**CALVIN AND HOBBS**

DING DONG I'LL GET IT.

HOBBS, QUICK! CLOSE THE CURTAINS AND HELP ME PROP FURNITURE AGAINST THE DOOR!

IT'S READING!

**GARFIELD**

SOMETIMES I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING

WHOA

I ALWAYS KNOW WHAT I'M DOING

HE'S LUCKY

**REALITY CHECK**

DAD MOTIVATIONAL POSTERS

DON'T SCREW IT UP, SON!

**SPEED BUMP**

I THINK THAT GUY IS MISSING THE POINT.

**CROSSWORD**

**NANCY**

BACK ON JANUARY 24, 1938, ERNIE BUSHMILLER ADDED A NEW "STREET ORPHAN" TO THE COMIC STRIP-- HERE IS THE REBOOTED VERSION OF THAT STORY-- TOLD BY FRITZ!

NOW, I WASN'T THERE, BUT AS NANCY TELLS IT-- THE TEEN-AGE BULLY HIT NANCY IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD WITH A HUGE SNOWBALL--

HA

THE BULLY HAD SOME BULLYING BUDDIES-- AND THEY SURROUNDED NANCY--

NOW-- YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO GET IT, KID!

MY LITTLE GIRL WAS IN TROUBLE--

**SUDOKU**

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

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

RULES

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

**ACROSS**

- Using your brain
- A neck-warmer
- A roll of tobacco leaves that is smoked
- Taking part in a play
- Come to a halt
- A curved support under a bridge
- A type of chimney on a ship
- A small oily green or black fruit from a tree
- Big
- A hot breakfast food

**DOWN**

- Bread cooked brown
- A young child
- Strike with the foot
- Time of darkness
- Moving stairway
- Spinning aeroplane part
- Tugged
- The capital of Egypt
- A health worker
- Close by

**SOLUTION**

V	I	L	L	A	G	E	S	I											
O	T	I	A	T															
G	E	A																	
A	N	C	A	D	O	R	I	O	N										
O	P	E	N	S															
E	O	A	R																
S	T	A	I	E	D														
A	E	D																	
R	O	D	I	S	E	S													

**GINGER MEGGS**

WHAT'S A PEDIATRICIAN?

A DOCTOR WHO'S ONLY ALLOWED TO PLAY MINI GOLF.

AT MY PLACE, I GET BED AND BREAKFAST.

# 'KAJAL'S DEDICATION TO SATYABHAMA INSPIRED ME TO CREATE COMPELLING MUSIC'

K. RAMYA SREE

As the countdown to the much-awaited release of *Satyabhama* intensifies, fans of Kajal Aggarwal are looking forward to the release of this movie, especially with the tantalising promise of a gripping soundtrack composed by the maestro, Sricharan Pakala. The expectations for the movie are even higher.

With Kajal Aggarwal reigning supreme in the lead role and an ensemble cast including Naveen Chandra adding to the intrigue, this crime thriller, produced by Bobby Tikka and Srinivasa Rao Takkalapalli, under the banner of Aarum Arts and directed by Suman Chikkala, is poised to captivate audiences when it hits theatres on June 7. In an exclusive interview, Sricharan Pakala opened up about his experience crafting the music for this adrenaline-fuelled saga.

Expressing excitement about being part of *Satyabhama*, Sricharan emphasised the thrill of working alongside Kajal Aggarwal, whom he regards as the epitome of cinematic excellence. With this film marking his third collaboration with Sashi Kiran Tikka and the opportunity to work with familiar faces, Sricharan savoured every moment of the creative process, believing that *Satyabhama* serves as the perfect platform for Kajal's triumphant return to the silver screen. Drawing parallels between his musical compositions and the pulse-pounding narrative of *Satyabhama*, Sricharan also highlighted the film's allure for thriller enthusiasts. He lauded Kajal's dedication in executing her own stunts, even post-childbirth, saying, "*Satyabhama* will resonate with those who love thrillers due to its

superb twists and emotional journey as a police officer. Kajal performed all the action scenes herself, an impressive feat post-childbirth, which inspired me to create compelling music."

Delving into the musical tapestry of *Satyabhama*, Sricharan revealed the presence of five captivating songs, each intricately woven into the fabric of the storyline. "The film features five songs, starting with two: *Kallara*, a love song between Kajal and Naveen Chandra, and *Vethuku Vethuku*, sung by Keeravaani, which ties into Kajal's case investigation. An English song is also included, and the rest of the lyrical songs will be released soon. Collaborating with Keeravaani and Chandra Bose on the song *Vethuku Vethuku* was a memorable experience for me."

While Sricharan's oeuvre is synonymous with thrillers, he expressed a keen desire to explore diverse genres, ranging from love stories to commercial blockbusters. Undeterred by his current image, Sricharan remains committed to pushing the boundaries of his musical repertoire, eager to embrace new opportunities and challenges.

Reflecting on his musical journey, Sricharan reminisced about his childhood influences and eclectic musical tastes, which have shaped his distinctive style. "I listened to *ghazals* as a child, I also created rock music. I never worked as an assistant to any music director, and my career began when the audience appreciated my music for a film. I will continue to create music and aspire to deliver new and unique compositions to the audience."



**Music composer Sricharan Pakala, whose gripping soundtracks for the upcoming film *Satyabhama* have already created waves, shares some interesting tidbits in this exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*.**

# 'Shooting in London gave Manamey fairytale-like aesthetics'

K. RAMYA SREE

The anticipation is high as Tollywood gears up for the grand release of Sharwanand's much-awaited 35th film, *Manamey*. Starring Kriti Shetty and Sharwanand in lead roles, the film promises to deliver a riveting performance in this family-centric flick directed by the visionary Sriram Aditya. Produced under the banner of Ramsay Studios in collaboration with People Media Factory, *Manamey* has already stirred a frenzy with its captivating songs, teaser, and promotional content, leaving fans eagerly awaiting its theatrical release on June 7. Ahead of the film's release, director Sriram Aditya shed light on the film's unique features and the challenges encountered during its making with us.

With *Manamey* nearing its release, director Sriram Aditya shed light on the film's unique features and the challenges encountered during its making with us.



If you have watched the trailer, you might already have an idea of what this film is all about. Addressing the genesis of the storyline, Sriram Aditya expressed his long-standing desire to explore the theme of parenting in a refreshing manner. He remarked, "There has always been an idea to talk about the parenting emotion in a slightly different way. My intention is to portray it with fun and energy, tapping into the unknown innocence associated with children."

Reflecting on his personal connection to the narrative, Aditya revealed, "I am very attached to my parents. After the birth of my son, that attachment increased even more." He also admitted that several dialogues in the trailer were inspired by real-life experiences, adding a layer of authenticity to the storytelling process. Undoubtedly, filming in London presented its own set of challenges, with unpredictable weather conditions testing the resilience of the crew. Aditya elaborated, "Shooting in London with a crew of sixty people is a tough task. The climate there is unpredictable, often disrupting our shooting schedules."

The decision to shoot in London was driven by the desire to infuse the film with a fairytale-like aesthetic. Aditya credited the unwavering

support of People Media Factory and producer Vishwa Prasad for ensuring a smooth production process despite logistical challenges. Sharing insights into Sharwanand's involvement, Aditya recalled the actor's enthusiastic response upon hearing the script. "As soon as he heard the story, he said, 'Let's do it properly.'" Aditya revealed. However, he remained tight-lipped about the specifics of Sharwanand's character, teasing the audience with hints of an electrifying performance.

Breaking away from his usual crime thriller repertoire, Aditya expressed his fondness for humor and the joy of exploring a different genre. With *Manamey* boasting a total of 16 songs, Aditya assured fans that each musical piece would seamlessly integrate into the narrative, enhancing the overall cinematic experience.

While remaining coy about certain plot details, Aditya hinted at the dynamic chemistry between Sharwanand and Kriti Shetty, likening their on-screen relationship to the playful banter of Tom and Jerry. Looking ahead, Aditya teased an upcoming action-comedy project, promising another exciting cinematic venture for audiences to anticipate.



# Delving into Rashmika Mandanna's hectic routine

Currently, Rashmika Mandanna finds herself immersed in a whirlwind of activity, shuttling between Hyderabad and Mumbai to tackle three eagerly anticipated projects: *Pushpa 2 - The Rule*, *The Girlfriend*, and *Kubera*.

In Hyderabad, Rashmika is deeply engrossed in filming *The Girlfriend* and *Pushpa 2 - The Rule*, the hotly awaited sequel to the blockbuster *Pushpa*. Her on-screen chemistry with the pan-India star Allu Arjun and her recent stunning sari-clad appearance have sparked immense excitement among fans and industry insiders alike. The rigorous shooting schedule and intense scenes demand her undivided attention, pushing her to deliver top-notch performances with every take.

Simultaneously, in Mumbai, Rashmika dedicates her time to *Kubera*, where she shares the screen with the versatile actor Dhanush. This project, with its unique challenges and expectations, presents Rashmika in a completely different light, showcasing her versatility as an actress. Her constant travel between the two cities under-

scores her unwavering commitment and passion for her craft.

A reliable source discloses, "Rashmika is incredibly busy juggling between Hyderabad and Mumbai for three projects: *Pushpa 2 - The Rule* and *The Girlfriend* in Hyderabad, and *Kubera* with Dhanush in Mumbai. It's undoubtedly demanding, but Rashmika relishes every moment of it. The travel and long hours are all part of her journey, and she is fully dedicated to delivering her best for all three films."

Rashmika's ability to manage such a demanding schedule with zest and vigour is truly commendable. Her relentless hard work and dedication are sure to bear fruit, with fans eagerly anticipating the release of these three exciting ventures.

In addition to *Pushpa 2 - The Rule*, *Kubera*, and *The Girlfriend*, Rashmika has an intriguing lineup of films, including *Chhaava*, *Sikandar*, and *Rainbow*.

# Rakul takes a trip down memory lane

Recalling her experience of learning to ride a bicycle, Rakul Preet Singh shares her nostalgic moments on World Bicycle Day. From cautious beginnings to becoming a confident cyclist, her journey resonates with many who have embarked on a similar path of challenges and triumphs.

Rakul's cycling adventure commenced like that of many others, with the aid of supporting side wheels. "I used to ride my bicycle with the supporting side wheels," she fondly remembers. "I was hesitant to take them off due to the fear of losing my balance." The turning point in her cycling expedition arrived with a gentle push from her father. "One day, my dad loosened the supporting wheels so much that they came off while I was riding the cycle," she reminisces. "He exclaimed, 'Look, you are cycling without the side supporters!' While I was managing fine until then, the moment my dad pointed it out, I lost my balance and took a tumble. I still bear the bruise on my leg from that fall."

Rakul expresses her hope for Mumbai to become more cyclist-friendly, continuing to inspire her fans to embrace a healthier lifestyle. On the professional front, Rakul has commenced shooting for *De De Pyaar De 2*, alongside Ajay Devgn.



# PRABHUTVA JUNIOR KALASALA RELEASING ON JUNE 21

Amidst the flurry of films seeking to engage youth audiences, there's a palpable buzz surrounding a unique cinematic endeavor. Spearheading this venture is director Sreenath Pulakuram, who has intricately woven a tale of reality and intrigue with the film *Prabhutva Junior Kalasala*. With post-production efforts completed, this film is now poised for release. This project, a culmination of Black Ant Pictures' efforts, is produced by Bhuvan Reddy Kovvuri, with captivating performances by Pranav Preetham, Shajin Sri Venu, Ram Patas, Tej Gaud, Bambe Padma, Shrimunichandhar, and Mandapeta Malik Jagul. As promotions roll out, the official release date for *Prabhutva Junior Kalasala* has

been confirmed for June 21, promising an enthralling cinematic experience. Speaking about the film's impending release, the director expressed immense satisfaction, stating that the censor board has cleared the film, praising its visuals and engaging storyline. Early audience reactions from promotional events have sparked excitement, with viewers eagerly awaiting its theatrical debut. Noted distribution company Shankar Pictures is ensuring a global theatrical release for the film. With teasers and two songs already trending, the film's youthful appeal is drawing anticipation, raising hopes for a successful run at the box office.



# PIC TALK

Allari Nares, the popular actor known for his versatile roles, has unveiled the first look and title of his upcoming horror thriller, *Raa Raja*. The announcement has sparked excitement among fans eagerly awaiting the actor's next project. Produced under the banner of SP Cinemas, *Raa Raja* promises to be an intriguing addition to the horror genre. The film is written and directed by the talented filmmaker BS Prasad. Starring Sugi Vijay and Mounika Helen in lead roles, the film is set to captivate audiences with its spine-chilling narrative.

# 'The prelude world is similar to the film, although more light-hearted'

*Buji & Bhairava* has received enthusiastic approval from fans, and director Nag Ashwin reacts to its success.

Now, opening up about the prelude, Nag Ashwin said: "I always felt that it's more fun to go to films whose characters you already know and are invested in... that's why Marvel works so well... I wanted to see if we could pull that off, even in a small way. When we started this, we didn't know how hard it would be... we started with 4 episodes... but in almost 2 years, we could only finish 2."

The story of this two-episode prelude is set in the year 2896 AD, in the futuristic, albeit dystopian, city of Kasi. Bhairava is a bounty hunter, and *Buji* is an AI pilot of a cargo ship. Both suffer setbacks in their journeys, and an unlikely partnership

blooms, setting the stage for adventure.

While spin-off animation series often attempt to cash in on successful films, the team behind *Kalki* has introduced a series as a prelude. The two episodes, each a little over 14 minutes long, establish the world of *Kalki* and are available in English, Telugu, Hindi, and Spanish, catering to a wider audience.

Adding more about working on the prelude, Nag Ashwin said, "We found a new style, didn't compromise on anything: the writing, the lighting, the detailing. We would have seen these 2 episodes over 200 times, at least to get it right... It's a lot of hard work to make things look easy. The prelude world is similar to the film, although a little more lighthearted. It helps get people used to the characters and the world."



# Suriya begins his next with Kartik Subbaraj

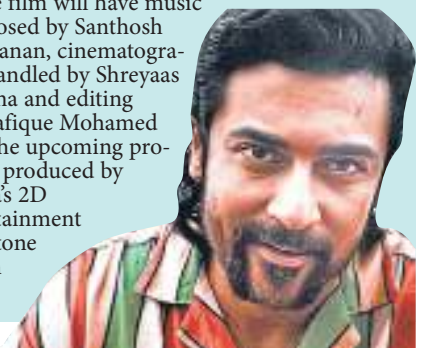
Actor Suriya has begun shooting for his 44th film, directed by Kartik Subbaraj of *Jigarthanda DoubleX* fame.

Also starring Pooja Hegde, the film, which was in the news for quite some time, went on floors now. Suriya shared the update on his official X page.

"Lights! Camera!! Action!!! #LoveLaughterWar #AKarthikSubbarajPadam Shoot in progress... #Suriya44," he captioned a video from the film set.

Jayaram, Karunakaran and Joju George also round out the cast.

The film will have music composed by Santhosh Narayanan, cinematography handled by Shreyas Krishna and editing by Shafique Mohamed Ali. The upcoming project is produced by Suriya's 2D Entertainment and Stone Bench Films.



# ENGLAND HOPE TO SET TONE AGAINST SCOTLAND

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Deprived of ideal preparation by rain, defending champions England will hope to get their act right straightaway when they face Scotland in their T20 World Cup opener here on Tuesday.

Phil Salt will look to continue his red-hot form of the Indian Premier League in the T20 showpiece, even as pacer Jofra Archer's return adds firepower to the English bowling attack. Rain played spoilsport in the preceding four-match T20I series at home against Pakistan, but England will still enter the tournament as one of the strong contenders to lift the title for an unprecedented third time.

In what will be their first ever meeting against the Scots in the shortest format, the Jos Buttler-led England will be the overwhelming favourites to emerge winners at the Kensington Oval, which offered a two-paced wicket for the game between Namibia and Oman on Sunday evening. Placed in Group B, England have traditional rivals

Australia, Namibia and Oman for company besides Scotland. To reach the Super Eight stage, teams will have to finish in the top two of a group.

In white-ball cricket, it hasn't been smooth sailing for England since their five-wicket-victory over Pakistan in the final of the last T20 World Cup in Melbourne in 2022.

A year after their success in Australia, Buttler's men endured a disastrous campaign at the ODI World Cup in India, finishing seventh after winning three and losing six of their nine matches including a painful defeat to Afghanistan. Their poor run in the white-ball game continued with a series of defeats to West Indies in both the 50-over and 20-over format.

In the rain-marred rubber against Pakistan recently, England regained some of their lost ground with a 2-0 series win.

Now focused on their opener against Scotland, England have fond memories of playing at the Kensington Oval as it is at this very venue the team won its first-ever T20 World Cup title back in 2010 under Paul



Collingwood's captaincy, beating Australia by seven wickets in the summit showdown. In the last 14 years since that triumph, England have become a dominant force in limited overs cricket, winning the 2019 ODI World Cup before their glory Down Under two years ago. Playing in their third consecutive T20 World Cup,

Scotland are no match to their fancied opponents on paper but they will nonetheless look to make an impression after having breezed through the European qualifiers. Scotland won all six of their matches in the qualifiers to finish top of the standings, which guaranteed them a ticket to the West Indies and the USA for the marquee tournament.

## TEAMS (FROM):

**England:** Jos Buttler (c), Moeen Ali, Jofra Archer, Jonathan Bairstow, Harry Brook, Sam Curran, Ben Duckett, Tom Hartley, Will Jacks, Chris Jordan, Liam Livingstone, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, Reece Topley, Mark Wood  
**Scotland:** Richie Berrington (c), Matthew Cross, Brad Currie, Chris Greaves, Oli Hairs, Jack Jarvis, Michael

## AFGHANS FAVOURITES IN FACE OFF WITH UGANDA



Jones, Michael Leask, Brandon McMullen, George Munsey, Safyaan Sharif, Chris Sole, Charlie Tear, Mark Watt, Brad Wheal.  
**Match starts at 8pm IST.**

**AFGHANISTAN EYE WINNING START:** In the day's other match, Afghanistan will be the overwhelming favourites against Uganda at the Providence in Guyana. The

Africans are making their maiden appearance in the tournament.

Afghanistan did extremely well in the last ICC tournament, beating the likes of England, South Africa and Pakistan in the ODI World Cup in India last year, and they will certainly take heart from that showing in this tournament.

## TEAMS:

**Afghanistan:** Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Ibrahim Zadran, Azmatullah Omarzai, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Ishaq, Mohammad Nabi, Gulbadin Naib, Karim Janat, Rashid Khan (c), Nangyal Kharoti, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad, Naveen-ul-Haq, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Fareed Ahmad Malik.  
**Uganda:** Brian Masaba (c), Simon Ssesazi, Roger Mukasa, Cosmas Kyewuta, Dinesh Nakrani, Fred Achelam, Kenneth Waiswa, Alpesh Ramjani, Frank Nsubuga, Henry Ssenyondo, Bilal Hassun, Robinson Obuya, Riazat Ali Shah (vc), Juma Miyaji, Ronak Patel.  
**Match starts at 8pm IST.**



## Trumpelmann, Wiese shine as Namibia win in Super Over

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Namibia's Ruben Trumpelmann became the first player to take wickets in the first two deliveries of a T20 international as his team beat Oman via the Super Over in a thrilling T20 World Cup match here. David Wiese and skipper Gerhard Erasmus smashed 21 runs for Namibia in the one-over eliminator with Oman managing 10 from the allotted six deliveries bowled brilliantly by the seasoned Wiese. Asked to bat first, Oman were earlier bowled out for 109 in 19.4 overs at the Kensington Oval. In reply, Namibia were also stopped at the same team score with Jan Frylinck making 45 in 48 balls and Mehran Khan taking 3/7 to force a Super Over. This was after Namibia's South Africa-born left-arm fast bowler Trumpelmann created history. The 26-year-old achieved the feat when he dismissed opener Kashyap Prajapati and Oman skipper Aqib Ilyas for golden ducks on the first two balls of the match. Khalid Kail top-scored for

Oman with 34 in 39 balls. Trumpelmann took another wicket in his second over and returned with the career-best figures of 4-21.

He trapped Kashyap Prajapati leg before wicket with an inswinging yorker on the first ball of the match and then dismissed Ilyas with one that crushed onto the batter's toes. In the process, Trumpelmann also registered the best figures for the team in T20 World Cup history. He beat the previous record of 3/17 set by him against Scotland in the 2021 edition of the T20 World Cup held in the UAE. After sending back Prajapati and Ilyas off successive balls, Trumpelmann dismissed opener Naseem Khushi and then returned to pick up the wicket of Kalemullah at the death for his fourth scalp. Wiese too was among wickets, returning fine figures of 3/28 in 3.4 overs as Oman found it hard to tackle the Namibia bowlers.

However, defending a small total, Oman bowlers showed a lot of discipline and refused to go down without a fight, eventually managing to tie the

game. But, on the day, Namibia had the last laugh.

While many thought Namibia captain Erasmus would hand the ball to Trumpelmann to bowl the Super Over, he chose the 39-year-old Wiese for his years of experience and it paid dividends.

After the nervy win, Player of the Match Wiese, who was also born in South Africa, said, "Aged a couple of years tonight. Don't have a lot of years left in me (laughs). It was emotionally draining evening." Speaking about batting and bowling in Super over, "It helped that I had a feel of the game and knew if I get a few hits out in the Super Over .... Then with the ball, felt like taking the ball and executing. "Pitch was difficult, didn't play the way we thought. But we adapted well. It was two-paced, it was a difficult wicket to get yourself in. Definitely one you needed to spend a bit of time before capitalising." Namibia were on course to chase down the target of 110 until Mehran Khan (3/7) brought Oman back into the contest with his two wickets in the final over.

PTI ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

Afghanistan batters have developed skills and confidence of chasing down big totals and the team has ceased to rely on their bowlers for pulling off favourable results, captain Rashid Khan expressed on Monday. Afghanistan, who have relied on their world-class spinners more often than not, have been bolstered with the rise of the explosive Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Ibrahim Zadran and Azmatullah Omarzai. "That is something in the past. We were struggling a little bit in the batting area. Earlier, the bowlers would do a lot more and help us win the games," Rashid said on the eve of Afghanistan's T20 World Cup opener here against Uganda. "Later on, we got those youngsters — especially from Under-19 — the way they came up to the national side, the way they have worked hard and got the opportunity to play for Afghanistan at a very young age, and then start

## Afghanistan confident of chasing big totals, not over-reliant on bowlers: Rashid Khan

exploring all around the world (while) playing the leagues, where they get better and better," he added. Rashid feels with a mix of talent, skills and the right mindset, anything is possible. "We have that kind of batting line-up where we can say, 'it's fine if there is 200 as well on the ground,'" he said. "We have that kind of ability, skills and talent where we can express (all) that on the ground and chase. T20 cricket is all about the mindset. As long as you have the right mindset and belief in there that we can do, anything is possible."

Afghanistan had their best-ever outing at the ODI World Cup in India last year when they trumped former champions Pakistan, England and Sri Lanka while running close eventual champions



Australia. "We're just focusing on one game at a time and making sure we do the right things and take the right decisions at the right time. That's something I think is going to help us, and

(we) don't (need to) think about the next round a lot. That's something which is an extra pressure I feel like to be as a player."

With slow pitches expected in the West Indies, many have picked Afghanistan to make the semifinal given their arsenal of high-class spinners. Rashid is delighted that Afghanistan are not considered minnows anymore. "They have mentioned Afghanistan is going to be there for semis. We take that as a very positive sign. Before, it used to be hard for us to qualify. Now, to be (in the) nomination, to be there in the top four, it's big for us. But for us, we don't look to those things a lot. It's all about how we're going to be there in the ground, delivering. "We were very near in the last

World Cup as well (that we wanted) to be in the semis," he added.

Several Afghans feature in the Caribbean Premier League and have an idea of how the pitches would behave but Rashid tends to look at it differently.

"We have those players who played recently here in the CPL, they (have) got that experience. We share that experience with the boys. But I think in ICC (events), you always expect something different."

"You never know what's going to be the behaviour of the wicket. You have to react to that. You shouldn't be someone (who is) already having in the mind, this is how it's going to be (or) this is how it's going to swing, spin, things like that. But for us, it's like we're well prepared."

## India batter Kedar Jadhav announces retirement

PTI ■ PUNE

India and Maharashtra batter Kedar Jadhav on Monday announced his retirement from international cricket, four years since his last appearance for the national team. The 39-year-old, who made his international debut for India in November 2014 during an ODI against Sri Lanka at Ranchi, went on to play 73 one-dayers as well as nine T20Is. Perceived close to former India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Jadhav borrowed from the iconic wicketkeeper-batter's style to announce his retirement with a similar play

of words. "Thank you all For your love and support throughout my Career from 1500 hrs. Consider me as retired from all forms of cricket," (sic) wrote Jadhav on X. Interestingly, Jadhav is currently captaining Kolhapur Tuskers in the Maharashtra Premier League which got underway in Pune on Sunday and his post does not specify whether the announcement covers this engagement. Jadhav scored 1,389 runs at an average of 42.09 with two centuries and six fifties for India in 73 ODIs. He also made 122 runs in the six innings of the nine T20 Internationals



that he played. Arguably, Jadhav's biggest moment under the sun came during the Pune ODI against

England in January 2017, when he got his second ODI ton. He smacked a brutal 76-ball 120 with 12 fours and four sixes to

fire India to a three-wicket win in a high-scoring contest. Jadhav teamed up with Virat Kohli (122) to put on 200 from a mere 147 balls for the fifth wicket after India were reduced to 63/4 at one stage, chasing 351.

Having developed his off-spin skills, Jadhav also emerged as a potent option with the ball with his slinging action that fetched him 27 ODI wickets.

In the Indian Premier League, the right-handed batter played for Chennai Super Kings, (formerly) Delhi Daredevils, now-defunct Kochi Tuskers Kerala, (formerly) Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad.

## Luggage woes, delayed flight, gusty winds and then cruise to make it alright

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Lost luggage, flight delays and gusty winds on landing here summed up the Australian cricket team's rather tumultuous arrival here for the T20 World Cup but all-rounder Ashton Agar said a cruise along the city's stunning coastline was all it needed to calm the players.

Australia will open their campaign against Oman on June 5 (June 6 at 6am IST).

Pace spearhead Pat Cummins and fellow fast bowler Mitchell Starc had come back to Australia after the IPL for a short break and while heading to the West Indies, the former lost his luggage which eventually did reach him, according to a report in 'cricket.Com.Au'.

"Flight delays also affected Starc and Maxwell, as the pair had to spend a night in Los Angeles and then another night in Miami en route to Barbados after their own brief trips back to Australia following the IPL," the website reported. Marcus Stonis also had to miss a practice match after his kit was delivered late to him.

However, Agar said a cruise on Saturday has managed to bring in a sense of calm for the side, which had to put support staff on ground during its practice games due to lack of first-choice players at that time.

"A lot of the boys are coming off a long time in India in the IPL, maybe 48 hours at home for a couple of them, so to do something like that is so refreshing," Agar



told reporters.

"I think mentally once you've done that, you go into the sessions ready to go, because you've already enjoyed what the Caribbean has to offer."

"We were sitting on the roof of the catamaran as we were coming back last night and 'Stoin' (Stoinis) actually mentioned that, 'I don't know if many other teams would be like this,'" he added. Agar said one of the memorable moments was watching the sunset.

"You've got all the boys sitting on the roof watching the sun go down, having a

drink together, having a genuinely good time and enjoying each other's company. "It was pretty easy to forget you're here for a World Cup," he quipped. Agar did show up for an optional training session though.

"Before a tournament where you're not going to train too much when the matches come thick and fast, you want to get all your drills in," said Agar.

"You want to make sure you're good to go, your mechanics are working well, nailing that four-to-six metre length, getting my shoulder on the right path," he asserted.

## Rahane underlines importance of fitness, game plan as Mumbai begin off season camp

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai skipper Ajinkya Rahane on Monday underlined the importance of working on fitness and exhorted the players of his state side to utilise the off-season training camp for getting better. The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) launched the three-month long camp on the theme titled 'Home of the Champions' for the upcoming season.

Rahane, who led Mumbai to their record-extending win in the Ranji Trophy last season, said work behind the scenes is critical for players to deliver on the field. "It will inspire many youngsters to do well for Mumbai and carry the legacy forward and do well for Mumbai in all age groups (teams)," Rahane told media.

"Working on fitness and on your own game plan, because this is the time when you can actually focus on what areas you want to improve as an individual," Rahane said when asked about what kind of work he would want the players to focus on.

"Once the season starts, it is all about what the team requires from you. These 2-3 months is all about getting better as individuals in terms of fitness and skills," he added.

Rahane praised the governing body's decision to appoint former bowler Dhawal Kulkarni as the bowling mentor for all teams across age groups (both men and women).

"It is a very good gesture from MCA. He has played Mumbai for so many years, he has represented India and I am sure that will be of help," he said.



"He has the ability of spotting the talent from various age groups and develop them. I am sure he will find good bowlers for Mumbai and India," Rahane added. The India batter will also be playing County cricket in England to give himself match-time during this period.

"For me, it's very important to keep playing and that is what I was looking for," Rahane said, confirming that he is set for a stint with Leicestershire.

"Playing matches at this stage is important. I will work on my fitness for a month and will go to Leicester for County matches," he said.

"For me it is all about having those matches under my belt before our

domestic season starts otherwise it becomes too long a gap and you hardly get anytime to (address) whatever areas you want to improve," Rahane added.

Meanwhile, addressing various age group players during the inauguration of the camp, India batter Sarfaraz Khan highlighted the importance of being focused and not give in to frustrations.

"I would get frustrated in between thinking I was not getting that opportunity (to play for India), but my father would tell me to focus on performing — to think as if I am playing for India even if I am playing Ranji Trophy and thus I would only focus on performing," he said.