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Enforcing law against paper leak mere whitewash: Cong chief Kharge



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FM Sitharaman underlines CENTRE'S support to states



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Shepherding A DYNASTY




Oil se

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The Telangana Congress Government has taken a historic step towards fulfilling 'Kisan Nyay' by waiving agricultural loans up to Rs 2 lakh which will free around 40 lakh farmer families from debts. Whatever we said, we did. The Congress government means a guarantee that the treasury will be used for helping deprived sections like farmers and labourers. The decision of the Telangana government is an example of this. We promise that wherever the Congress is in power we will use India's wealth to help 'Indians' and not 'capitalists'

- Rahul Gandhi, Congress MP



P4

DON'T MISS...

Pawan vows to solve public...

Jana Sena Party (JSP) chief and Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan demonstrated his commitment to serving the public by personally receiving grievances from citizens outside his party office in Mangalagiri on Saturday. After participating in the Assembly session, Pawan Kalyan visited the JSP state party office in Mangalagiri. Noticing a group of people waiting to voice their concerns, he halted his convoy, got out, and sat in a chair in front of the office to...

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Security measures tightened...

With the Amarnath Yatra set to begin in a week, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said security arrangements have been tightened and facilities improved for the successful conduct of the pilgrimage. Jammu Additional Director General of Police Anand Jain has reviewed security arrangements along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, emphasising the need for the highest level of alertness to scuttle any attempt by terrorists to disrupt the pilgrimage, officials said on Saturday...

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'Will empower 65L youth with...

Magic Bus, a non-profit organisation in the education and skilling space, aims to impart essential life and employability skills in over 65 lakh young people from marginalised communities over the next five years. The NGO operates in 23 states and union territories and operates out of 117 livelihood centres, of which 17 are all-girl centres. It imparts essential life skills and employability skills in young people from underserved communities. "Since 1999, Magic Bus has impacted 30 lakh adolescents, equipping them with life skills to..."

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Chimps found to 'seek out' plants...

Chimpanzees sought out and ate medicinal plants to treat their injuries, according to a study. While wild chimpanzees are known to consume a variety of plant matter, researchers said it can be hard to figure out if they intentionally seek out medicinal plants to heal their ailments, or "passively" consume plants that happen to be medicinal. The study is published in the journal PLoS ONE. At the Budongo Central Forest Reserve in Uganda, the researchers, including those at the University of Oxford, UK, observed the behaviours and health of 51 wild chimpanzees, belonging to two habituated communities. The researchers observed a male chimpanzee with an injured hand seek out and eat the leaves of a fern, which may...

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OBTUSE ANGLE



Ayyanna slams Jagan's 'lack of courtesy'

Stresses the tradition of Oppn presence during Speaker's election



Speaker calls for YSRCP leaders to attend the Assembly, respect its traditions, and raise public issues.

He vows to uphold the dignity of the Assembly, contrasting it with the previous government's behaviour.

Ayyanna lifts bans on certain media houses imposed by the previous government, citing press freedom concerns.

He stresses the responsibility of the Speaker's position and is committed to enhancing the House's respect.

Ayyanna recalls the day CM Chandrababu Naidu shed tears, marking YSRCP's decline from 175 seats to 11.



CM, Dy CM guide Speaker to his chair

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Senior TDP leader Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu was unanimously elected as Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Saturday. As Ayyanna Patrudu was the only nomination received, Pro-tem Speaker G Butchaiah Chowdary announced his unanimous election for the post.

Legislators of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and its alliance partners Jana Sena and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) hailed Ayyanna Patrudu's election with the thumping of desks. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan and some senior ministers guided Ayyanna Patrudu to the chair and congratulated him.

The Speaker was elected on the second day of the first Assembly session following the formation of the government by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Leaders of NDA had Friday submitted nomination papers to the Secretary General of the Assembly, PPK Ramacharyulu on behalf of Ayyanna Patrudu.

Patrudu was elected from Narsipatnam Assembly constituency in Anakapalle for a seventh term in the recent elections. He is the third Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Assembly after bifurcation. A key leader of backward classes from north-coastal Andhra Pradesh, Patrudu had also served as MP from Anakapalle (1996-98).

The Speaker began his political career with the TDP after it was floated by legendary actor NT Rama Rao in 1982.

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'Amaravati, Polavaram, river linkage my priorities'

Lauds Ayyanna's selection as Assembly Speaker

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu praised the selection of senior TDP leader Ch Ayyanna Patrudu as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on Saturday. He criticised the previous government for undermining the ethical values of the legislature, turning it into a platform for personal attacks and blame games.

In his maiden address to the House after the unanimous election of the Speaker, Naidu expressed regret that the previous ruling dispensation had turned the Assembly into a "Kaurava Sabha" with baseless allegations and highly objectionable comments. "I have entered the House with the blessings of the people," Naidu stated.

Recalling arrogant comments made against the TDP in 2019, when the party won only 23

Assembly seats, Naidu pointed out that the National Democratic Alliance has now won 164 seats. "1+6+4 equals 11, the number of seats the YSRCP has won," he remarked.

Naidu also highlighted the comments made against Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan. He noted that Jana Sena has emerged victorious in all the seats it contested. "The Deputy Chief Minister, Pawan Kalyan, knows where to win and where to bow down," Naidu added.

The Chief Minister expressed pride in having Ayyanna Patrudu, a senior leader and representative of the Backward Classes (BCs), as the Speaker. He recalled that Ayyanna Patrudu entered politics at the age of 23, answering the call of TDP founder, the late NT Rama Rao, and won his first Assembly election.

Continued on Page 2

18 IAS officers shifted in AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a significant administrative reshuffle, the Andhra Pradesh government has transferred 18 Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers across various districts. Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad issued the transfer orders under GO Rt No 1100 on Saturday.

Among the notable transfers, NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao (IAS, SCS: 2013) has been directed to report to the General Administration Department (GAD) for further posting. S. Nagalakshmi (IAS, RR: 2012), the current Collector & District Magistrate of Vizianagaram District, will now serve as the Collector & District Magistrate of Guntur District, succeeding M. Venugopal Reddy (IAS, SCS: 2013). Venugopal Reddy has been directed to report to the GAD.

Dr. A. Mallikarjuna (IAS, 2012), the Collector & District Magistrate of Visakhapatnam District, has also been transferred and instructed to report to the GAD. The Joint Collector and Additional District Magistrate of Visakhapatnam will assume full additional charge of the post until further orders.

OTHER TRANSFERS

A.S. Dinesh Kumar (IAS, RR: 2013), from Prakasam District to Alluri Sitarama Raju District, replacing M. Vijaya Suneetha (IAS, SCS: 2014), who will report to the GAD.

Sagili Shan Mohan (IAS, RR: 2013), from Chittoor District to Kakinada District, replacing J. Nivas (IAS, RR: 2010), who will report to the GAD.

Vetrisevi K. (IAS, RR: 2014), Director of Women Development & Child Welfare, to Eluru District, replacing Prasanna Venkatesh V. (IAS, RR: 2012), who will report to the GAD. **Continued on Page 2**

Govt to disburse Rs 7,000 to pensioners in July

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

AP Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav held discussions with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday regarding budgetary matters. Minister Keshav participated in the Preparatory Meeting for the Union Budget, where he outlined the State's priorities and sought financial support from the Central government. He highlighted the ongoing financial challenges stemming from the State's bifurcation and economic mismanagement during the previous YSRCP administration.

Minister Keshav assured that pensions amounting to Rs 7,000 will be disbursed without delay in July. He said that seeking loans is a routine process, and discussions with the Reserve Bank of India are underway regarding necessary financial arrangements.

During the meeting, Minister Keshav advocated for the establishment of

industrial corridors alongside the construction of mega highways in Andhra Pradesh. He specifically requested financial aid for key projects mandated by the Reorganisation Act, including the Ramayapatnam Port, an Integrated Steel Plant, and the Greyhounds Training Centre.

Furthermore, Minister Keshav pressed for full funding for the Polavaram project and additional resources for the development of Amaravati and backward districts in the state. He also appealed for a 5% GST waiver on the handloom sector and urged the Centre to support AP in establishing a "Green Energy Corridor."

Highlighting public confidence in Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's leadership, Minister Keshav underscored the need for a simplified, dispute-free tax system. The minister's discussions aimed to secure comprehensive support from the Centre to propel Andhra Pradesh's development trajectory.



During the meeting with Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister Keshav advocated for the establishment of industrial corridors alongside the construction of mega highways in Andhra Pradesh. He specifically requested financial aid for key projects mandated by the Reorganisation Act, including the Ramayapatnam Port, an Integrated Steel Plant, and the Greyhounds Training Centre.

Under-construction YSRCP central office razed



MMTC officials demolished the under-construction YSRCP Central Office at Sasetanagaram on Saturday. Pic by Ch Vijaya Bhaskar

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Mangalagiri Tadepalli Municipal Corporation (MTMC) demolished the under-construction building of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) central office in Tadepalli.

Former chief minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy had controversially allocated 2 acres of irrigation land in survey number 202/A1 in Tadepalli, within the Amaravati capital area, for the party office. Allegations surfaced that Jagan Mohan Reddy planned to occupy an additional 15 acres by establishing the party office on these 2 acres.

It has now been clarified that the Irrigation Department did not grant clearance for these 2 acres to be handed over to the YSRCP. Neither the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA), the MTMC, nor Revenue officials transferred the Irrigation

Department's land to the then-ruling party. Moreover, it was revealed that the YSRCP did not apply for the necessary clearances to construct the party office and had begun construction unlawfully. Upon learning of these violations, the general secretary of the Guntur district unit of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) complained to the Commissioners of the CRDA and MTMC, demanding action against the illegal occupation of the land.

As a result, MTMC officials, acting on the complaint, supervised the demolition of the unauthorised YSRCP construction.

HC orders ignored: Jagan Mohan Reddy

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy on Saturday said the Chandrababu Naidu-led government in Andhra Pradesh has demolished the under-construction central office of his party at Tadepalli in Guntur district, disregarding the High Court orders. Slamming the state government, Reddy on X said, "Chandrababu took vendetta politics to the next level. Like a dictator, he got YSRCP's central office demolished with excavators and bulldozers, which was almost complete."

In its response, the TDP said the under-construction YSRCP office at Tadepalli was demolished based on a complaint lodged by a ruling party leader that it was being allegedly built on Irrigation Department land.

The complaint was lodged with the commissioners of the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) and Mangalagiri Tadepalli Municipal Corporation (MTMC) stating that the opposition party office was built illegally on two acres of Irrigation Department land, a TDP release said. **Continued on Page 2**

NEET-NET 'PAPER LEAK' Centre sacks NTA DG

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

National Testing Agency (NTA) Director General Subodh Singh was shunted out on Saturday, amid a massive controversy over alleged irregularities in competitive exams NEET and NET.

An official said he has been put on "compulsory wait" in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) till further orders. India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) Chairman and Managing Director Pradeep Singh Kharola has been assigned additional charge of the testing agency till appointment of a regular incumbent.

"NTA DG has been put on compulsory wait in the Department of Personnel and Training. Pradeep Singh Kharola has been assigned additional charge of NTA DG till further orders," a senior official said. The government has cancelled



"NTA DG has been put on compulsory wait in the Department of Personnel and Training. Pradeep Singh Kharola has been assigned additional charge of NTA DG till further orders," a senior official said.

the UGC-NET even as there are allegations of paper leak in NEET-UG as well and demand for its cancellation.

NEET-PG POSTPONED

The Union Health Ministry on Saturday said it has decided to postpone the NEET-PG entrance examination, scheduled to be held on June 23, as a "precautionary measure" in the wake of recent allegations on the integrity of certain competitive exams. Ministry of Health has decided to undertake a thorough assessment of the robustness of processes of the NEET-PG entrance examination,

conducted by the National Board of Examination (NTA) for medical students, it said.

"It has accordingly been decided, as a precautionary measure to postpone the NEET-PG entrance examination, scheduled to be held tomorrow -- 23rd June, 2024," the ministry said. The fresh date of this examination will be notified at the earliest, it said. "Ministry of Health sincerely regrets the inconvenience caused to the students. This decision has been taken in the best interests of the students and to maintain the sanctity of the examination process," the ministry said.

Panel set up to reform exams

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a row over irregularities in competitive exams NEET and NET, the education ministry on Saturday notified a seven-member panel headed by former ISRO chief K Radhakrishnan to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of examinations through the National Testing Agency (NTA). "Transparent, tamper-free and zero-error examinations are a commitment. Setting up of the high-level committee of experts is the first of a series of steps to improve the efficiency of the examination process, put an end to all possible malpractices, strengthen data security protocols and overhaul and reform the NTA," Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said. "Students' interests and their bright future will always be our government's top priority," he added.

The ministry's notification comes two days after Pradhan announced the setting up of the committee. The panel will make recommendations on reforms in the mechanism of the examination process, improvement in data security protocols and the structure and functioning of the NTA. It is supposed to submit its report within two months.

The panel also includes former AIIMS Delhi director Randeep Guleria, Central University of Hyderabad Vice-Chancellor B J Rao, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT Madras K Ramamurthy, People Strong co-founder and Karmayogi Bharat board member Pankaj Bansal, IIT Delhi Dean of Student Affairs Aditya Mittal and Ministry of Education Joint Secretary Govind Jaiswal. **Continued on Page 2**



Age matters even in Congress

In good old days, whenever veteran leaders switched parties, it was deemed as a shot in the arm for the party receiving them into its fold. Nowadays, senior turncoats switching to TPCC, driven by young and energetic Revanth Reddy, are detested in some circles for seeking rehabilitation and thus blighting the chances of younger elements waiting in the wings. So, whenever a senior leader joins the party, a video clip of Revanth Reddy's exasperated pre-poll comment "Why did Ponnala Lakshmaiah join BRS just before death?" surfaces in party quarters that do not entertain aged netas. For, these young TPCC leaders are anxious that their own chances would be reduced by the nepo kids who tag along with the veterans and bask in reflected glory. So, all eyes are on how Revanth will handle discontent brewing in these jittery quarters of the party.

revealing responses from politicians. However, with social media platforms mirroring pressers with just tell-tale clips, it has become trendy for netas to avoid taking questions. Instead, politicians talk whatever they want; knowing what would surely be featured on SM platforms. This is particularly true in the case of leaders of the Bharat Rashtira Samithi. Almost all the scribes who had turned up at the recent press conference of BRS working president KT Rama Rao were angry that he did not take questions. For, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka had held a press meet just before KTR and made serious accusations related to BRS. Since it was KTR's first presser after BRS' washout in the Lok

suggestions like a sincere student on the first day of her class in college. While accepting reporters' tips that she should take up activities and speak with media persons frequently, she offered to speed up her activities with "the support of the media". After she left the room, one of the reporters sighed, saying: "Political leaders take suggestions and heed advice in the beginning, but as the days roll by, the same leaders will develop a haughty attitude and not even glance at reporters".

Change in approach or strategy?

Some of the actions of Chandrababu Naidu, upon returning to power as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, have raised eyebrows. Curiously, he told party leaders that they would henceforth see a 'changed Chandrababu'

REPORTERS' DIARY

Sabha polls, newshounds expected him to at least address those charges. Ever otherwise, ever since BRS lost power in TG, seasoned journalists too have found it difficult to get viewpoints from BRS brass. "If this trend continues, then hardly anyone will show up," remarked a senior reporter working for a TV channel.

Beginner's pins and needles

Bharatiya Janata Party Telangana unit Mahila Morcha's new president Dr Mekala Shilpa Reddy was on pins and needles briefly upon taking over and sought feedback from journalists the other day. She suddenly entered the media enclosure in the State BJP office and made enquiries about her dharna earlier that day. She also wanted to know the outcome of her first press conference conducted in the evening the same day, realizing she had felt nervous. She listened to reporters'

with the administrative apparatus transformed. Accordingly, he directed officials to distribute books to students though he knew they carried the picture of former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. Heading the requests of YSR Congress MLAs, Chandrababu has allowed certain relaxations for YS Jagan in the Assembly. Noticeably, Chandrababu said that there won't be 'revenge politics', but clarified that he would not spare those who had indulged in misdeeds. So, people are wondering: Has Chandrababu changed his attitude or is it part of an unfolding strategy? Others say, it is the proverbial calm before the storm. They say: "In the coming days, YS Jagan will see the 'real' Chandrababu."

(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate, K Venkateswarlu and SNCN Acharyulu)

Is Harish Rao's team poking Congress?

Harish Rao's team is giving Telangana Congress a run for their money. Now the talk in Congress circles annoyed by charges of power cut is back in TG' is that Harish Rao's team is orchestrating efforts to defame the government. In fact, at one point of time Chief Minister Revanth Reddy too blamed Harish Rao for raising the bogey of power cuts. Whatever be the truth, Team Harish Rao not only takes up a 'powerful' new issue every day, but also responds to every small criticism against him. The state government has learned to take the power-packed matters he raises seriously.

Are pressers meant only to feed social media?

Reporters' loaded queries often yield

Due process not followed: Ex-AAG

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Assistant Advocate General Ponnalavolu Sudhakar Reddy has clarified that while the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) issued the Provisional Order to the YSRCP on June 15, the order was prepared on June 10.

Speaking to the media in Hyderabad on Saturday, Reddy explained that legal arguments were presented in court on June 21, resulting in the High Court instructing officials to comply with its directives.

Reddy further noted that during its tenure from 2014 to 2019, the TDP had enacted GO 340, which allocated land for political parties to establish their offices. Emphasising continuity in law despite changes in government, he stated that the current administration has similarly allocated land to the YSRCP for their office, citing GO provisions.

Regarding recent developments, Reddy highlighted a dispute wherein the Telangana Minorities Commission (TMMC) issued an order to dismantle a structure within seven days, a decision challenged by the YSRCP through an urgent court petition.

"We informed the court that demolition was imminent, asserting that under prevailing law, structures cannot be demolished until Confirmation Orders are issued," Reddy asserted, expressing dissatisfaction with the administration's handling of the matter.

"We were assured due process would be followed, but unfortunately, that commitment was not upheld," he added.

Vijaya MP Kesineni Chinni hosts breakfast for Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Union Minister for Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, MLAs Gadde Rama Mohana Rao and Venigandla Ramu, and Indian cricketer KS Bharath attended a breakfast hosted by Vijayawada Parliament Member Kesineni Sivanath, also known as Chinni, at his residence in Gurunanak Nagar, Vijayawada, on Saturday. MP Chinni warmly welcomed Minister Ram Mohan Naidu and felicitated him.

This visit marked Minister Ram Mohan Naidu's first trip to Vijayawada since assuming office as the Civil Aviation Minister. In this context, MP Kesineni Chinni extended an invitation for breakfast at his residence.



Joining the minister were MLAs Gadde Rama Mohana Rao and Venigandla Ramu, along with Indian Test Cricketer KS Bharath. Following the breakfast, the minister visited Chinni's office, NTR Bhavan, located in Gurunanak Nagar.

During his visit, Minister Ram Mohan Naidu held a meeting with MLAs Gadde Rama Mohana Rao, Venigandla Ramu, and MP Chinni to discuss various

issues. The minister expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the TDP leaders and cadres who contributed to the party's success in the recent elections.

TDP national official spokesperson K Pattabhi, former Vijayawada mayor Koneru Sridhar, TDP State secretary Chennupati Gandhi, VMC Corporation Jasti Sambasiva Rao, and other prominent figures were present.

18 IAS officers shifted...

Continued from Page 1

P. Prasanthi (IAS, SCS: 2014), Director of Agriculture Marketing, to East Godavari District, replacing Dr. K. Madhavi Latha (IAS, SCS: 2014), who will report to the GAD.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (IAS, SCS: 2015), Director of Mid-day Meals & School Sanitation, to Vizianagaram

District.

C. Naga Rani (IAS, SCS: 2010), Director of Technical Education, to West Godavari District, replacing Sumit Kumar (IAS, RR: 2014), who will be the new Collector & District Magistrate of Chittoor District.

Srijana Gummalla (IAS, RR: 2013), from Kurnool District to NTR District, replacing S. Dilli Rao (IAS,

SCS: 2013).

A. Thameem Ansariya (IAS, RR: 2015), Commissioner of Municipal Corporation, Srikakulam, to Prakasam District.

P. Ranjit Basha (IAS, SCS: 2013), from Bapatla District to Kurnool District. The Joint Collector and Additional District Magistrate of Bapatla will hold additional charge until further orders.

CM, Dy CM...

Continued from Page 1

He was first elected to the Assembly from Narsipatnam in 1983 and retained the seat in 1985. He was elected again on TDP tickets in 1994, 1999, 2004, 2014 and 2024.

Patrudu served as a minister of technical education, roads, buildings and ports in N.T. Rama Rao's Cabinets in 1984-1986 and 1994-95. He was minister of forests, environment, science and technology in the government headed by Chandrababu Naidu in 1999-2004.

Panel set up to reform exams...

Continued from Page 1

"The panel will analyse the end-to-end examination process and suggest measures to improve efficiency of the system and to forestall any possible breach. It will conduct a thorough

'Amaravati, Polavaram

Continued from Page 1

Naidu noted that Ayyanna Patrudu has served as an MLA seven times, an MP once, and as a minister for 16 years. Since the formation of the TDP, Ayyanna Patrudu has been the sole leader representing the Narsipatnam segment and has served on the party's politburo for a decade.

Reflecting on his own political career, Naidu mentioned his nine wins in Assembly elections, 14 years as Chief Minister, and 15 years as Leader of the Opposition. He emphasized the TDP's responsibility to bring the state back on track, not just wield power. Governments have the power to transform people's lives, he said, citing the economic reforms introduced by the late former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao. The Chief Minister outlined his vision for the state: building the capital, interlinking rivers to solve water issues, completing Polavaram, attracting investments, creating employment for youth, and reforming schools.

of Education said in a statement. The committee has also been tasked with examining the existing security protocols related to the setting of the papers and other processes for different examinations and making recommendations to enhance the robustness of the system.

Gottipati assumes charge as Minister for Energy

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Gottipati Ravi Kumar assumed charge as Minister for Energy in the Government of Andhra Pradesh at the Secretariat in Velagapudi on Saturday. After assuming charge, the Minister has signed the first file and accorded permission for providing additional agricultural connections to the farming sector, for the applications to the extent of paid cases as of Saturday (22.06.2024).

The Minister has also signed and approved to constitute a committee for complying the Govt. of India instructions to initially list all Govt. Buildings/Complexes under the State government departments /organizations to make a baseline assessment of the total potential rooftop solar capacity based on the availability of appropriate rooftop space and requirements.

Further, the Minister has also signed a file on the constitution of the State Level Coordination Committee (SLCC) for implementation of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana Scheme of Government of

Signs 3 files on farm connections, rooftop solar capacity potential and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana Scheme



India, headed by Chief Secretary to Government as chairman, Special Chief Secretary Energy as Member Convenor and Principal Secretaries of key departments as members and also a District level Committee (DLC) headed by District collectors.

On this occasion, the energy minister expressed his happiness on assuming charge and thanked Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu for allowing serving as Minister

for Energy. He said he would study the power sector and resolve any issues on top priority.

He said the consumers would be given the utmost priority and he would strive to ensure AP power utilities provide the best services to them. He has sought the cooperation of all the Power Utilities and associations for his future endeavours. He advised the energy department to involve every employee as part of

efforts to deliver quality services to the consumers.

He further said that Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu is extremely keen to provide a highly reliable power supply to all categories of consumers. He said all necessary steps will be taken to strengthen the AP power sector and meet the targets set by the Chief Minister. On this occasion, the Colleague Ministers Anagani Satya Prasad, Minister Revenue Dept, Dola Bala Veeranjanya Swamy, Minister for Social Welfare and MLAs of various constituencies extended their wishes.

Special Chief Secretary Energy K Vijayanand, MD APGENCO KVN Chakradhar Babu, CMDs of DISCOMS I Prudhvi Tej, K Santosha Rao, Joint Secretary Energy BAVP Kumara Reddy, MD AP Solar Power Corporation Limited M Kamalakar Babu and other top officials of AP Power Utilities and have congratulated the Minister.

Diarrhoea outbreak leaves 1 dead, 30 ill in Nandyala

PNS ■ NANDYALA

Tragedy struck Chabolu village in Jupadu mandal as one person succumbed to suspected diarrhoea, while 30 others, including children, fell ill.

Official reports indicate that around 30 villagers, including 12 children, experienced vomiting and diarrhoea symptoms after reportedly consuming contaminated water. They have been admitted to the government general hospital in Nandikotkur for treatment.

Regrettably, Nadipi Naganna (28) lost his life during treatment.

Family members and villagers have alleged that they have been forced to consume contaminated water due to the authorities' failure to repair drainage systems. They claim that heavy rains have caused drains to overflow, leading to sewage contaminating the village's drinking water supply.

In light of this incident, the villagers of Chabolu are urging officials to take immediate action to clean the drains and replace the deteriorating drinking water pipelines.

GVMC DECLARES YSRCP OFFICE ILLEGAL

Amarnath flays govt's actions

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In response to the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC)'s notice declaring the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) office at Chinagadili Endada illegal, former minister Guduvada Amarnath strongly criticised the Andhra Pradesh coalition government, accusing it of undermining constitutional principles.

Amarnath, addressing the media in Visakhapatnam, condemned the government's actions, accusing it of abandoning the Constitution drafted by Dr B.R. Ambedkar in favour of what he termed the "Red Book Constitution." He denounced the demolition of the YSRCP central office in Tadepalli, which took place while court proceedings were pending, calling the move unethical and undemocratic.

"This behaviour is a blatant misuse of power," Amarnath declared, emphasizing that democracy should ensure equal opportunities for all. He warned that the public is closely monitoring the government's actions and called for vigilance against partisan activities.

Amarnath also expressed deep disappointment over the turmoil within the new administration



just 20 days into its term. He argued that this situation undermines the patience advocated by party leader YS Jagan, who had initially suggested six months before making judgments about the new government. He assured the media that the constructions at both the Visakhapatnam and Anakapalli offices complied with all relevant regulations.

Comparing party offices to temples, Amarnath urged the people of Andhra Pradesh to stay vigilant and closely observe the government's actions, stressing the importance of adhering to democratic principles and ensuring fair governance.

The GVMC's Town Planning Officer for Zone-II reported that the YSRCP office was allegedly built without the necessary permits from the Visakhapatnam Metropolitan

Development Authority (VMDA). According to GVMC regulations, operating an office in this area without VMDA approval is illegal. The YSRCP has been given a week to explain, failing which immediate action will be taken.

This controversy has intensified following the recent change in the state government, bringing additional scrutiny to M. Sai Saran, who applied for the construction online.

The Janasena party has also raised alarms about various buildings in the Visakhapatnam district being constructed without proper permits, demanding their demolition. As the political landscape in Andhra Pradesh heats up, citizens are left to grapple with the implications of these developments on the state's democratic fabric.

YSRCP in trouble over land deal scam in Anakapalli

PNS ■ ANAKAPALLI

The questionable activities of the YSRCP are surfacing, revealing a pattern of misuse of power. Following similar events in Visakhapatnam, a valuable piece of government land in Anakapalli has been leased at a nominal cost for constructing a lavish party office without proper authorisation.

In 2022, YSRCP leaders targeted approximately 3 acres of highly valuable government land in Survey No. 75/1, Narsingaraopeta village of Anakapalli mandal in Rajupalem Revenue jurisdiction. Despite the land's market

value of Rs 8 crore to Rs 10 crore per acre, it was leased to the party at a mere Rs 1,000 per acre annually, totalling just Rs 1,750 per year for a 33-year lease. This gross underpricing starkly deviates from official regulations, which stipulate that only undeveloped or barren lands be allocated for political purposes.

In December 2022, YSRCP officials bypassed established rules to secure this prime land, developed by VMRDA, under Government Order No. 759. YCP district president Karanam Dharmasri applied to the GVMC planning department to construct a lavish party office

but did not pay the required fees, leaving the plan unapproved. Legally, building on government-leased land requires fees totalling around Rs. 17 lakhs, covering gram panchayat charges, permit fees, greenery enhancement charges, DPMS user charges, and labour cess charges.

Despite these requirements, YCP leaders commenced construction, nearing completion without approval while a local court case contested the land allocation. Ramky Infra Company, owned by a YSRCP Rajya Sabha member, has undertaken the construction. Villagers from Kothuru,

Narsingaraopeta, Portu Colony, Sirasapalli, and Subrahmanya Colony have fiercely opposed the unauthorized project, demanding its immediate halt.

GVMC ACP Ramakrishna confirmed to 'The Pioneer' that the building plan remains unapproved due to non-payment of fees. Former MLA Pila Govinda Satyanarayana lodged complaints with authorities, highlighting the misuse of valuable government land. Frustrated by the lack of response, locals filed a case in the High Court in June 2023, advocating for the land to be used for a community Kalyana Mandapam instead.

Ayyanna slams...

Continued from Page 1

The Speaker underscored the responsibility of his position and promised to perform his duties efficiently, enhancing the House's respect. He recalled the day Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu shed tears in the House, marking the beginning of YSRCP's decline, leading to their reduction from aiming for "Why Not 175" to securing only 11 seats, excluding them from opposition status.

HC orders ignored: Jagan...

Continued from Page 1

Further, the TDP claimed that MTMC had served a seven-day show cause notice to YSRCP on May 20, 2024, seeking an explanation as to why the 'illegal' structure (party office) being built should not be demolished.

In a follow-up notice on June 1, the TDP said the civic body said there was neither a response from YSRCP to the show cause notice nor any effort to regularise it and no consent was taken from

the Irrigation Department.

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had allotted the parcel of land in survey number 202/A1 in Tadepalli, by misusing his power, alleged the ruling party. According to a YSRCP statement, the under-construction office was demolished even though the party had approached the HC on Friday, challenging the preliminary actions of the CRDA (Capital Region Development Authority).

YSRCP pointed to the court directive to halt any demolition

activity, which was conveyed to the CRDA commissioner by a party lawyer, and said the civic authorities still went ahead.

The opposition party said the CRDA's action amounted to contempt of court. Former CM Jagan Mohan Reddy alleged that law and justice completely disappeared in the southern state under the NDA government, comprising TDP, BJP and Janasena, and added that the demolition indicates how Naidu's reign in the next five years would be. The YSRCP chief said his party will not be intimidated by such 'vendetta politics'.

'Send back 800 tahsildars transferred before elections to their districts'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A delegation from the Andhra Pradesh Revenue Services Association (APRSA) has appealed to the Minister for Revenue, Stamps, and Registrations, Anagani Satya Prasad, to relieve approximately 800 Tahsildars back to their respective districts following their transfer before the general elections.

APRSA president Bopparaju Venkateswarlu and general secretary K. Ramesh Kumar presented a formal request on Saturday.

The APRSA representatives, led by Venkateswarlu and Kumar, met Minister Satya Prasad in his office at the



Secretariat in Velagapudi to discuss the matter. In February, under directives from the Election Commission of India (ECI), the Chief Commissioner

of Land Administration (CCLA) transferred about 800 Tahsildars to different districts. After submitting the representation, Venkateswarlu stat-

ed that these Tahsildars served as Assistant Returning Officers (ARO) during the elections. Now that the ECI has lifted the election code, the Tahsildars should be returned to their original districts. He emphasized that, according to regulations, Tahsildars should be sent back to their respective districts immediately after the election process is completed.

Venkateswarlu mentioned that Minister Satya Prasad responded positively and assured that he would discuss the issue with relevant officials to take appropriate action. The minister also promised to issue government orders regarding this matter as soon as possible.



BC staff meet Energy Minister Gottipati

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

After assuming charge as the Minister for Energy, Gottipati Ravi Kumar was felicitated by the members of the Andhra Pradesh State Power BC Employees Welfare Association led by P Srinivasa Rao in his ministers' chamber in the secretariat on Saturday. The Minister was felicitated with a shawl bouquet and a memento.

Later the association president Srinivasa Rao said that the Minister responded positively to the association leaders and said.

Deputy CM Pawan vows to solve public grievances

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Jana Sena Party (JSP) chief and Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan demonstrated his commitment to serving the public by personally receiving grievances from citizens outside his party office in Mangalagiri on Saturday.

After participating in the Assembly session, Pawan Kalyan visited the JSP state party office in Mangalagiri. Noticing a group of people waiting to voice their concerns, he halted his convoy, got out, and sat in a chair in front of the office to listen to them. He attentively received their memorandums and assured them of prompt resolution.

Pawan Kalyan also made phone calls to several officials to address the issues brought to his attention. Additionally, the JSP state office had set up a help desk. Pawan Kalyan was seen interacting with people at the help desk, listening to their griev-



ances and promising solutions. This initiative is reminiscent of his Janavani programs, which he conducted while in opposition, to hear public grievances across the state.

One particularly distressing case was presented by a woman named Shivakumari, who reported that her minor daughter had been missing for nine months, allegedly trapped by a man under the pretence of love. Despite lodging a police complaint, no

action had been taken. Pawan Kalyan reviewed the FIR and immediately contacted the Machavaram Circle Inspector to inquire about the case. He arranged for the woman to be transported to the Machavaram police station for further assistance.

Furthermore, Pawan Kalyan engaged with 30 differently-abled individuals, listened to their problems and assured them of his support in resolving their issues.

Vikas 'Job Mela': 232 candidates get placements



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As many as 232 candidates on Saturday secured placements in various companies during a 'Job Mela' organised by the Vikas Group of Educational Institutions at its engineering college in Nunna near Vijayawada. Approximately 800 candidates from different locations attended the event, and 232 of them succeeded in securing placements after undergoing multiple tests and interviews.

The Vikas Educational

Institutions conducted the 'Job Mela' for candidates who completed courses in Inter, Degree, Diploma, Engineering, Pharmacy, and other disciplines. Representatives from companies such as Vividh Technologies, Raj Groups, SS Railway Constructions, and NTTF attended the event to recruit suitable candidates. The 'Job Mela' received a positive response from the attendees.

Vikas Educational Institutions' Placement Officer, S Kishore Babu, supervised the event.

GVMC intensifies bid to combat seasonal diseases

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Commissioner CM Saikanth Varma of Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) has underscored the need for a resolute campaign to shield the city from the scourge of diarrheal and seasonal diseases. Aligned with the nationwide "Stop Diarrhea" campaign launched by the Central Government, Commissioner Verma convened a review meeting with senior officials to prioritize the swift implementation of preemptive measures mandated by state directives.

Commissioner Verma highlighted the importance of the two-month statewide public awareness campaign 'Stop Diarrhea', initiated by the state government. He emphasised the urgent necessity to prevent diseases such as malaria and dengue, especially with the approaching monsoon season. Engineering officials were



instructed to expedite the desilting of drains, aiming for 1,019 km of major and 2,890 km of minor drainage networks. Stressing the pivotal role of coordinated efforts among Zonal Commissioners, Engineering, and Public Health Departments within city limits, the commissioner detailed immediate action plans to address rainwater accumulation in critical areas such as corridors, highways, and coastal roads.

Furthermore, the commissioner directed supervising engineers to swiftly identify drinking water pipes passing

through sewage canals and culverts within three days, implementing measures to prevent leaks. Additionally, cleaning of water tanks across zones (246 ELSR, GLSR), rigorous water quality testing, and chlorine level checks in the water supply to colonies by secretariat volunteers were prioritized. Engineering teams were also assigned the task of clearing silt from 682 km of underground drainage systems on main and internal roads.

Chief Medical Officer Dr Naresh Kumar took charge of identifying high-risk garbage accumulation sites, overseeing improvements in public and social toilet hygiene, and conducting a comprehensive evaluation. Deputy Project Officer, UGD MVD Phaniram, received instructions to mobilize secretariat volunteers in identifying and monitoring vulnerable children under five years old, susceptible to diarrheal illnesses.

AP facing shortage of organ donors

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A critical shortage of organ donors in Andhra Pradesh has created a backlog in the state's transplant program, with 3,697 patients currently listed for life-saving surgeries. This situation highlights the limitations faced by the Jeevandan programme, a comprehensive organ transplant initiative launched by the Andhra Pradesh government. The significant disparity between the high demand for organs and their limited availability translates into lengthy wait times for patients. This shortage isn't merely inconvenient; it presents a dire health crisis, with many patients succumbing to their illnesses due to the lack of a timely transplant.

Dr. K. Rambabu, the program coordinator for Jeevandan, revealed concerning data to The Pioneer. The figures indicate a substantial need for kidney transplants (2,508 patients), followed by liver transplants (1,111 patients). Additionally, 65 patients require heart transplants, and 13 await lung trans-



plants. Data from Jeevandan paints a worrying picture - a significant increase in the number of individuals across the state suffering from organ failure, particularly among younger demographics. Dr. Rambabu stated, "Nearly half of those requiring transplants are under 40 years old." He attributes this concerning trend to unhealthy lifestyle choices, including poor diet, alcohol consumption, and smoking, which contribute to organ damage in young individuals. These patients, after exhausting other treatment options, are left with the critical need for organ transplants.

The limited number of organ donors compared to the vast pool of patients in need further exacerbates the crisis. Dr. Rambabu explained the two primary methods of organ donation: deceased donation (cadaveric) and living donation. While both methods are crucial, the supply of organs continues to fall short of the ever-increasing demand.

As the number of patients waiting for transplants continues to climb, the Jeevandan program stands as a vital lifeline for those in need. However, the urgent call for more organ donors cannot be ignored.



DC reviews 'Stop diarrhoea' programme preparedness

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Krishna District Collector, DK Balaji, has mandated the implementation of the 'Stop Diarrhoea' campaign across the district from July 1 to August 31, following directives from State and Central governments. To kick off preparations, Collector Balaji conducted a review meeting on Saturday at the collectorate in Machilipatnam. Municipal Commissioners, officials from the Medical and Health Department, and representatives from the Panchayat Raj department attended the meeting.

Addressing the gathering, Collector Balaji emphasized the crucial need for regular

cleaning of water tanks to prevent water pollution-induced diarrhoea. He instructed officials to ensure that water supplied from these tanks is chlorinated before distribution and to maintain records of cleaning activities along with residents' contact details for accountability. Random checks on these records will be conducted to ensure compliance, he added.

Additionally, he directed officials to conduct thorough biological analyses of water samples and monitor private RO water plants to maintain water quality standards. In light of potential health risks, he advised residents to boil water before consumption.

National award for NTR Dist Collector Dilli Rao

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao has been honoured with a prestigious National Award for his exceptional efforts in curbing drug usage and illegal transportation. This recognition comes as a result of his collaborative efforts with the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB). Dr. Rao has demonstrated a strong commitment to Child Rights Protection, spearheading effective action plans to combat these pressing issues within the district.

His dedication has earned him commendation at the national level, culminating in his selection for the National Award. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place at Vignan Bhavan, Rajpath Area, New Delhi, on June 30. In addition to the award itself, Dr Rao will receive an appreciation letter from the authorities at NCPCR.

Under his leadership, Dr. Dilli Rao has fostered extensive partnerships with voluntary organizations, government departments, and educational institutions to tackle drug abuse and illegal trafficking. Furthermore, he has actively promoted awareness campaigns against sexual harassment, eradication of child labour, and prevention of child marriages across Vijayawada and the wider district. His initiatives have included numerous community engagements and proactive measures.

Regular review meetings conducted by Dr. Rao, in collaboration with law enforcement, Women and Child Welfare departments, Child Line, NCC, NSS, and other NGOs, have been instrumental in addressing the root causes of drug abuse and enhancing public awareness. His efforts have not only garnered national recognition but also underscored his unwavering commitment to societal well-being. The National



Dilli Rao's dedication has earned him commendation at the national level, culminating in his selection for the National Award. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place at Vignan Bhavan, Rajpath Area, New Delhi, on June 30. In addition to the award itself, Dr Rao will receive an appreciation letter from the authorities at NCPCR

Commission for Protection of Child Rights has personally informed Dr Dilli Rao about his selection for this esteemed accolade, acknowledging his pivotal role in safeguarding the rights and welfare of children at a critical juncture.

Will TDP govt be able to revitalise tribal welfare?

PNS ■ PARVATHIPURAM

In a bold initiative aimed at prioritizing tribal welfare, the Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs) are poised for a sweeping revitalization under the TDP coalition government. This move follows years of neglect and mismanagement during the previous YCP administration, which left tribal communities in Parvathipuram and Seethampet reeling from substantial setbacks.

During the YCP government's tenure, ITDAs experienced a precipitous decline in operational efficacy. Critical funds earmarked for tribal development were diverted, severely hampering the agencies' ability to meet even the most basic needs of the community. This fiscal mismanagement resulted in a dire scarcity of resources, effectively paralyzing essential services and exacerbating longstanding trib-



al grievances. Historically, under previous TDP administrations, ITDAs served as lifelines for tribal communities. These agencies not only implemented crucial welfare schemes such as tricar loans and subsidized vehicles but also spearheaded economic empowerment through initiatives like agricultural machinery distribution and youth training programs. However, these vital programs

ground to a halt with the change in government.

A glaring failure during the YCP regime was the gross neglect of mandatory ITDA governing body meetings. These assemblies are crucial for addressing local issues and driving forward developmental initiatives. Shockingly, in the past half-decade, only two such meetings were convened in Seethampeta and Parvathipuram—far below the

required frequency. This significant oversight severely impeded progress and perpetuated a cycle of underdevelopment in tribal regions.

The adverse impacts of the YCP's fiscal policies extended beyond mere neglect. Drastic funding cuts decimated critical sectors central to tribal livelihoods, such as agriculture and horticulture. Subsidies for loans and agricultural equipment were abruptly terminated, stalling progress across multiple departments and exacerbating economic disparities within tribal communities.

Compounding these issues, essential services provided by ITDAs, including hostels for pregnant tribal women and transportation for healthcare personnel, faced chronic delays and operational challenges. These failures underscored the administration's disregard for the basic needs of tribal populations, leaving crucial health and welfare services in

disarray.

With the recent change in administration, however, district residents are now cautiously optimistic about the future of ITDAs. Minister of Tribal Affairs, Gummidu Sandhyarani, a respected native of Manyam district, has pledged a comprehensive revival of these vital agencies. Plans are already in motion to reinstate regular governing body meetings in Parvathipuram and Seethampet, signaling a renewed commitment to addressing longstanding tribal issues head-on.

Minister Sandhyarani affirmed, "We are steadfast in our mission to restore the effectiveness of ITDAs and ensure holistic development for tribal communities." Her proactive stance marks a definitive departure from past inertia, promising a new era of accountability and empowerment in tribal governance.

Fear grips AP coast as fishing boat fires rise

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The azure waters off the coast of Andhra Pradesh, once a thriving source of livelihood for generations of fishermen, have become shrouded in an unsettling fear. Over the past year, a series of fire incidents involving fishing boats, culminating in a devastating blaze that ravaged over 40 vessels in Visakhapatnam harbour, has highlighted the precarious working conditions of these seafarers. Despite these harrowing episodes, a disturbing number of vessels in the state remain ill-equipped with basic life-saving and fire-fighting apparatus. This alarming trend has cast a shadow over Vizag and other coastal regions, where fishermen are increasingly exposed to the perils of fire-related accidents.



Andhra Pradesh boasts a fleet of over 2,500 mechanized fishing boats, each capable of storing more than 5,000 litres of fuel. Within Vizag fishing harbour alone, around 700 boats are docked. Regulatory mandates insist these vessels be outfitted with navigational, life-saving, and fire-fighting equipment. However, a significant proportion of these boats

sail without essential safety gear such as portable fire extinguishers, power or hand-operated pumps, and fireman's axes. "We are urging the authorities to intervene," pleads Vasupalli Janaki Ram, president of the AP Mechanised Fishing Boat Operator's Association. He emphasises the urgent need for a comprehensive solution.

NAIDU TO TDP MPs

Focus on development and interests of State

NARASARAOPET MP LAVU APPOINTED TDPP LEADER

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Appointing the Narasaraopet Lok Sabha member Lavu Srikrishnadevarayalu as the Leader of the Telugu Desam Parliamentary Party (TDPP), the party chief and Chief Minister, Nara Chandrababu Naidu, on Saturday gave the roadmap to the party's Parliament members.

Chairing the TDPP meeting at the party office in Amaravathi, Chandrababu Naidu told the MPs that all of them function making development and the interests of the State their highest priority and the MPs should stand as an inspiration for others. The meeting discussed in detail the issues to be raised on the floor of Parliament and the plan of action to be adopted by them.

Chandrababu Naidu asked all the MPs to work hard to get the maximum amount of funds for the development of the State, for the projects to be launched and the schemes. Since the TDP has 16 members in the Lok Sabha, Chandrababu asked them to keep the progress of the State in mind and strive hard to get the maximum amount of funds and developmental projects.

He asked them to focus on getting 10 top universities to the State, global-standard hospitals and a maximum amount of industries to the State. Chandrababu is particular that each MP should have a direct connection with a particular Ministry and coordinate with the same wing in the State too which will help the State progress well and wanted the MPs to see to it that the Central funds are utilised properly.

Since the people's capital city of Amaravathi and the Polavaram project which is the lifeline of the State are on top of the agenda, all the MPs



should focus mainly on these two along with the fulfilment of the promises made to the State during bifurcation. The Chief Minister wanted the State should stand as an example to the whole country in organic farming and dur-

ing the earlier TDP regime too organic farming was encouraged well. Informing the party MPs that roads were constructed on a large scale under the Employment Guarantee Scheme during the earlier TDOP regime and

houses too were built with the Central funds, Chandrababu asked them to mainly focus on these two issues and get the maximum amount of funds possible to the State. The MPs also keep in mind the national highways in the State linking with the other States, particularly initiating measures for early completion of the Amaravathi-Anathapur highway.

The Chittoor MP, Daggumalla Prasad Rao is appointed as the Deputy Floor Leader, the Nandyala MP, Byreddy Sabari, is the treasurer and Vemireddy Prabhakar Reddy is the whip in the Lok Sabha.

Medico Vaishnavi donates Rs 25 lakh for Amaravati

Chandrababu announces Vaishnavi as brand ambassador for Amaravati

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Funds have been pouring in for the development of various projects in Andhra Pradesh ever since TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu assumed charge as the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh. A medical student A Vaishnavi from Mudinepalli, Eluri district met CM Chandrababu on Saturday and donated Rs 25 lakh for the construction of Amaravati and Rs 1 lakh for the Polavaram project through a cheque.

Vaishnavi said that she sold one-acre land for Rs 25 lakh and donated for capital construction and sold gold bangles for Rs 1 lakh and gave it to Polavaram. She said that she has given this donation to the government which is working with the idea of



building the capital and developing the state. Chandrababu heaped praise on Vaishnavi for selling land and donating to the construction of the capital. Vaishnavi, who is currently a medical student, with the help of her father, donated to the capital and Polavaram. Chandrababu said that Vaishnavi is an inspiration for

today's youth. Chandrababu said that his government will make the dreams of such youth come true. CM honoured Vaishnavi on the occasion and announced her as the brand ambassador of Amaravati. Vaishnavi is currently studying MBBS second year in a medical college in Vijayawada.

Lokesh urges Union Minister to complete airport works soon

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

IT Minister Nara Lokesh said that through Praja Darbar many problems faced by the people across the state are coming to his notice and said that Praja Darbar will be continued. The Minister conducted a chat-chat in the assembly premises on Saturday and said that Praja Darbar is a platform for those who want to share their problems with him.

Union Minister for Civil Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu and Minister Lokesh had a chat-chat in the Legislative Assembly lobby. Nara Lokesh asked Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu that the pending Airport work in AP will be completed as soon as possible. Ram Mohan Naidu responded positively and said that they will be completed in the next two years.

Rape-cum-murder case: 3 accused held within 48 hours

PNS ■ BAPATLA



Within 48 hours, the police arrested the three accused in the sensational rape and murder of a 21-year-old woman.

District Superintendent of Police Vakul Jindal told the media here on Saturday that a 21-year-old woman was found raped and murdered on the outskirts of Epurupalem village under the bushes near the railway track. The police formed 10 special teams, each team led by CI and SI. The police took the case as a challenge.

The SP said that a police team on June 22, arrested the accused who were involved in several cases. The names of the arrested were given as Devarakonda Vijay (26), Karanki Mahesh (22) and Devarakonda Srikanth (24) at Hai restaurant on the port road in Chirala at 7 pm on Saturday.

The accused No 1, Devarakonda Vijay was involved in a murder case and

several other offences in Chirala rural police station limits. A rowdy sheet 63 was also opened against him.

The Accused 2, Devarakonda Srikanth was also involved in a murder case, attempted murder case and several other cases. A rowdy sheet 45 was opened against him in Chirala rural police station. The third accused Karanki Mahesh helped the two notorious accused in committing the crime, the SP said.

The 21-year-old deceased woman studied up to Intermediate and worked as a tailor. The SP said that on the fateful day on June 21, at around 5:45 am, she went to the railway track to attend nature's call. The accused noticed her, followed and dragged the woman into the bushes and raped her and later killed her. Her naked body was found behind bushes with bleeding injuries. The Chirala police registered case No: 169/2024 U/s 302,376 IPC.

DEMOLITION OF YSRCP OFFICE

Building razed based on complaint by party leader: TDP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP's under-construction central party office at Tadepalli was demolished based on a complaint lodged by a TDP leader that it was being allegedly built illegally on Irrigation Department land, said the party on Saturday.

The complaint was lodged with the commissioners of the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) and Mangalagiri Tadepalli Municipal Corporation (MTMC) that the opposition party office was being built illegally on two acres of Irrigation Department land, a TDP release said. "Following this, the demolition of these illegal constructions of the YSRCP leaders has been launched under the supervision of the MTMC officials," it said.

According to the ruling party, former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had allotted that parcel of land in survey number 202/A1 in

Jagan Mohan Reddy has prepared a plan to occupy the neighbouring 15 acres by building the party office on these two acres. It is now clarified that the Irrigation Department has not given the clearance to hand over these two acres to the YSRCP.

Tadepalli, misusing his power.

Jagan Mohan Reddy has prepared a plan to occupy the neighbouring 15 acres by building the party office on these two acres. It is now clarified that the Irrigation Department has not given the clearance to hand over these two acres to the YSRCP," the release added.

Earlier in the day, the YSRCP chief said the Chandrababu Naidu-led NDA state government has demolished the under-construction central office of the opposition

party at Tadepalli in Guntur district.

Reddy alleged that the demolition was carried out disregarding High Court orders.

"Chandrababu took vendetta politics to the next level. Like a dictator, he got YSRCP's central office demolished with excavators and bulldozers, which was almost complete," said Reddy in a post on X.

According to a YSRCP statement, the demolition commenced around 5.30 am on Saturday.

"The demolition proceeded even though the YSRCP had approached the High Court the previous day (Friday), challenging the preliminary actions of the CRDA," said the statement.

YSRCP noted that the court had ordered a halt to any demolition activity, which was conveyed to the CRDA commissioner by a party lawyer, but the authority still went ahead and demolished the structure.



AP govt's first Cabinet meet tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The first Cabinet meeting of the new NDA government in Andhra Pradesh, headed by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, is scheduled for June 24.

The NDA government comprises TDP, BJP and Janasena. The Cabinet meeting is scheduled to commence at 10 am on Monday in the first block of the Secretariat, said an official release on Saturday, quoting Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad.

The Chief Secretary on Friday directed all the departments to submit their agenda for the Cabinet meeting. The 25-member strong Cabinet is a mix of 17 freshers and eight experienced ministers.

COURTESY CALL



Eluru district Superintendent of Police D Mary Prashanthi called on State Director General of Police (DGP), Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, on Saturday. She conveyed her best wishes by presenting him a flower bouquet.

Minor mishap in Jagan's convoy

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy narrowly escaped a mishap on Saturday while travelling to Pulivendula. His convoy was en route to Pulivendula after a warm welcome at Kadapa airport earlier in the day. Near Ramarajupalli village, a large crowd of locals surged towards Jagan's car.

The convoy's Innova car braked suddenly, causing a minor collision with a fire engine behind it. Although the car's trunk sustained some dents, no injuries were reported. The convoy resumed its journey towards Pulivendula without further incident.



Jagan Mohan Reddy has commenced a three-day visit to his home constituency of Pulivendula today. This visit marks his first since the Assembly election results were announced earlier this

month. During his stay, Jagan will meet with party leaders from the Kadapa district and other leaders from the Rayalaseema region to discuss and finalize the party's future strategies.

Rahul hails TG Govt decision on farm loan waiver

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi hailed the Telangana government for fulfilling the 'Kisan Nyay' pledge by deciding to waive farm loans.

In a post on X, he hailed the decision to waive farm loans up to Rs 2 lakh for over 40 lakh farming families, describing it as a historic move that will make these families debt-free.

"Congratulations to the farming families of Telangana. The Congress

government has taken a historic step by waiving all farm loans up to Rs 2 lakh, fulfilling our 'Kisan Nyay' commitment. Whatever we said, we did. The Congress government is a guarantee that the treasury will be used to help deprived groups like farmers and labourers. The decision of the Telangana government is an example of this. We promise that wherever the Congress is in power, we will spend India's wealth on 'Indians' and not on 'capitalists'," Rahul said in his post.



Lokesh directs officials to recover land encroached by YSRCP leaders

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

People from across the State are attending the Praja Darbar programme organised by Minister for Education, IT, and Electronics, Nara Lokesh, originally intended for the people of Mangalagiri. Attendees gather in the morning to directly present their issues to Lokesh. Due to the overwhelming response, MLAs of the ruling party are planning to hold similar programmes in their respective Assembly segments.

Lokesh, after giving a patient hearing to everyone, promptly forwarded the appeals made by the people to the concerned officials for necessary action. On Saturday, Lokesh received numerous appeals from people across the state regarding their lands being illegally and forcibly occupied by local YSRCP leaders when the party was in power.

Affected individuals personally explained to Lokesh how their lands were taken by local YSRCP leaders. Sambasiva Rao from Errabalem in Mangalagiri mandal informed Lokesh that his 16.5 cents of land were grabbed by Chavali Ullaiah and appealed to Lokesh to take steps to reclaim his land.

Kurava Mardiah, an elderly man from Loddipalli in Orvakallu mandal of Kurnool district, explained that the land, which is his family's main source of income.

Take steps to curb outbreak of dengue diarrhoea, officials told

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari District Collector Sumit Kumar has directed the officials to take precautionary steps to contain the outbreak of dengue and diarrhoea in the district.

Collector Sumit Kumar held a meeting with the officials of the RWs, MPDO, EOPRD and Panchayat Raj through video conference on Saturday and reviewed the steps being taken to curb the seasonal disease. Speaking on the occasion, the District Collector said that the OHSR tanks should be cleaned regularly once every 15 days and the Panchayat Secretary should hand over the certificate.

He also told the officials to monitor whether drinking water samples are tested in the relevant lab and instructed the officials to take steps to repair the OHSR tank staircase panels, adding that small animals like birds may fall into the tank.



The Collector said that the tank cleaning tablets are available for cleaning the tanks and Rs 20,000 should be given to the MPDOs for cleaning the tanks in the mandal. It is pointed out that chlorination with bleaching causes other problems.

"The MPDO, EV PRD and Panchayat Secretaries were directed to monitor sanitation every day. There is a lack of panchayat secretaries' supervision resulting in all roads looking like a garbage dumping yard in all villages, the

Collector expressed anger. The Panchayat Secretaries and EO PRD should identify the areas where garbage is accumulating and take steps to move it.

Collector Sumit Kumar said that if the leakages of drinking water pipes are not stopped, the drinking water would be contaminated leading to the outbreak of diarrhoea.

Steps should be taken to stop the leakages immediately, he ordered the officials and directed the MPDO to take immediate action in this regard as

the people of the suburbs are suffering from irrigation water shortage due to the pumping of water by motors in the Mogalthur area.

If there are leakages in the pipelines, there is a scope for water contamination and the leakages must be plugged immediately, the Collector instructed the officials. From July 1 to August 31 campaign programmes on diarrhoea control should be conducted and awareness among people about diarrhoea control should also be created, he told the officials.

Steps should also be taken to provide treatment if people suffer from diarrhoea. If diarrhoea cases are registered in the government hospital or private hospitals, the data should be examined and action should be taken immediately. DRO J Uday Bhaskar Rao and DRWS officer BV Nageswara Rao were among those who were present.

DC focuses on infra & healthcare facilities in Pedabayalu

PNS ■ PADERU

In response to a boycott of the 2024 elections by several villages in Pedabayalu mandal in the ASR district, Collector M Vijaya Suneetha has conducted a proactive approach to address critical infrastructural deficiencies and strengthen healthcare services. This comprehensive initiative aims to restore trust and improve living conditions in disenfranchised communities.

Villages within the Ginnelakota Panchayat area, including Tamalam, Gabbara Mamidi, Kurajangi, and Kanchurai, have long suffered from inadequate roadways. Following thorough inspections, Collector Suneetha has instructed the engineering department to draft proposals for new road construction. However, due process, including obtaining forest clearance, must be followed before work can commence, ensuring sustainable development practices.



During her inspections, Collector Suneetha visited the Pedabayalu primary health centre and uncovered significant deficiencies. As a result, a key official was promptly suspended for neglecting duties, poor recordkeeping, and indifference towards critical health issues such as potential malaria outbreaks. This decisive action underscores the Collector's commitment to upholding high standards in healthcare delivery.

At the Primary health care centre, further irregularities were identified, including a

pharmacist's failure to properly register received ORS packets. Collector Suneetha intervened immediately, emphasizing the importance of meticulous record-keeping and accountability in medical supply management. Highlighting the urgency for improved healthcare accessibility, an alarming incident occurred at the health centre where a pregnant woman in labour was attended to by a nurse instead of a qualified doctor. Expressing strong disapproval, Collector Suneetha issued a stern warning to all medical staff.

Govt, opposition face-off on protem Speaker issue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha, the NDA government and the INDIA bloc sparred on the issue of Pro-tem Speaker with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju accusing the Congress of resorting to lies and the opposition threatening to refuse to join the panel of chairpersons in the House.

President Droupadi Murmu had appointed BJP leader and seven-term member Bhartruhari Mahtab as the Pro-tem Speaker of the Lok Sabha, who is tasked with administering the oath and affirmation to the newly-elected members of the lower house and preside over the election of the Speaker.

The President had also named five senior members - K Suresh (Congress), T R Bалу (DMK), Radha Mohan Singh and Faggan Singh Kulaste (both BJP) and Sudip Bandyopadhyay (TMC) to assist Mahtab in the process that will take place over the first three days of the Lok Sabha Session commencing on June 24.

The Congress had alleged that the government has violated procedures and conven-



tions and ignored the right of eight-term member Suresh to the post of the pro-tem Speaker, a claim dismissed as "misleading" by Rijiju.

On Saturday, opposition sources said Suresh, Balu and Bandyopadhyay may not join the panel of chairpersons to assist pro-tem Speaker Mahtab in administering the oath to the newly elected members of the Lok Sabha.

Rijiju had asserted that Mahtab was the senior-most in the House as he was elected for seven uninterrupted terms to the Lok Sabha, while Suresh, though an eight-term member, was not a member in 1998 and 2004.

Suresh had said his claim to the post of pro-tem speaker

was overlooked as he belonged to the Dalit community, remarks that were scoffed at by Rijiju.

BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawala said the Congress had deliberately insulted a "tribal" Parliamentary Affairs Minister by lying on the issue of pro-tem speaker.

"Congress has always insulted Tribals. They called Droupadi Murmu ji Rashtrapati and they even abused her," Poonawala said.

Rijiju said he may be the first tribal to occupy the post of Parliamentary Affairs Minister but he won't be intimidated by the threats and lies of Congress party.

"I will be bound by rules and will strictly follow Prime

Minister Narendra Modi ji's mantra of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas," he said.

Earlier, Congress leader K C Venugopal had described the overlooking of Suresh's claim to the Pro-tem Speaker post as an attempt at "destroying parliamentary norms".

"I have said this before and say this now, the battle for saving our democracy and constitution isn't over yet," Shiv Sena leader Aditya Thackeray said in a post on X.

CPI general secretary D Raja said even after a serious reprimand by the people by cutting the BJP in size, they have not understood the seminal importance of democracy, consultation, parliamentary norms and opposition for the country.

"However, the totalitarian BJP cannot see an opposition member even as Speaker pro tem and thus appointed a turncoat BJP MP to the post," Raja said.

Mahtab, a BJP member from Cuttack, Odisha was appointed as pro tem Speaker by President Murmu under Article 95(1) of the Constitution to perform the duties of the Lok Sabha presiding officer till the election of the Speaker on June 26.

HOOCH TRAGEDY IN TN

GOVT RULES OUT CBI PROBE

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The Kallakurichi hooch tragedy, which has claimed 53 lives so far, echoed for the second consecutive day in the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Saturday with the main opposition party AIADMK staging a walkout over the matter.

The ruling DMK hit out at the AIADMK for attempting to do politics over the painful issue and dismissed the plea for CBI inquiry saying the government is transparent.

"The government is transparent, we have not hidden



anything, CBI inquiry is not needed," Law Minister S Regupathy said.

The AIADMK legislators, led by leader of opposition Edappadi K Palaniswami, sought adjournment of the question hour as soon as the

House convened and demanded that they be permitted to raise the Kallakurichi issue.

Speaker M Appavu said question hour cannot be adjourned and told them that they will be given the time they

wanted during zero hour to raise the matter. However, the AIADMK members persisted on their demand and later staged a walkout.

Speaking to reporters outside the House, Palaniswami said his party was denied permission to raise the Kallakurichi issue for the second consecutive day.

"We have information that out of the 183 treated persons 55 were dead; everyday the death toll is rising," he claimed and said several lives could have been saved had the government acted swiftly.

Delhi's maximum temperature settles at 39.4°C

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's maximum temperature on Saturday was recorded a notch above normal at 39.4 degrees Celsius, the India Meteorological Department said.

The minimum temperature had settled 0.6 notches above the season's average at 28.6 degrees Celsius, it added.

On Friday, rain drenched several parts of Delhi, bringing relief from the intense heat wave that had been sweeping the city.

Enforcing law against paper leak mere whitewash: Cong chief Kharge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday termed the enforcement of the anti-paper leak law a "whitewash" and asserted that the BJP cannot evade its responsibility in "promoting corruption and education mafia".

The Centre on Friday night operationalised the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, which aims to curb malpractices and irregularities in



competitive examinations and entails provisions for a maximum jail term of 10 years and a fine of up to Rs 1 crore for offenders.

In a post in Hindi on 'X',

the Congress president claimed that 70 question papers were leaked in the last seven years and sought to know why the BJP has taken no action so far.

"No matter how much effort BJP makes in the NEET scam, it cannot escape its responsibility in promoting fraud, corruption and education mafia," Kharge said. He said the law against paper leaks got the President's assent on February 13 this year but was notified only on Friday night.

UAPA tribunal confirms ban on Tehreek-e-Hurriyat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A tribunal set up under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) on Saturday confirmed the Centre's decision to impose a five-year ban on the Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (Masarat Alam faction) and Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, Jammu and Kashmir.

The one-member tribunal of Delhi High Court judge Sachin Datta was constituted under the stringent anti-terror law in January to assess whether there was "sufficient cause" behind the imposition of the ban.

Upholding the ban, the tribunal held the two organisations were carrying out secessionist activities in the valley with help from across the border to realise the merger of Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan and establish Islamic rule in the Union Territory. The tribunal also upheld the Centre's contention that the organisations were acting on behalf of Pakistan-based terrorist organisations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizbul Mujahideen, and were giving constant on ground support for carrying out militant operations in the valley.

RENUKASWAMY MURDER CASE Court remands actor Darshan in judicial custody till July 4

PNS ■ BENGALURU

A court here on Saturday remanded Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa to judicial custody in the Renukaswamy murder case till July 4.

His four alleged accomplices too were sent to judicial custody. The actor was in the police custody since June 11.

The Special Public Prosecutor prayed the court for a direction to lodge the accused persons separately and in different jails across

Karnataka, which was opposed by Darshan's lawyers.

Darshan and his aides were taken to the central prison at Parappana Agrahara in Bengaluru.

A huge number of his fans gathered at the court and raised slogans in favour of Darshan. The actor too waved at them from the caged police van.

Thirteen other accused, including the actor's friend Pavithra Gowda, were remanded to 14 days' judicial custody two days ago.



Quota row: Maharashtra CM vows to prevent caste tensions

PNS ■ NASHIK

The Maharashtra government will ensure that caste tension doesn't erupt in society, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said on Saturday against the backdrop of Marathas and OBCs firming up their stands on reservations.

Shinde thanked OBC activist Laxman Hake and others for withdrawing their indefinite fast following the government intervention.

"We will ensure there is no caste tension in the society," Shinde told reporters in Nashik.

Activists Hake and Navnath



Waghmare were observing fast since June 13 demanding that the OBC quota not be diluted. They called off their agitation on Saturday after a government delegation called on them. Shinde, who chaired a meeting of OBC leaders in Mumbai on Friday, said an all-party meeting will be convened in the first week of the monsoon session beginning June 27. "A good discussion was held on the issue yesterday," he added.

The government has decided to convene the meeting to discuss the issue of extending reservations to "sage-soyare" or the kin of Marathas who possess the Kunbi caste certificate, state minister Chhagan Bhujbal said.

In January, the state government came out with a draft notification to grant Kunbi status to the 'sage-soyare' (relatives by birth or marriage) of Marathas who have already established that they belong to the agrarian Kunbi community, an OBC group.

Special programme to fast-track immigration services

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday launched a special programme under which the immigration process for pre-verified Indian nationals and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders will be fast-tracked.

The Fast Track Immigration - Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP) is a "visionary initiative"

of the government, thoughtfully designed for Indian nationals and OCI cardholders, Shah said.

The FTI-TTP is similar to the Global Entry Program offered by the United States that allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travellers upon arrival at select US airports, officials said.

The home minister said the initiative will provide

more facilities for the Indian nationals and OCI passengers coming from other countries.

The launch of the programme is one of the key agendas set for "Viksit Bharat by 2027" and reflects the Narendra Modi government's commitment to enhance travel convenience and efficiency for everyone, he added.

Shah said the facility will be available free of cost for all passengers.

The FTI-TTP will be launched at 21 major airports in the country. In the first phase, along with the Delhi airport, it will be launched at seven major airports -- Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi and Ahmedabad.

It is designed for faster, smoother and safer immigration clearance for international travellers.



Fresh plea in SC seeks CBI, ED enquiry into NEET-UG exam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh plea has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking directions to the CBI and ED to investigate alleged irregularities in the medical entrance exam NEET-UG held on May 5.

The petition, filed by 10 students who had appeared for the exam, has also sought a direction to Bihar Police to expedite the investigation in the case and file a report before the apex court.

"The petitioners are fully aware of the ramifications of the cancellation of the examination but there is absolutely no other alternative." The NEET UG Examination of 2024 had many other irregularities, in particular, the gross negligence on the part of the authorities to make the question papers available to the candidates on time.

In some places, the wrong set of question papers was distributed and later recalled," the plea said.

'Defer implementation of new criminal laws'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Saturday demanded that the enforcement of the three criminal laws, which are to come into force from July 1, be deferred, saying the Bills were "bulldozed" through Parliament.

In a post on X, Ramesh said the implementation of the Bills be deferred to enable a thorough review and re-examination by a reconstituted Standing Committee on Home Affairs as they were passed at a time when 146 MPs had been



suspended. "On Dec 25 2023, the President of India had given her assent to the Bharatiya

Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, 2023. The three far-reaching Bills had been bulldozed through Parliament without proper debate and discussion, and at a time when 146 MPs had been suspended from the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha," Ramesh said.

"Earlier the Bills had been bulldozed through the Standing Committee on Home Affairs without detailed interactions with stakeholders across the country and com-

pletely ignoring the written and very detailed dissent notes of a number of MPs belonging to different political parties, including the Indian National Congress, who were members of the Standing Committee," he said.

Ramesh said the three new laws are to come into effect from July 1, 2024, and the Congress is of the firm opinion that the date should be deferred to enable a thorough review and re-examination of the laws by the reconstituted Standing Committee on Home Affairs.

Security measures tightened ahead of Amarnath Yatra

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

With the Amarnath Yatra set to begin in a week, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said security arrangements have been tightened and facilities improved for the successful conduct of the pilgrimage.

Jammu Additional Director General of Police Anand Jain has reviewed security arrangements along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, emphasising the need for the highest level of alertness to scuttle any attempt by terrorists to disrupt the pilgrimage, officials said on Saturday.

Taking part in the virtual 'Pratham Pujan' which marks the ceremonial commencement of the Amarnath Yatra - at the Raj Bhavan in Srinagar on Saturday morning, Sinha said 'darshan' for the pilgrims across the country will start on June 29 when the yatra commences.

"The (Shri Amarnath) Shrine Board and the J-K administration have made special arrangements for the pilgrims. In the last two years, the facilities for the yatis have improved a lot."

Sinha said the roads leading to the cave shrine have been upgraded and some stretches



have been widened by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) this year. "I think the yatis will be able to undertake a smoother pilgrimage this time," he told reporters at Raj

Bhavan after the puja. The LG said people from all religions have always supported the yatra.

"I appeal to the people of J-K, especially those in the areas

from where the yatra passes through, to keep alive the tradition of supporting the yatra and taking care of the pilgrims this year also. Peaceful and smooth pilgrimage helps create a good image of J-K across the world," he added.

The 52-day pilgrimage will begin from the two tracks -- the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgal route in Anantnag and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal -- on June 29, a day after the first batch of pilgrims will leave Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the valley.

Over 4.5 lakh pilgrims performed the pilgrimage last year and offered their prayers at the naturally formed ice-shivlingam inside the cave shrine. Later, at another function, Sinha launched various Swachh Bharat initiatives for the yatra. "Happy to launch various Swachh Bharat initiatives of Directorate of Rural Sanitation for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2024.

A new logo, Swachh Yatra Anthem, website and mobile application developed by the directorate will greatly benefit our objective of zero-waste pilgrimage," the LG said.

He said J-K is at the forefront of promoting sustainable tourism.

INDIA CORNER

Nepal nominates 8 new envoys, including for India



Nepal has nominated ambassadors for eight countries, including India, a little over two weeks after recalling the incumbents. According to the Cabinet sources, former chief secretary and Nepal's ambassador to the United Kingdom, Lokdarshan Regmi, has been nominated as the new Nepalese ambassador to India. Regmi has earlier held positions of Home Secretary, Finance Secretary and Secretary at the Ministry of Land Reform and Management. The decision was taken by Nepal's Cabinet on Friday. Earlier on June 6, the Nepal government had recalled ambassadors from 11 countries, including those serving in India and the US and appointed under the Nepali Congress' quota, three months after Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' terminated his alliance with the party and joined hands with former prime minister KP Sharma Oli. The development had come three months after the coalition was formed with the support of CPN-UML.

PETA gifts life-size mechanical elephant to Kerala temple



The non-profit organization People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India along with actor Adah Sharma on Saturday gifted a life-size mechanical elephant to Pournamikavu temple here. PETA said, in a statement, that the mechanical elephant, named Baladhasan, was donated to the temple in recognition of its decision to never own or hire live pachyderms for ceremonies and festivals. The mechanical elephant, the third one to be introduced in a Kerala temple, is around three meters tall and weighs around 800 kilograms, PETA said. Speaking on the occasion, Sharma said, "Technological progress allows us to preserve our deep cultural traditions and heritage while allowing elephants, who are endangered, to live with their families in the jungle. I am delighted to contribute this mechanical elephant with PETA India, enabling followers to participate in sacred rituals in a manner that is both safe for humans and respectful of animals." Pournamikavu Temple's Mukya Karyadarshi M S Bhuvanachandran welcomed the donation and is quoted as having said, "On this auspicious Pournami day, we are delighted to have mechanical elephant Baladhasan with us in honour of all the divine creatures who yearn to roam the earth free and secure with their loved ones."

Software engineer loses Rs 40 lakh in 'task fraud'



A 25-year-old software professional from Maharashtra's Thane district allegedly lost about Rs 40 lakh in a "task fraud", an official said on Saturday. The resident of the Kalyan area was cheated between June 6 and June 16, he said. The complainant told the police that two persons contacted him offering a part-time job that involved rating hotels and restaurants online. The man said he was initially paid some money for the "tasks" but was later coaxed into investing in schemes that promised "high" returns. In all, he shelled out Rs 40.4 lakh over ten days, the official said citing the FIR. The man realised he had been conned after he did not get any returns on his investments despite follow-ups. On his complaint, the Kolsewadi police on Thursday registered a case against two persons, including one identified as Avika Mishra, for cheating. A probe is underway to track down the alleged scammers, the official added.

India's PSUs engine of growth, development: Jitendra Singh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday said the country's public sector undertakings have lived up to the global benchmarks and they are the engine of its growth and development.

Addressing an event here, he said "India, today excels in most of the global benchmarks, in some areas it is at par with other big nations, whereas in other areas it is much ahead of them."

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, praised the public sector undertakings (PSUs) for their consistent contribution to the Indian economy and being the engines of growth and development.

The rise of the Indian economy has been possible due to

the contribution of the PSUs, he said.

The PSUs have lived up to the global benchmarks and standards, the minister said.

"It is due to their unparalleled efforts that India has risen in the global innovation index. Today, it is ranked 40 worldwide, ahead of many economies of comparable size, whereas it was at rank 81 in 2014," Singh was quoted as having said in a statement issued by the Personnel Ministry.

The reason why Indian PSUs have excelled in present times is because they have given up the hesitation to incorporate private players, he said, while attending the 1st "ET Government PSU awards" organised by the 'Economic Times'.



TAX DEVOLUTION, GST COMPENSATION ARREARS FM Sitharaman underlines Centre's support to states

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday underlined Centre's support to states through timely tax devolution and GST compensation arrears to stimulate growth.

At the pre-budget meeting with state finance ministers, Sitharaman also nudged states to take advantage of the scheme under which the Centre gives 50-year interest free loan to states for undertaking specified reforms.

In her remarks, the Union Finance Minister underlined the union government's support to states through timely tax devolution, Finance Commission grants, and arrears of GST Compensation being provided for providing stimulus to growth, an official



In her remarks, the Union Finance Minister underlined the union government's support to states through timely tax devolution, Finance Commission grants, and arrears of GST Compensation being provided for providing stimulus to growth, an official statement said.

requested the states to avail these loans by fulfilling requisite criteria.

Most states appreciated the centre's 'Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment' and gave some suggestions for further improvement. The participants also gave several valuable sug-

gestions to the Union Finance Minister for inclusion in the Union Budget for FY 2024-25, along with some State-specific requests, the statement added.

Rajasthan FM and Deputy CM Diya Kumari told reporters that the state has asked for a hike in allocation towards Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP), Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), certain national highways projects and railway lines.

Karnataka Finance Minister Krishna Byre Gowda sought releasing Rs 5,300 crore of already announced assistance for Upper Bhadra Water Project and declare it a national project. He also sought inclusion of cesses and surcharges into a divisible pool so that states get their rightful share in central taxes.

GRSE to construct four cargo ships for German firm

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Defence PSU Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd on Saturday signed an agreement with a Germany-based shipping company for the construction and delivery of four multi-purpose cargo vessels, an official said.

The contract is worth approximately USD 54 million and the order is to be executed in 33 months, GRSE informed the National Stock Exchange and BSE.

GRSE signed the agreement with shipping company Carsten Rehder Schiffsmakler und Reederei GmbH and Co. KG, Germany, for the construction and delivery of four multi-purpose vessels with an option of building another four ships in near future, the GRSE official said in a statement.

The vessels will be 120 metres long and 17 metres wide and can carry 7,500 metric tonnes of cargo each, the GRSE official said.

The vessels will have a single cargo hold each to accommodate bulk, general and project cargoes, with provision for carrying containers on hatch covers, he said, adding that the ships have been specifically designed to carry multiple large wind-mill blades on deck.

The agreement was signed here by Commodore Shantanu Bose, (retd), director (shipbuilding) for GRSE and Carsten Thomas Rehder, managing director for the German shipping company in the presence of Chairman and Managing Director of GRSE, Commodore P R Hari, (retd).

The Kolkata-based PSU warship maker has been actively pursuing exports in both maritime and commercial vessels and has built and delivered an offshore patrol vessel to Mauritius, a fast patrol vessel to Seychelles and a passenger-cum-cargo ocean-going ferry to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, the official said.



'Entrepreneurship presents viable path to economic rejuvenation'

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Entrepreneurship presents a viable path to economic rejuvenation and a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem can drive sustainable growth, leading cybersecurity major TAC Security founder Trishneet Arora has said.

Arora believes that fostering a culture of entrepreneurship can be the key to revitalizing Punjab's economy and addressing its financial woes and the path to Punjab's prosperity lies in collaboration between entrepreneurs and the government.

He envisions a synergistic relationship where the government provides the necessary infrastructure and policy support, while entrepreneurs drive innovation and growth.

This partnership can create a conducive environment for



businesses to thrive, ultimately benefiting the state's economy, he said.

"Technology and AI have the potential to revolutionize farming in Punjab by enhancing productivity, reducing costs, and ensuring sustainable agricultural practices," Arora said.

TAC Security is listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and has a market capitalization of Rs 800 crore.

The government, on its part,

must recognize the potential of entrepreneurship as a catalyst for change and work towards creating an environment that nurtures and supports business innovation, he said.

With a staggering debt of Rs 3.74 lakh crore, the state's financial health is in dire need of rejuvenation, he said.

Punjab's economy has traditionally been driven by agriculture. However, the need for diversification is more pressing than ever, he said.

"With precision farming techniques, real-time data analytics, and AI-driven crop management, farmers can optimize their resources, predict yields, and mitigate risks more effectively."

"Embracing these advancements will not only boost the agricultural output but also improve the livelihoods of our farmers."

Govt buys 71K tons of onion for buffer stock

Expects retail prices to ease with normal monsoon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has bought nearly 71,000 tonnes of onion so far this year for buffer stock, out of the total target of procuring 5 lakh tonnes for price stabilisation and it expects retail prices to ease with the progress of monsoon over most parts of the country.

According to data compiled by the department of consumer affairs, the all-India average onion retail prices stood at Rs 38.67 per kg on Friday, while the modal price was Rs 40 per kg.

Till June 20th, the Centre has procured 70,987 tonnes of onion, as against 74,071 tonnes procured in the same period last year, a senior official in the department of consumer affairs said.

"The pace of onion procurement for price stabilisation buffer this year is largely comparable with last year, despite about 20 per cent decline in estimated rabi production," the official said, adding that the government is on course to achieve tar-



getted procurement of 5 lakh tonnes for price stabilisation.

The government will exercise the option of holding or releasing onions from the buffer in order to maintain stability in prices of onion, the official said.

The procurement price is a dynamic one, linked to prevailing market prices.

The increase in prices of onion is on account of a shortfall in production in 2023-24 by about 20 per cent each in Kharif, late Kharif and Rabi, over the pre-

vious year due to less rains in major producing areas, the official explained.

To control prices, the government has been taking measures in a graded manner, from August last year starting with export duty of 40 per cent, followed by Minimum Export Price (MEP) of USD 800 per tonne in October, 2024 and imposition of export prohibition from December 8, 2023.

These measures have helped in maintaining domestic availability of onion at reasonably stable prices.

Export prohibition had been lifted from May 4, 2024 with MEP of USD 550 per tonne and 40 per cent export duty in view of substantial stability observed in major mandis like Lasalgaon, in Maharashtra and the prospect of good Kharif production on the back of above-normal monsoon prediction this year.

"The prolonged and extreme heatwave condition currently prevailing over large parts of the country has impacted

CNG price in Delhi, adjoining cities hiked by Re 1 per kg

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

CNG price in Delhi and adjoining cities was on Saturday hiked by Re 1 per kg following a drop in the supply of subsidised input natural gas.

Indraprastha Gas Ltd, the firm that retails CNG automobiles and piped cooking gas to households in Delhi and adjoining cities, announced the hike in rates on its website.

In New Delhi, CNG will now cost Rs 75.09 per kg, up from the previous rate of Rs 74.09. In Noida, Greater Noida, and Ghaziabad, the price has increased to Rs 79.70 per kg from Rs 78.70 per kg.

There, however, was no change in piped cooking gas prices.

IGL did not give reasons for the increase but sources said the hike was warranted

because the firm now has to buy more imported gas following a drop in domestic supplies.

Natural gas pumped out of the ground and seabed is turned into CNG for running automobiles. But supplies from ONGC's domestic fields have not kept pace with the CNG demand.

Gas from ONGC fields make up for 66-67 per cent of CNG demand of IGL. The rest has to be imported.

Domestic gas supplies are prioritized for piped cooking gas purposes and so there is no hike in that segment, sources said.

However, there has been no change in CNG prices in Gurugram, as it is serviced by a different company.

Other city gas retailers have so far not announced any change in prices.

MONEY MATTERS

Prestige Estates plans to raise up to Rs 5K cr



Reality firm Prestige Estates Projects Ltd plans to raise up to Rs 5,000 crore by selling shares to institutional investors and also monetise its hotel business.

According to a regulatory filing on Friday, the company's board approved 'raising of funds by way of issuance of equity shares or other eligible securities for an aggregate amount not

exceeding Rs 5,000 crore by way of qualified institutional placement (QIP) or other permissible mode.' The board also approved plans to 'monetise assets of the hospitality segment through its arm Prestige Hospitality Ventures Ltd, by way of issue of shares (through primary or secondary or both).' All these decisions are subject to approval of shareholders. For monetisation of hospitality assets, the board has formed a sub-committee to oversee and structure the process. "The committee is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring compliance with all regulatory requirements."

Durlax Top Surface IPO subscribed over 161 times



Solid surface manufacturer Durlax Top Surface's Rs 40.80 crore initial public offer has been oversubscribed nearly 161 times, the company said on Saturday.

According to the exchange data, the IPO received bids for around 87 crore shares against 60 lakh shares on offer for subscription, Durlax Top Surface said in a statement. Non-institutional

investor category received the highest interest among investors and was subscribed over 415 times. Bids for around 35.52 crore shares were received against 8.56 lakh shares on offer. Retail segment was subscribed over 202 times and the qualified investor segment was subscribed over 48 times, the company said. The company's shares will be listed on the NSE SME platform, Emerge, on June 26.

The company had fixed the price band at Rs 65-68 per share for the issue which was open for subscription from June 19-21, it added. The IPO comprises a fresh issue of 42 lakh shares worth up to Rs 28.56 crore and an offer for sale of 18 lakh shares worth up to Rs 12.24 crore. Out of the fresh issue of Rs 28.56 crore, the company plans to utilise Rs 17.50 crore to part finance working capital requirements and Rs 6 crore towards general corporate purposes. Promoters including Shrawan Suthar and Lalit Suthar hold around 95 per cent stake in the company while public shareholders hold nearly 5 per cent stake.

Scope of improvement in logistics for Maha growth



Logistics infrastructure and cost of power supply have scope of

improvement in Maharashtra for industrial growth, CII Vice President R Mukundan said on Saturday. Mukundan inaugurated the new office of CII Maharashtra Zone chaired by Sunil Kirdak. "Last-mile connectivity is important for every industry to run their business smoothly."

Improvement in logistics in terms of national and state highways should take place to keep investments coming. Where industry is less, we need more connectivity there," he told reporters. Efforts should be made to make the western region more competitive in terms of power supply and cost of power. There is a need to reduce the cost of power, he added. These two issues have been addressed well but there is a scope of improvement, Mukundan noted.

On prospects of exports, he said, "If we need to export from here, we have to increase the number of airports and port facilities also". CII western region deputy chairman Rishi Kumar Bagla said, some airlines have shown interest to run international flights from here. Work is also underway in the international convention centre here. Chikalthana and Shirdi airports are connecting the region to the South, North and West of the country. Talking about the local issues, Sunil Kirdak said, "We have met the police commissioner here and have put forth some issues. The police have acted on it and regular meetings are expected to happen."

'Will empower 65 L youth with employability skills'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Magic Bus, a non-profit organisation in the education and skilling space, aims to impart essential life and employability skills in over 65 lakh young people from marginalised communities over the next five years.

The NGO operates in 23 states and union territories and operates out of 117 livelihood centres, of which 17 are all-girl centres. It imparts essential life skills and employability skills in young people from underserved communities.

"Since 1999, Magic Bus has impacted 30 lakh adolescents, equipping them with life skills to achieve school, life, and work outcomes. We have empowered over 3.7 lakh youths with life and employability skills, connecting them to sustainable livelihood opportunities. Looking ahead, we aim to extend its impact by empowering over 65 lakh young people over the next five years," Magic Bus India Foundation founder Matthew Spacie told



"We have also aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP), our approach aims to bolster the government's efforts in delivering holistic education, empowering adolescents with higher-order thinking, analytical skills, and socio-emotional learning essential for success in the 21st century," he added. Magic Bus is also operating programmes in Bangladesh, Spacie said

Life skills education serves as a cornerstone for the holistic development of young people

and are essential for them to navigate life and work in an increasingly technology-driven world, he said.

Magic Bus India Foundation Global CEO Jayant Rastogi stated that the organisation conducts thorough assessments of the demand-supply gap before introducing new skills or phasing out obsolete ones.

"This process involves analysing the demand for specific skills in different geographical areas and evaluating the suitability of individuals to meet those demands. Before initiating any skilling programme, we ensure that there is a clear understanding of the market demand for the skills being imparted," he said.

Additionally, he said, the organisation also engages with potential employers during the programme to align its training with their hiring needs, which helps Magic Bus to tailor its skilling initiatives to the current job market requirements and maximise the employability of its participants.

The organisation targets

young people, 18 to 25 years, from marginalised communities, providing them with the necessary 21st-century skills to obtain grey-collar jobs in the formal sector in the service industry.

Rastogi further stated that Magic Bus has partnered with various state governments to expand the reach of life skills education.

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Magic Bus is also operating programmes in Bangladesh, Spacie said.

"Currently, our programmes are operational in Bangladesh, and we are mapping potential countries in South East Asia to understand their needs and take our programmes to newer geographies," he added

Establish skill development institutes for workforce enhancement: Gadkari

PNS ■ NAGPUR

Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, on Saturday urged industries to initiate skill development institutes to create a skilled and industry-ready workforce.

Addressing the CII-Industry Academia Conclave in Nagpur, Gadkari emphasised the need for collaboration between industry and academia to develop skilled manpower.

"Coordination between industry and academia is essential for the skill development of students and enhancing manpower," he stated.

Gadkari suggested that industries should progressively establish their own skill development centres, as well as engineering and polytechnic colleges, to provide both knowledge and practical experience, thereby making students more skillful.

He acknowledged the issue of skilled manpower shortage in industries while educated



"I am of the opinion that step by step, deemed industries should establish their own skill development centres, engineering and polytechnic colleges, which will impart knowledge as well practical experience making the students more skillful," he said

individuals remain unemployed, attributing this to a lack of coordination and communication between educational institutions and the industry.

"I am of the opinion that

step by step, deemed industries should establish their own skill development centres, engineering and polytechnic colleges, which will impart knowledge as well practical experience making the students more skillful," he said.

The Union minister further said every industry should train the manpower as per their requirements and appealed to the industry to collaborate with deemed and private universities for skill development.

Talking about industries in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, Gadkari informed that the Reliance-Dassault plant in Nagpur will export Rafale jets across the world within two years. Similarly, the Falcon business jet will be completely made at the Reliance-Dassault plant in Nagpur.

The Nagpur MP also pitched for the creation of wealth in agriculture and tribal belts for overall development

FEAST ON A CULINARY RAINBOW!

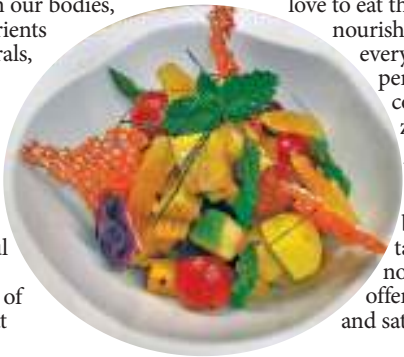
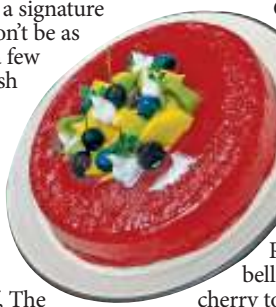


Admiring a rainbow in the sky is an awesome experience but savouring it on your plate is a sensory treat, writes SHARMILA CHAND

How to go about creating a rainbow? Pick and choose different colored fruits and vegetables, toss them together in a bowl, perk up with your favourite seasoning and place it in your plate. Maybe you can line it all up in the sequence of rainbow colours. Or else, enjoy all mixed. Now isn't your plate looking colourful and pretty? Well, it's not just for the visual appeal, but each colour plays its own role, lending a range of nutrients having immense health benefits.

Chef's Flair
Ask chefs how to create a rainbow and trust them, they will have a signature dish up their sleeves. It won't be as simple as just tossing up a few ingredients. Rather the dish will be exotic, colorful, flavoursome, nutritious and aesthetically presented. "Take a bite from Elan's Poke Bowl and enjoy a spectrum of flavours and health benefits," says Chef Vijay Thapliyal, Executive Chef, The Lodhi, New Delhi. He elaborates, "We use a variety of ingredients that are locally sourced to ensure the well-being of our guests while inculcating a sustainable future. Coloured vegetables play a significant role in our bodies, providing essential nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, and fibre. By incorporating these colourful ingredients, we broaden our spectrum of nutrients while ensuring our guests enjoy a visually appealing and delightful meal. Elan's Poke Bowl is one of our standout dishes that

embody the rainbow diet. It includes ingredients like edamame beans, silken tofu, red cabbage, pumpkin seeds, red rice, pink carrot ribbons, cucumber dices and sesame dressing, each ingredient lending its own property. Inspired by the Buddha Bowl, this dish has been a staple on our menu and is being served consistently. It's a vibrant, colourful dish that celebrates both colours and flavours, making it a complete meal in itself. The vibrant combination of colours and textures creates a delightful dining experience that tantalises the palate and captivates the visual senses."



Chef Ankur Gulati, Executive Chef, The Claridges, New Delhi loves his vibrant Thai Rainbow Salad. He says, "This delightful dish combines a medley of colourful fruits and vegetables, creating a visual feast and a nutritional powerhouse. Packed with fresh mangoes, bell peppers, purple cabbage, cherry tomatoes, and carrots, this salad offers a spectrum of flavours and health benefits. Rich in vitamins, antioxidants, and fibre, our Rainbow Salad is as good for your body as it is for your eyes. Perfect for those who love to eat the rainbow and nourish their body with every bite. It is perfectly complemented by a zesty Thai chili jam dressing, creating a harmonious blend of sweet, tangy, and spicy notes. Each bite offers a juicy, crisp, and satisfying crunch,



making this salad the perfect way to cool down and nourish your body during the hot summer months." Enjoy a taste of Thailand with every colorful and nutritious mouthful!
Rainbow Platters
The fact that Rainbow diet is not restricted to any one particular cuisine is evident in the traditional food of every region. If the Indian Thali symbolises a perfect Rainbow platter with different coloured veggies, chutneys, pickles, papads, the Sushi



Boats too exemplify the same. Hence, you dine at Harajuku Tokyo Café, and see how the concept is fully embraced using a diverse array of colourful ingredients. Chef Asami says, "Our Poke Bowls are complete meals that illustrate the concept beautifully. The Bowl consists of white sushi rice topped with a choice of protein, along with fresh, crunchy vegetables like carrots, cucumber, sweetcorn and cabbage. Drizzled with our special house-made sauces, the Bowl offers a



balanced mix of proteins, vitamins and minerals, making it both nutritious and delicious. He further adds, "Let us not forget our Rainbow Sushi and Sushi Boats which showcase a variety of vegetarian options and feature a spectrum of colourful ingredients. These include red bell peppers, carrots, cucumbers, avocados, and purple cabbage. Each ingredient is chosen not only for its taste and texture but also for its nutritional benefits, ensuring a well-rounded, healthful dining experience. By incorporating these colourful ingredients, we ensure that our dishes are not only appealing to the eye but also provide a wide array of essential nutrients, supporting overall health and well-being."
Joy In Colorful Bakery!
In bakery too, colours and colourful decorations on bakery products act like a visual language, creating a unique character evoking emotions and flavours. For example, at Taj Holiday Village Resort and Spa, Goa, Chef Subhankar Chitrakar's Giant Easter Egg, is such a delightful rainbow that adds warmth, colours and joy to the entire festivities. "It is my favourite and I love to design it patiently using royal icing. You have to let the chocolate egg

cool completely before decorating with icing. Let your imagination run to the moon and back while you deck it up." He adds, "Certain colours are naturally associated with specific emotions and flavours. For instance, red evokes excitement and is linked to flavours like strawberry or cherry. Pink is softer and suggests sweetness like raspberries or watermelon. I use these colour connotations to tell a story about the taste of the pastry before you even take a bite. Colourful sprinkles, chocolate drizzles, or candied fruit pieces can visually highlight the key ingredients in a pastry. This not only creates a unique look but also tells the guest exactly what flavours to expect."
An all-natural fruit jelly is a favourite of Yastendra Rawat, Executive Chef at Hyatt Regency Gurgaon. "It is very simple to make and highly nutritious; kids just love it. It requires very basic and limited ingredients such as cut fruits of your choice, gelatin, sugar, and water. If you want to be a little more adventurous, you can add a bit of your favorite fruit juice to the water and sugar mixture. To prepare it, cook the sugar, water, and gelatin together until a gel texture is achieved. Then, pour the mixture over the cut fruits of your choice and freeze. Once un-molded, it will give you a wholesome dessert that looks like a rainbow."
To Conclude
Go ahead, have a Rainbow Diet that promises to not only refresh and revitalize you during the hot summer months but also supports your health with a broad spectrum of nutrients.

(Author Intro: Sharmila Chand is an author and freelance journalist who writes on food, travel, art, design, wellness)

How Best To Spend 48 Hours In Tokyo

Glitz, Glamour, Neon lights secretly protect a soul that resonates profound Japanese traditions and heritage in Tokyo, discovers SHARMILA CHAND

Landing at the international Haneda Airport, I headed straight to Hotel The Peninsula Tokyo which I chose for its location -- right opposite The Imperial Palace and Hibiya Park in Marunouchi district; just a walk away from the famous Ginza, the shopping hub. The hotel's captivating vibes are an added attraction, a seamless blend of traditional Japanese charm and contemporary luxurious elements. From the charms of the centuries-old active volcano Mt Fuji, and the quaint village -- Oshino Hakka, to soaring edifices such as Tokyo Sky Tree, the capital city of Japan packs multiple surprises at every corner. It may not be on top list of travelers as heritage Kyoto but believe me, once you start exploring this city, you will be surprised at its vivacious character, unmatched by any other place in the world. There is an unbeatable synergy between rich Japanese culture and hyper modern metropolitan landscape in Tokyo.

So if you have only 48 hours in this delightful eclectic city, then let's cover it in such a way that you get to see both the East and West side; highlighting tourist trails as well as local hideouts to get a glimpse of real life. I call these my selection which will make an interesting potpourri to explore.
The Iconic Skytree
Start your morning with a visit to the iconic Skytree, the world's tallest freestanding tower, rising above the Azuma Bridge. A perfect venue that offers an unparalleled bird's-eye view of the city's vistas, particularly the red-roofed shrines dotted humbly among the huge skyscrapers.
Tsukiji Outer Market



Now sushi for breakfast may seem a bit unusual, but when in Tokyo, it is a done thing. Trust me, this is an experience worth giving a shot. The market is packed with top-notch sushi options, vegetarian and non-veg both. I thought it was the most exciting way to start my day of Tokyo exploration.
Akihabara for Tokyo Flavour
If not sushi then have a hearty breakfast of your choice and then start with Akihabara. It gives you the real peek into what Tokyo is associated with. In this kitschy district you will find skyscraping arcades, Manga stores, video game stores and a lot more. That's the much talked about
Spend An Hour In Shinjuku Gyoen
Tokyo's most spectacular gardens are in Shinjuku Gyoen. Tourist hotspot, much loved during cherry blossom season as it is home to over 400 cherry trees. You will get to see perhaps the most beautiful sight with baby pink petals all around. Accentuated with coy fish ponds, fruit trees, and exquisite flower beds. Take a

quick look at the Art Gallery here and then a cuppa of coffee at the pretty cafe.
Tokyo's Oldest Buddhist Temple
Senso-ji temple is the oldest Buddhist temple in Tokyo which showcases the rich culture of Japan's Edo Period. Undoubtedly this was my best sojourn. It enshrines a golden image of Kannon -- Buddhist Goddess of mercy. Legend has it that she was miraculously pulled out of the nearby Sumida-gawa by two fishermen in AD 628. The image has remained on the spot ever since but is never on public display. The main entrance to the temple complex is via pretty red Kaminari Mon and Busy shopping street Nakamise-dori. When you enter the gate, do not miss to see statues of Fjjin (the God of wind) and Raijin (the God of thunder), and a stunning carved dragon under the giant red lantern. At the end of Nakamise-dori is the temple itself. The 55m-high five storey Pagoda is a sight to behold. Walk to the eastern edge of the temple complex. Here you will see Asakusa

Jinja, a shrine built in honour of the brothers who discovered the Kannon statue that inspired the construction of Sens-ji. Immerse yourself in a vibrant atmosphere adorned with colorful hanging lanterns. Have a look at various temples and then walk towards Nakamise bustling market that offers a delightful array of traditional Japanese snacks and souvenirs. And yes, don't forget to make a wish at the famous Senso-ji Thunder Gate!
Day 2: 10.30 am Coffee at Shozo
It is always nice to discover special cute small places to have a coffee break. So after winding up breakfast at the hotel, it is a good idea to go to Aoyama district. You will find this area fascinating with plenty of shops and art galleries. My local friends had already told me - a pretty hideout, the Shozo Coffee Store should not be missed and I agree with them. A wooden hut done up with plants was my coffee corner where I had the best caramel latte with a delicious cheesecake. And that set my

mood right to start exploring.
The Grand Meiji-jing: History and Heritage
Tokyo's grandest Shint? shrine is dedicated to the Emperor Meiji and Empress Sh?ken. Their reign (1868-1912) coincided with Japan's transformation from an isolationist, feudal state to a modern nation. Constructed in 1920, the shrine was destroyed in WWII air raids and rebuilt in 1958. The main shrine is built of unpainted cypress wood with a copper-plated roof. It is in a wooded grove accessed via a long winding gravel path. The shrine occupies only a small fraction of the sprawling forested grounds, which contain some 120,000 trees collected from all over Japan. Of this, only the strolling garden Meiji-jing? Gyoen is accessible to the public. It is said that The Meiji emperor himself designed the iris garden here to please the empress and the garden is at its best when the irises bloom in June.
Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony
If you are not exhausted after lunch, I suggest attend a beautiful tea ceremony at Happo-en. Where on earth you will get to immerse in a real Zen garden in the heart of Tokyo? Happo-en is one of Tokyo's exclusive secrets. Off the touristy beat, hence tranquil, with hundred year old bonsai trees and Japanese carp and cherry trees swimming in a pond. Attend the serene tea ceremony, a lifetime experience, you will not forget.
A Bowl of Ramen Is Quintessential
Ramen and Tokyo go together. A bowl of Ramen is absolutely essential. Stop by at any Ramen joint, as you will find them after every 50 m. There's no shortage of delicious, steaming hot bowls

of rich broth, mounds of noodles and toppings of your choice to be found throughout the city.
Visit Golden Gai in the evening
One evening go to Golden Gai and see the spectacle. Narrow alleys will take you to the buzz of bars, karaoke joints, and sizzling yakitori spots. Have a bite at Omoide Yokocho. It's an uber-narrow strip lined on both sides with hole-in-the-wall yakitori joints. I kept looking at bandana-clad chefs flipping skewers by the dozen over fiery charcoal. That day I was totally immersed in the environs, looking nonstop at the locals, without blinking an eye and also ate like them, shoulder to shoulder. Amidst the heavy smoke and aroma of the grilled food, I was in a bustling and lively world.
Learn Origami Craft
The Happy Origami Crafting Lesson teaches participants how to create intricate figures from traditional washi paper. Beginners can join, no prior experience with origami is required. With this one-of-a-kind experience, you'll be able to learn the ancient Japanese art of origami with the help of an experienced paper folding pro. Seal Your Memories and Bid Farewell To Tokyo
Immersing myself in the traditional Japanese culture, exploring the capitals unique character of effortlessly blending tradition and technology, admiring pagodas comfortable next to neon signs, experiencing authentic 'Forest Bathing', my 48 hours were like a fairytale dream!

(Sharmila Chand is an author and independent journalist who writes on Travel and Food)



Dakshin Yatra Flavours of South

Edesia, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla and Viva, Holiday Inn Aerocity, are delighted to announce an exclusive South Indian food festival, Dakshin Yatra Flavours of South, from June 22 to June 30, 2024. Guests are invited to embark on a culinary journey through the rich and diverse cuisines of South India, with dining experiences available every evening from 7 PM to 11 PM at both locations. Dakshin Yatra promises an authentic and immersive experience with a menu specially curated by the esteemed Chef Reghunath, who will be traveling from Kochi to share his expertise and passion for authentic South Indian cuisine. The festival will feature famous dishes such as Chettinad Chicken, Kerala Prawn & Mango Curry, Dindigul Biryani, Thalassery Biryani, Bisi Bele Bath, Malabar Parotta, and many more. The Dakshin Yatra festival is an opportunity for our guests to experience the rich and diverse flavors of South India right here in New Delhi, says Mr. Shuvenud Banerjee, General Manager at Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla. "We are thrilled to bring this unique experience to our guests, with Chef Reghunath's exceptional expertise



adding an authentic touch to every dish, says Mr Amit Rana, General Manager at Holiday Inn New Delhi International Airport. Complementing the food, the festival will offer a selection of unique cocktails and mocktails that capture the essence of South India, including Madras Magic, Kerala Coconut Cooler, Andhra Mango Mojito, Udipi Uplifter, Ambuli Juice, Neer Majjige, Panakam, Panna, and Nimbu Pani. The ambience at Edesia and Viva will transport guests to the vibrant and culturally rich regions of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. Both restaurants will be adorned with traditional decor, colourful displays, and installations representing the distinct art and culture of these southern states. A dedicated vendor will enhance the dining experience by transforming the space into a visual celebration of South India's heritage.

the pioneer agenda

"That's my gift. I let that negativity roll off me like water off a duck's back. If it's not positive, I didn't hear it. If you can overcome that, fights are easy"
- George Foreman



Water is a driving force and fuel for all nature. India's water crisis is increasing day by day, especially in metropolitan cities. To address this problem is the urgent need of the hour, say **DR KAUSHAL KANT MISHRA** and **DR VINAY PATHAK**

SCARY SCARCITY OF LIFE'S DRIVING FORCE

Water is the key resource for sustaining life on Earth. It permeates every aspect of our existence, from the biological processes that occur within our bodies to the agricultural systems that produce our food or source of energy. The critical nature of water is further underscored by its finite availability and the essential roles it plays in maintaining ecosystems, supporting economic activities, and ensuring human health and well-being.

As global populations continue to rise and climate change intensifies, the pressure on our water resources is mounting, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable management and conservation practices. The significance of water cannot be overstated; it is the lifeblood of our planet, making the stewardship of this precious resource a paramount concern for all.

Securing water resources is paramount because, unlike energy, there are no alternative sources for water. It is an imperative that transcends environmental and geopolitical boundaries. We are often guided by the same motivations and methodologies in water related matters like we do for energy. However, unlike energy, which could benefit from a diverse array of alternative sources, water remains singular in its indispensability and irreplaceability. Energy sources can be substituted, green sources for fossil fuel, solar for coal, nuclear power for thermal power and so on. The situation is quite different when it comes to water.

The total volume of water present on planet earth is constant. If we discount the amount of water contained in meteors, water does not come to this planet in any significant form. Our exorbitant exploitation of this natural reserve is making water ratio available for human diminish alarmingly.

Alternative energy resources like wind energy, solar energy, have become quite reliable alternatives to the traditional fossil fuels. These alternative energy sources do provide pollution free and sustainable means for the planet's energy needs. We can use ethanol for petrol or mixture of both and it still works.

In contrast, water has no such alternatives. These renewable sources are diverse and abundant, enabling a flexible and resilient energy supply system. There is no renewable or alternative water that can replace the freshwater required for drinking, sanitation, agriculture, and industrial processes. This stark difference underscores the critical nature of water and the imperative to manage it wisely.

While advancements in technology have enabled us to harness the power



DR VINAY PATHAK



DR KAUSHAL KANT MISHRA

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SECURING WATER RESOURCES IS PARAMOUNT BECAUSE, UNLIKE ENERGY, THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVE SOURCES FOR WATER. IT IS AN IMPERATIVE THAT TRANSCENDS ENVIRONMENTAL AND GEOPOLITICAL BOUNDARIES. WE ARE OFTEN GUIDED BY THE SAME MOTIVATIONS AND METHODOLOGIES IN WATER RELATED MATTERS LIKE WE DO FOR ENERGY”



of the sun and wind, the same cannot be said for creating new sources of water. Thus, the focus must be on conserving and efficiently managing the water we have, ensuring its availability for future generations.

The absence of viable substitutes for water underscores the urgency of safeguarding our existing supplies through comprehensive, integrated approach encompassing the demand side and also the supply sides of the equation. Ensuring water security involves not only protecting the quality and quantity of freshwater sources but also includes improvements and in the water supply, transmission, sanitation infrastructure to withstand the impacts of climate change and population growth. This requires coordinated efforts at all levels of governance to commit and deploy far reaching policy reforms, technological innovations, and community engagement.

The stakes are high, as the failure to secure water resources could lead to severe social, economic, and environmental consequences. Let's convince ourselves and decide to call water not as water resource but water reserves.

According to a US geological survey the total water reserves on this planet is 1.36 billion kms. Out of this only 2.5 per cent is freshwater and out of that 0.3 per cent is liquid while the rest is frozen in glaciers and poles. Scarcity of water is actually scarcity of access to water reserves, which is pervasive. As per UN estimates around two billion people suffer from some form of water stress. This number is only going to increase in near future.

In the Middle East and North Africa, the annual per capita water availability is less than 500 cubic meters, far below the threshold for water access. Similarly, in Sub-Saharan Africa, recurrent droughts exacerbate the already limited access to safe drinking water, affecting both rural and urban populations.

The world's most populous countries, India and China face significant challenges due to the over-extraction of groundwater depletion and water reserve contamination. In Chennai, the situation turned dire in 2019 when the city's reservoirs dried up, leading to a severe drought. This crisis was exacerbated by delayed monsoons and overdependence on groundwater, prompting emergency measures like water tankers and rationing. Bengaluru's crisis this year in April needs no reminder.

The local impacts of water reserve access are profound and varied, affecting communities in different ways depending on their geographic, economic, and social contexts. In regions like California in the United States, prolonged droughts have led to severe water restrictions, affecting agricultural productivity and leading to economic losses.

In India, the state of Maharashtra has experienced recurrent droughts, leading to crop failures and driving rural-to-urban migration as farmers seek alternative livelihoods. These local impacts highlight the interconnectedness of water scarcity with other critical issues such as food security, economic stability, and social cohesion.

Overuse and mismanagement of water reserves are primary drivers of water scarcity. In agriculture, inefficient irrigation practices lead to significant water wastage. For example, traditional flood irrigation methods can lose up to 50 per cent of water to evaporation and runoff. Transitioning to more efficient methods, such as drip irrigation, can substantially reduce water use while maintaining crop yields. In industry, water is often used in large quantities for processes such as cooling, cleaning, and manufacturing. Without proper recycling and reuse strategies, this water is discharged as waste, contributing to the depletion of local water reserve sources. Household mismanagement also plays a role, with excessive water use for

activities such as lawn watering, car washing, and inefficient fixtures leading to unnecessary wastage. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that includes technological innovation, regulatory measures, and public awareness campaigns to promote more sustainable water use practices across all sectors.

Climate change has a profound impact on global water cycles, exacerbating water reserve access scarcity and contributing to the depletion of freshwater reserves. Rising temperatures lead to increased evaporation rates, reducing the availability of surface water in lakes, rivers, and reservoirs. There may be increased rainfall and flooding which sometime increases the chances of contamination of water supplies and infrastructure damage. The variability and unpredictability of climate change's effects on water availability necessitate adaptive management strategies that can respond to these changing conditions. This includes enhancing water storage infrastructure, improving water use efficiency, and developing robust monitoring and forecasting systems to better manage water resources in a changing climate.

In many developing countries, inadequate sanitation infrastructure exacerbates the problem, leading to widespread contamination of drinking water reserves. Addressing water pollution requires stringent regulatory measures to control industrial emissions, promote sustainable agricultural practices, and improve waste management systems. Further, increasing the expenditure in water treatment methods may help mitigate the problem. Public awareness and education campaigns are also crucial in promoting responsible behaviour and reducing pollution at the reserve source. The health and well-being of communities depend on the availability of clean and safe water, making the

prevention and mitigation of water reserve pollution which is a critical component of water reserve management.

Thus, the call to action is clear: we must prioritize water reserves as a central pillar of sustainable development. Efficient water reserves management is key to tackling the problem. We have to ensure sustainable use of water resources. In agriculture, the adoption of advanced irrigation techniques, such as drip-irrigation and sprinkler based systems, can significantly reduce water use while maintaining or even improving crop yields. These new and innovative technologies deliver water directly to the plant roots and reducing the overall need for water.

In the industrial sector, recycled water supply in-plant reuse policy may substantially decrease water consumption. By treating and reusing wastewater within industrial processes, companies can reduce their reliance on freshwater sources and lower their environmental impact. Household water-saving technologies, such as low-flow fixtures, dual-flush toilets, and rainwater harvesting systems, can also contribute to significant water savings.

Encouraging the widespread adoption of these technologies requires supportive policies, financial incentives, and public awareness campaigns. By implementing efficient water management practices across all sectors, we can reduce water wastage, enhance water security, and promote sustainable development. All individuals, industries, and governments need to act collectively and urgently to protect and manage our water reserves. The right time to get together and respond to the call for action is right now. The water we save today is the water we generate for tomorrow.

DR KAUSHAL KANT Mishra is Delhi-based senior orthopaedic surgeon
DR VINAY PATHAK is Assistant Professor, IIT-Sonepat

A BEACON OF SANATANA DHARMA IN THE MODERN WORLD

PRIYANKA ANAND'S transition from corporate success to spiritual leadership exemplifies her profound commitment to preserving and promoting India's ancient wisdom.

Inspired by her Guru, Om Swami, she now leads the Vedic Sadhana Foundation, making Sanatana Dharma accessible to the modern world says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

In a world where ancient traditions often struggle to find their place amidst modernity, Priyanka Anand stands as a shining beacon of Sanatana Dharma, illuminating the path for countless seekers. Her journey from a successful corporate career to leading the Vedic Sadhana Foundation is a witness to the power of spiritual transformation and the enduring relevance of India's ancient wisdom. Priyanka's life story is one of dedication, faith and a profound commitment to preserving and promoting the timeless teachings of Sanatana Dharma, especially among the younger generation. From a young age, Priyanka was driven by a quest for deeper answers to life's fundamental questions. This quest took a significant turn when she met her Guru, Om Swami, whose selfless service to humanity and profound vision inspired her to find a new direction. One of the major reasons for her transition was the disconnection she observed between the youth and their Vedic heritage, a disconnection she experienced personally and saw in her own daughter. Guided by her Guru, Priyanka felt a compelling urge to share this transformative experience with others, particularly children, to ensure they appreciate and embrace their cultural heritage. Despite stepping away from her corporate career, Priyanka continues to grip her corporate experience in her current role. The Vedic Sadhana Foundation operates with the dynamism of a startup, driven by a mission to serve and make a lasting impact. Rather than focusing on shareholder value, the foundation is dedicated to sharing the wealth of Dharma with future generations. This approach ensures that the rich heritage of Sanatana Dharma is

not only preserved but also revitalised in a way that resonates with today's youth. Priyanka's decision to transition from the corporate world was influenced by several pivotal moments. Under her Guru's guidance, her interest in exploring the depths of Dharma grew. The powerful teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures offered profound answers and insights into life. A particularly significant experience was when her daughter, attending a Catholic school, expressed a desire to become a disciple of Jesus at the age of seven. This moment highlighted the disconnection from their own cultural heritage. Priyanka began sharing stories from the Puranas with her daughter and practicing more rituals at home. These experiences deepened her love for Bhagawan and solidified her path. In times of despair, her Guru was her pillar of strength, much like Krishna to Draupadi, leading her to share this journey with others. At the Vedic Sadhana Foundation, Priyanka strives to make ancient teachings relatable to the younger generation by meeting them where they are online. The foundation has developed the world's first app for Mantra Sadhana, empowering youth globally through the practice of meditation and mantra chanting. The Sadhana App, used by 90,000 people globally, 75% of whom are youth, makes these practices accessible. Additionally, the foundation holds free Sadhana events across India, allowing youth to collectively embrace and understand the meaning behind these practices. Engaging directly with their curiosity, the foundation answers thousands of queries on their helpdesk, showcasing the beauty and richness of Dharma, which encourages personal exploration and empowers youth to lead better lives.



Incorporating Sanatana Dharma into educational systems is essential for preserving this rich heritage. Key scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita and the Mahabharata can be integrated into the curriculum, teaching them as history rather than mythology. Mindful practices like prayer, meditation and contemplation can profoundly impact students,

encouraging them to reflect on higher questions of life. Well-trained teachers who understand Sanatana Dharma can inspire students with its values and virtues. Celebrating traditional festivals, rituals and practices creates a vibrant cultural environment, helping students connect with their heritage. Technology, like the Sadhana App, can also be

incorporated into the curriculum, providing students with practical tools for spiritual growth and self-discovery. The impact of the Vedic Sadhana Foundation's work is evident in stories like Priya's, who found solace and purpose through the Sadhana App. Struggling with severe mental health issues, Priya discovered the app and started with simple mantra chanting. The practices brought her a profound sense of calm and clarity, transforming her life. Inspired to learn more about Sanatana Dharma, Priya found a renewed sense of purpose and a stronger spiritual foundation. Her story is a powerful testament to the foundation's life-changing impact. One major challenge in promoting Sanatana Dharma is the reluctance to discuss religion openly. The foundation addresses this by leading by example, proudly celebrating heritage and showcasing its transformative power. Modern-day disengagement from traditional practices due to time constraints and lack of access to authentic information is another challenge. The Sadhana App, created by Om Swami, makes these practices accessible to all, demonstrating their profound impact. Priyanka's vision for the Vedic Sadhana Foundation is to become a global beacon for Sanatana Dharma, making ancient Indian wisdom accessible and transformative for people worldwide. The foundation plans to establish a stronger presence, inspire the younger generation and collaborate with patrons to ensure a lasting legacy. Upcoming initiatives include the Sadhana Tablet, a dedicated device for performing Sadhana, and the Astro Sadhana App, which integrates astrology with spiritual practices. Programs for children will help them connect with their spiritual roots from an early age.

With a global audience, the foundation plans to expand its reach to digital platforms and establish a strategic physical presence. Relocating to the USA, Priyanka aims to bring ancient Indian wisdom to the forefront, mirroring historical efforts of saints who spread this knowledge globally. By making digital offerings more accessible and organising on-ground events, the foundation hopes to inspire pride in heritage and embrace Sanatana Dharma worldwide. Priyanka's personal journey and spiritual practice under the mentorship of Om Swami have profoundly influenced her leadership and the foundation's direction. Rediscovering the transformative power of Sanatana Dharma, she integrates these ancient practices into modern life, driving the foundation's mission to reconnect individuals with their spiritual roots and promoting mental and emotional well-being through ancient practices. In a world increasingly disconnected from its roots, Priyanka Anand and the Vedic Sadhana Foundation stand as powerful advocates for the preservation and promotion of Sanatana Dharma. Through innovative use of technology, educational initiatives and a profound commitment to spiritual growth, they are ensuring that the timeless wisdom of ancient India continues to thrive and inspire future generations. Priyanka's journey from a corporate leader to a spiritual guide is not just a personal transformation but a beacon of hope for all seeking deeper meaning and connection in their lives. Her work is a reminder that, with dedication and vision, it is possible to bridge the gap between the ancient and the modern, creating a harmonious path forward for all.

An Immersive Journey Through Indigenous Australian Culture

"Walking Through a Songline" is a mesmerising digital installation that merges the ancient wisdom of Indigenous Australian Songlines with cutting-edge technology. Presented by the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and the Australian High Commission, this immersive experience, crafted by the National Museum of Australia and Mosster Studio, takes visitors on a profound journey through the rich tapestry of Aboriginal culture, offering a unique blend of storytelling, art and innovation says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Songlines, pathways of knowledge that map the routes of Ancestral creator beings. These Songlines are not just historical artifacts; they are living, breathing elements of cultural identity, imbued with values and practices that have been preserved through generations. The installation also features a series of short films, each offering a unique glimpse into different aspects of Indigenous Australian culture. Films like 'Footprints' and 'Bulun Milkari' explore themes of cultural preservation and storytelling, highlighting the vital role that these narratives play in the survival and continuation of Aboriginal traditions. These films add a rich, personal dimension to the exhibition, allowing visitors to connect with the individual stories and experiences of the First Nations people. As you move through the installation, the seamless blend of visual art and storytelling creates a tapestry that is both beautiful and profound. The projections, combined with a beautiful soundtrack, create an atmosphere that is both meditative and expressive. The voices of traditional custodians and knowledge holders resonate throughout the space, adding depth and authenticity to the experience. The collaboration between the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and the Australian High Commission is a testament to the power of cross-cultural exchange. By bringing this installation to a wider audience, they not only celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Australia's First Nations people but also uphold a greater appreciation for the diversity and depth of Indigenous cultures worldwide. 'Walking Through a Songline' is more than an exhibition; it is an immersive journey that invites you to step into the heart of Aboriginal culture. It is a celebration of life, resilience and the timeless power of storytelling. As you leave the exhibition, the stories stay a reminder of the deep connections that bind us to the land and to each other. This installation is exploring the profound and enduring narratives that continue to shape our world.

Stepping into 'Walking Through a Songline' feels like crossing the threshold into another world, one where ancient stories and modern technology converge in a harmonious dance. It feels surreal as it presents an impressive vision of a 'Perfect World'. It feels like a soulful journey, offering a quiet, therapeutic way that allows the mind to wander into its own world. The collaboration between the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and the Australian High Commission brings forth a groundbreaking digital installation, 'Walking Through a Songline'. Produced by the National Museum of Australia and Mosster Studio, this captivating experience promises to be a cultural journey like no other transforms the abstract into the creating an environment that is both surreal and profoundly real. The installation, produced by the National Museum of Australia and Mosster Studio, centers around the captivating story of Naji, which originates from the Dreaming or Bugarrigarre time. This narrative is a cornerstone of Aboriginal culture, detailing how spirit beings traversed a barren land, bringing life and water in their wake. As you walk through the space, these stories unfold through a series of stunning projections, enveloping you in a world that feels both timeless and immediate. One of the most compelling aspects of this installation is its ability to evoke a sense of peace and introspection. The quiet,

therapeutic atmosphere invites visitors to lose themselves in the journey, much like the spirit beings did as they traversed the land. Each projection is a doorway into a different facet of the story, each detail meticulously crafted to draw you deeper into the narrative. Visitors are taken on a journey through mesmerising projections that portray Songlines in an artistic and astonishing way. This immersive experience blends ancient knowledge with new technology, allowing visitors to sit quietly in front of each short film and feeling transported to another world. The calm and therapeutic nature of the installation resonates with everyone present. The tale of the Seven Sisters, a highlight of the exhibition, is presented with a blend of awe and reverence. Known as Kungkarangkalpa, the story follows the sisters as they are pursued across the desert landscape by Wati Nyiru. The narrative is brought to life through vibrant paintings by First Nations artists, which are projected onto the walls, creating a dynamic and immersive visual experience. The transformation of the sisters into stars is depicted with a poignancy that speaks to the universal themes of resilience and transformation. 'Walking Through a Songline' does more than tell a story; it creates an experience that bridges the ancient and the modern. The use of cutting-edge digital technology allows for a multi-sensory journey through the

SWAY INTO SUMMER SERENITY DISCOVER THE SHEER SPLENDOR OF CHIFFON SAREES

As the balmy breeze of summer is here, it's time to drape yourself in elegance and embrace the season's ethereal charm. We're thrilled to unveil our latest collection, curated especially for the enchanting summer weddings and soirées that await. Crafted with meticulous attention to detail and an unwavering commitment to sophistication, our Summer Chiffon Saree Collection captures the essence of grace and allure. Each saree is a masterpiece, designed to adorn you with effortless glamour and timeless beauty. Light as a Whisper, Radiant as the Sun - Chiffon, renowned for its delicate texture and airy feel, takes center stage in our collection. Impossibly light and luxuriously soft, chiffon drapes like a dream, ensuring you glide through the summer festivities with unparalleled grace. A Kaleidoscope of Hues and Patterns - From the soft pastel tones reminiscent of a summer sunrise to the vibrant hues that mirror the blossoming flowers, our collection boasts a kaleidoscope of colors to suit every mood and occasion. Whether you prefer subtle sophistication or eye-catching exuberance, you'll find the perfect saree to express your unique style. Intricate Embellishments and Timeless Embroidery - Each saree in our collection is adorned with exquisite embellishments and timeless embroidery, adding a touch of opulence to every ensemble. From delicate floral motifs to intricate threadwork, every detail is meticulously crafted to elevate your look and leave a lasting impression. Effortless Elegance, Unmatched Comfort - Designed with the modern woman in mind, our chiffon sarees marry elegance with



comfort. With their lightweight fabric and fluid drape, they allow you to move with ease and confidence, ensuring you stay effortlessly chic from dawn till dusk. A Timeless Investment - More than just garments, our chiffon sarees are a timeless investment in your wardrobe. Versatile and enduringly chic, they transcend fleeting trends, becoming cherished heirlooms that you'll treasure for years to come. Drape Yourself in Summer Splendor - As you prepare to step into the enchanting world of summer weddings and events, let our Summer Chiffon Saree Collection be your guide.

Immerse yourself in the sheer elegance of chiffon, and let each saree become a canvas upon which you paint your own summer story. Let this summer be your most stylish yet, as you enchant and captivate in the timeless beauty of chiffon sarees from Atelier Shikaarbagh

About Atelier Shikaarbagh

Atelier Shikaarbagh is not just a brand, but a celebration of heritage and style. With a legacy inspired by fashion icons Rani Urmila Rajey of Dholpur and Rajmata Gayatri Devi of Jaipur, the brand encapsulates the essence of timeless elegance and grace. The brand is now led by the visionary Founder & Head Designer Maayankraj Singh, Atelier Shikaarbagh is a sanctuary of sartorial splendor, where each creation is a masterpiece in its own right. From resplendent sarees adorned with intricate embroidery to bespoke wedding poshaks that exude regal charm, every creation is meticulously crafted to perfection. The essence of each garment is steeped in heritage craft and design narratives that have stood the test of time. The expression molds itself to the vision and desires of a proud traditional patron, finding their personal signature in a rapidly evolving local, regional and international fashion and styling arena. Their designs have been worn by some of the most prominent personalities, including the esteemed Mrs. Kokilaben Ambani, Mrs. Nita Ambani, Mrs. Smriti Z Irani, Princess Sarvath al-Hassan, Mrs. Sharmila Tagore, Mrs. Hema Malini, Mrs. Kareena Kapoor Khan, Ms. Jahnvi Kapoor, and members of Indian and International royal families. Let me know if you require any more information.

CHANDU CHAMPION Kartik Aaryan's Breakthrough Performance Sets the Bar High

"Chandu Champion," directed by Kabir Khan and produced by Sajid Nadiadwala under Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, is an enthralling biographical sports drama that tells the inspiring story of Murlikant Petkar, India's first Paralympics gold medalist

Kartik Aryan stars in the lead role, capturing the essence of a dream that perseveres against all odds and ultimately becomes a reality. The film follows Murlikant Petkar's life, from his challenging childhood to overcoming personal trauma and societal ridicule. Known as 'Chandu,' Petkar's journey is marked by resilience, perseverance and an indomitable spirit that defies the label of 'loser' and aims for Olympic glory. This movie introduces the world to Murlikant Petkar, a hero whose name and achievements were unknown to many, beautifully depicting his journey and making sure everyone knows about the hero who fought for our country and made us proud.

Kartik Aryan delivers an exceptional performance in "Chandu Champion," showcasing his versatility and dedication to the craft. His portrayal of Murlikant Petkar is deeply moving, capturing the essence of the character's struggles and triumphs with authenticity. Aryan's physical transformation for the role is truly inspirational, highlighting his commitment to portraying the character authentically. His performance is an exemplification of his talent and serves as a powerful anchor for the film. Aryan's dedication to the role shines through, making it one of his standout performances. Vijay Raaz, portraying Tiger Ali, provides a perfect balance to the film with

his nuanced performance. The on-screen chemistry between Aryan and Raaz adds a compelling dynamic, enriching the narrative with authenticity and depth. Kabir Khan's direction is skillful and sensitive, capturing the essence of Petkar's life journey. The screenplay is meticulously crafted, combining moments of joy, emotion and pride. Unlike typical sports biographies, "Chandu Champion" combines heartfelt storytelling with engaging entertainment. Sudeep Chatterjee's cinematography is visually stunning, capturing the highs and lows of Petkar's journey with breathtaking visuals. While the first half of the film is engaging and well-paced, the

second half slows down slightly. However, the gripping storyline and stellar performances keep the audience invested in Chandu's journey. "Chandu Champion" is a joyful, emotional and pride-filled depiction of a real-life hero's extraordinary journey. Kartik Aryan's powerful performance, alongside Vijay Raaz's excellent support, makes this film a must-watch. Despite the slower pace in the second half, the film's heartfelt narrative and inspirational message make it a memorable cinematic experience. "Chandu Champion" celebrates the human spirit and the relentless pursuit of dreams, reminding us that no dream is too big to achieve. Rating: 4/5

Millions baking across US as heat prolongs misery with little relief



Relentless heat wave continued to bake most of the United States on Friday, with numerous areas expected to see record-breaking temperatures and forecasters warning there would likely be little relief through the weekend for most areas.

The steamiest conditions on Friday were expected in parts of Ohio and Indiana, where heat indexes were likely to soar past 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 degrees Celsius) and remain there most of the day. But the Midwest was not the only area being baked, as heat and excessive heat warnings and advisories has been issued across the northeast, the mid-Atlantic and in some western states.

Millions of residents across the country have had their lives disrupted by days of unusually high temperatures. In Michigan, utility crews from several states were working feverishly Friday to restore power to thousands of suburban Detroit customers, two days after severe storms knocked out their power, leaving residents suffering amid a heat wave expected to linger through Saturday.

About 14,000 homes and businesses remained without power late Friday morning in Oakland County, a suburban area north of

Detroit, following Wednesday night's storms that cut power to about 75,000 homes and businesses at its peak, said Brian Calka, DTE Energy's vice president of distribution operations. Between 500 and 600 crew members from utilities in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois were working with about 1,000 DTE Energy utility workers and another 1,000 tree-trimming contractors to get the power back on amid the heat. Calka said the utility's goal is to get the power back on for all of those 14,000 customers by late Friday.

Utility crews were working 16-hour shifts to get the power back on and they are being urged to deal with the heat by taking more breaks to rest and more water breaks because they are wearing jeans, long-sleeved shirts, rubber gloves and hardhats for their work, Calka said.

"They are working in very, very tough conditions," he said.

Among the Michigan residents feeling the heat is Jody DeRusha, whose home in the village of Beverly Hills about 10 miles (16 km) north of Detroit lost power Wednesday night and was also struck by part of a maple tree toppled by high winds in that night's severe thunderstorm. She has lost everything in her

"We've lost our power before and in the freezer if you don't open it you'd have about 48 hours, but in this heat, no. In 24 hours the refrigerator was done. Trash day is Monday so I'll empty it out then."

"Especially in areas that don't have a high population density, we're going to need help," Walz said. "There's resources there. The rebuilding will happen."

refrigerator, including a large amount of frozen beef and some halibut and fresh walleye.

"We've lost our power before and in the freezer if you don't open it you'd have about 48 hours, but in this heat, no. In 24 hours the refrigerator was done. Trash day is Monday so I'll empty it out then," DeRusha said Friday.

She and her daughter are armed with flashlights and they have been sleeping in their home's basement, which she said is 10 to 15 degrees cooler than the home, which is stuffy and hovering at about 80 F (26.7 C).

DeRusha, a contract logistics worker for a car transportation company, said she's been spending time in her car to savour its air conditioning while also recharging her cellphone.

This month's sizzling day-time temperatures were 35 times more likely and 2.5 degrees F hotter (1.4 degrees C) because of the warming from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas — in other words, human-caused climate change. That is according to World Weather Attribution, a collection of scientists that run rapid and non-peer reviewed climate attribution studies.

The excessive heat wasn't the only weather-related issue in some states. Several small-town tourist meccas in northern Minnesota continued to be inundated by floodwaters after a deluge of rain earlier this week, prompting the closure of major roads and leaving a costly trail of damage.

On Friday, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz travelled to St. Louis County, where people in one town paddled through flood-ridden streets in small boats and local officials estimated the floods had caused at least \$50 million in damage and prompted the closure of more than 40 roads. At a news conference in Biwabik, Walz said he expected a presidential disaster declaration might be imminent, but the damage hadn't yet reached the necessary threshold. Walz encouraged people to keep track of damage, which could help the state secure federal assistance.

"Especially in areas that don't have a high population density, we're going to need help," Walz said. "There's resources there. The

rebuilding will happen."

In southwestern Minnesota, the state department of transportation also closed a portion of eastbound Interstate 90 that was swamped by floodwaters.



President Joe Biden's simple act of sitting down while commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France, gained more attention than the ceremony itself in some circles as social media users shared a shortened version of the clip to falsely claim he was reaching for a nonexistent chair.

The clip was the first of at least three out-of-context or trimmed videos shared widely over less than two weeks in June to fuel a narrative that Biden is mentally and physically unfit for office.

It's long been standard practice in politics to spin real moments to make an opponent look bad. Yet the recent spate of misleading videos — which amassed millions of views and were picked up by

Right-leaning outlets around the world — shows how the reach of social media and real concerns about Biden's age have made the tactic especially powerful in 2024.

Experts say voters can expect to see both Republicans and Democrats weaponizing unflattering, out-of-context moments to label each other's presidential campaign.

Northwestern University who studies media, public opinion and public policy in democracy and elections.

At the G7 summit in Italy, where Biden headed after Normandy, a clip of the president watching a skydiving demonstration was cropped to make it appear as though he wandered off for no reason. A wider view of the video shows he was greeting paratroopers who had just landed. And at a Los Angeles fundraiser last weekend, a pause by Biden as he left the stage amid cheers was used to say the president froze, while Biden's campaign said he was only stopping to take in the applause. The clips have been especially effective at activating concerns about Biden's competency, according to Nisbet, because he is the oldest sitting president the U.S. has ever had, and he moves with more difficulty than he once did. Dr. Kevin

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre in a press briefing called the videos "cheap fakes," a term for videos edited using cheap video editing software rather than artificial intelligence. Trump's campaign has doubled down on the clips and circulated a meme that defined a "cheap fake" as "any unedited video of Joe Biden's cognitive decline that the Biden administration does not want the public to see."

Experts say these attacks can be iterative, with social media influencers and campaigns piling on one another.

"The attention economy within conservative media helps perpetuate these cycles of circulation and these sorts of misinformation and campaign messaging," said A.J. Bauer, an assistant professor at the University of Alabama who studies conservative news. For example, the Republican National Committee posted a cropped version of the video of Biden at the G7 summit in Italy shortly after it happened, captioning the post, "What is Biden doing?" The RNC's post was then shared by right-leaning media outlets — among them, Sinclair Broadcast Group syndicated stations and the New York Post, which embedded the RNC's post in its story.

Seeing is believing? Not necessarily when it comes to video clips of Biden and Trump

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What the 3.2 million-year-old Lucy fossil reveals about nudity and shame

Fifty years ago, scientists discovered a nearly complete fossilized skull and hundreds of pieces of bone of a 3.2-million-year-old female specimen of the genus Australopithecus afarensis, often described as "the mother of us all." During a celebration following her discovery, she was named "Lucy," after the Beatles song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds."

Though Lucy has solved some evolutionary riddles, her appearance remains an ancestral secret. Popular renderings dress her in thick, reddish-brown fur, with her face, hands, feet and breasts peeking out of denser thickets. This hairy picture of Lucy, it turns out, might be wrong.

Technological advancements in genetic analysis suggest that Lucy may have been naked, or at least much more thinly veiled.

According to the coevolutionary tale of humans and their lice, our immediate ancestors lost most of their body fur 3 to 4 million years ago and did not don clothing until 83,000 to 170,000 years ago.

That means that for over 2.5 million years, early humans and their ancestors were simply naked. As a philosopher, I'm interested in how modern culture influences representations of the past. And the way Lucy has been



depicted in newspapers, textbooks and museums may reveal more about us than it says about her.

FROM NUILITY TO SHAME

The loss of body hair in early humans was likely influenced by a combination of factors, including thermoregulation, delayed physiological development, attracting sexual partners and warding off parasites.

Environmental, social and cultural factors may have encouraged the eventual adoption of clothing. Both areas of research — of when and why hominins shed their body hair and when and why they eventually got dressed — emphasize the sheer size of the brain, which takes years to nurture and requires a dispropo-

Managing gestational diabetes in the earlier stages of pregnancy could help prevent complications and improve delivery outcomes, according to researchers.

Among the most common pregnancy complication around the world, gestational diabetes cases are on the rise and becoming more complex because of increasing obesity, said the authors of a new series published in The Lancet journal.

The international team of researchers, including those from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, said that the condition affects one in about seven pregnancies globally and is typically tested for and treated late into the second or third trimester.

If left untreated, gestational diabetes can lead to high blood pressure, increased risk of caesarean sections, mental health conditions, and complications for the baby at delivery, they said. The authors added that the pregnancy-related condition could also increase the chances of the mother developing health complications later in life, such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Evidence suggests that the reasons for developing gestational diabetes can exist prior to pregnancy and that metabolic changes, such as those in glucose and blood pressure, can be

'Managing gestational diabetes in early stages could prevent complications'



detected in early pregnancy (before 14 weeks), according to the authors.

Therefore, they have called for urgently bringing in strategies, including testing and diagnosing earlier, to prevent and manage gestational diabetes. This could reduce pregnancy and delivery complications, along with lowering the risk of women developing other health con-

ditions later in life, they said.

"(Gestational diabetes) is a tremendous public health challenge. Women who experience it need support from the medical community, policymakers, and society as a whole to ensure they can effectively access proper treatment, reduce the stigma associated with (the condition), and improve their overall pregnancy experience," said series author Dr. Yashdeep Gupta of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

The authors found that 30-70 per cent of women having gestational diabetes experience high blood glucose from early stages of their pregnancy — 20 weeks or sooner. These women were also found to have worse outcomes, compared to those developing the condition in later stages of their pregnancy.

In studies where gestational diabetes was not managed effectively, the authors found these women to be at higher risks of premature delivery (51 per cent), birthing of bigger babies (57 per cent) and caesarean delivery (16 per cent).

Further, women with gestational diabetes were found to be at a 10-fold higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life compared to those not experiencing the pregnancy-related condition, and could possibly be accompanied by hypertension, fatty liver and an increased risk of heart disease.

Chimps found to 'seek out' plants to heal injuries, infections: Study

Chimpanzees sought out and ate medicinal plants to treat their injuries, according to a study.

While wild chimpanzees are known to consume a variety of plant matter, researchers said it can be hard to figure out if they intentionally seek out medicinal plants to heal their ailments, or "passively" consume plants that happen to be medicinal.

The study is published in the journal PLoS ONE.

At the Budongo Central Forest Reserve in Uganda, the researchers, including those at the University of Oxford, UK, observed the behaviours and health of 51 wild chimpanzees, belonging to two habituated communities.

The researchers observed a male chimpanzee with an injured hand seek out and eat the leaves of a fern, which may have helped to reduce pain and swelling. They also recorded another chimpanzee with a parasitic infection consuming the



bark of a cat-thorn tree (*Scutia myrtina*). The team also tested the plant extracts of tree and herb species in the reserve, which they suspected were being consumed by the chimpanzees to self-medicate, for anti-inflammatory and antibiotic prop-

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erties. The species included plants not part of the chimpanzees' normal diet, but being consumed for their healing properties.

The authors found 88 per cent of the plant extracts had antibacterial properties, arresting the growth of bacteria, while 33 per cent of them had anti-inflammatory properties.

Deadwood from a tree in the Dogbane family (*Alstonia boonei*) showed the strongest antibacterial activity and also had anti-inflammatory properties, suggesting it

could be used to treat wounds, they said.

Bark and resin from the East African mahogany tree (*Khaya anthotheca*) and leaves from a fern (*Christella parasitica*) were found to exhibit potent anti-inflammatory effects.

The results suggested that chimpanzees looked for and ate specific plants for their medicinal effects, and the study was one of the first to document evidence of this kind, the authors said.

The medicinal plants growing in Budongo Central Forest Reserve could also be helpful for the development of new drugs to address the challenges of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and chronic inflammatory diseases, the authors said.

The findings demonstrated how watching and learning from our primate cousins may fast-track the discovery of novel medicines, along with emphasising the importance of protecting our forest pharmacies, they said.



Water emergency halts tourist arrivals at Italy's popular Capri island

A water emergency prompted the mayor of Capri — one of Italy's most popular islands — to order a halt to the arrival of tourists on Saturday, in a crisis that has deprived some areas of any water supply.

Without a water supply, it is impossible to guarantee essential services to "thousands of people" who travel to the island daily during the tourist season, Mayor Paolo Falco said. "The health and hygiene situation is explosive, we have taken our countermeasures and activated the crisis unit and issued a restrictive order," the mayor's order said.

The emergency was caused by a failure in the mainland's water system that provides vital supplies to the world-known island.

At the moment water is still supplied to most of the island, but some isolated areas of the upper municipality of Anacapri are already dry. Only local reservoirs supply the network, which in the absence of supplies from the mainland risks being run out.

Meanwhile, tanks are expected to reach the island to support essential services, pending the restoration of full supply.

The Mayor's order was notified shortly after 0900 a.m. causing an immediate stop to ticket sales.