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QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The pioneer
 I changed the name of TRS to BRS as I wanted to expand nationally. I started in Maharashtra. Some work was done in Odisha and Chhattisgarh too. Unfortunately, we lost the elections in Telangana. I think regional parties must not remain constrained and should try to expand if they can
 BRS chief KCR

DON'T MISS...

Warden's circular turns a bone of...

Osmania University's hostel Chief Warden's circular has become a bone of contention between the Congress and the BRS. Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said, "Goebbel seems to be born again if you see K Chandrashekar Rao on Monday in Suryapet and Mahbubnagar. KCR is trying his best to spread wrong information about Osmania University. Even in May 2023, when KCR was the chief minister, the university chief warden issued a similar notice regarding the closure of hostels and messes for a month in connection..

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Healthy lifestyle could counter...

Adopting a healthy lifestyle could counter the effects of life-shortening genes by more than 60 per cent, according to new research published in the British Medical Journal Evidence-Based Medicine. Researchers found four factors to make up the most favourable lifestyle combination -- not smoking, regular physical activity, adequate nightly sleep, and a healthy diet. The team, including researchers from Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China, found that while genes and lifestyle...

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Aluminum industry requires additional...

The Indian aluminium industry would require an additional capital expenditure of nearly Rs 2.2 lakh crore (USD 29 billion) to achieve net-zero carbon emission, according to a new study. The study by independent think-tank Council on Energy, Environment, and Water (CEEW) said renewable energy power sources could abate 49 per cent of the total emissions from the industry. However, fully switching to renewable energy is not feasible right now because it is not always available. So a backup plan is needed...

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Voter awareness programmes..

'I Vote for Sure' campaigns are being conducted on a grand scale under the guidance of District Election Officer Ronald Rose, large-scale outreach programmes are underway throughout the district to raise voter awareness. Ronald Rose said, these initiatives include field-level sweep programmes aimed at creating awareness among voters along with programmes being conducted in all Assembly segments, where Self Help Group (SHG) members engage with urban women's federations, TLF, and SLF.

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No place for quota based on religion in Constitution: Modi

◆ Nation ashamed of Telangana's 'RR Tax', says PM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that discussions are going on in Telangana about 'RR Tax' and that all businessmen and contractors are paying 'RR Tax'. The nation felt proud seeing RRR cinema but the nation is ashamed of the RR Tax imposed in Telangana, he said.

Modi said that the Congress is paying tax to its high command in Delhi by collecting RR Tax from industrialists in Telangana. The Congress is looting Telangana like the BRS, he said.

There is a need to ensure the victory of BJP candidates to end the corruption of the Congress government, Modi said.

He said that the Congress would tax hereditary assets if it came to power at the Centre. The Congress is planning to grab 55 per cent of the assets earned by parents through hard work, Modi said. People should be careful about this, Modi cautioned.

The Congress said that the BRS engaged in huge corruption in using the Kaleshwaram Project. However, the Congress is protecting the BRS after coming to power. The BRS and

- Cong deceived farmers saying that it will waive farm loans up to Rs 2 lakh
- The Congress said that the BRS engaged in huge corruption in using the Kaleshwaram Project. However, the Congress is protecting the BRS after coming to power.



Modi said that the Congress is paying tax to its high command in Delhi by collecting RR Tax from industrialists in Telangana. The Congress is looting Telangana like the BRS, he said.

The Congress are the same when it comes to corruption, Modi said.

Addressing a public meeting at Alladurgam in Medak district on Tuesday, the PM said that the Congress always speaks lies and engages in vote bank politics.

The Congress deceived farmers by assuring them that it would waive loans up to Rs 2 lakh within 100 days of taking over. The Congress also failed to fulfil its assurance to give Rs 500 as a bonus for every quintal of grains produced by farmers. The Congress is trying to keep the poor permanently poor, he said.

The PM said that there are many restrictions on celebrating festivals in Hyderabad. The Congress government is troubling others to gain the votes of one group. The Congress is looting Telangana like the BRS, the PM added. Modi said that the construction of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya was a 500-year-old dream of Indians.

Continued on Page 2



Won't allow KCR into INDIA, says Revanth

◆ KCR will join hands with BJP after LS polls: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that BRS chief K. Chandrasekar Rao will join hands with the BJP after the LS elections, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that they will not allow KCR into INDIA under any circumstance.

Addressing Jana Jatar public meetings at Regonda and Huzurabad on Tuesday, the CM said that casting even a single vote for the BRS is a waste. He ridiculed KCR stating that KCR's 'car' has gone to Kharakhana and it will be sold as scrap by weight.

Revanth said that Prime Minister Modi blocked the construction of the Outer Ring Road and airport in Warangal.

"Modi is trying to file cases against me. The BJP is conspiring to abolish quotas for SCs, STs and OBCs and that is why the BJP is seeking 400 seats. It seems Union Home Minister Amit Shah has been captured by KCR and so he sent the Delhi Police to Gandhi Bhavan. They ordered the police to arrest me. We will see whether Gujarat domination will run or Telangana manhood (paurusham) will run. I will not be afraid even if they send the BSE. The elections are a battle between Gujarat domination and Telangana manhood (paurusham)," he said.

The CM said that the BJP and the BRS are one as they have entered into a secret pact. He said that KCR is trying to spread lies among the public.

KCR asks Modi to initiate inquiry on CM over 'R-Tax'



BRS chief KCR addressing public at Kothagudem on Tuesday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Chief KCR reacting to PM Modi's statement on RR Tax said, "if you both are not together, immediately order an inquiry on the Chief Minister. Bring in ED, IT. Whenever theft is happening, catch them. But Narendra Modi is not capable of doing this. They are doing drama publicly, but they both are definitely together"

On 7th day of his Bus Yatra at Kothagudem, he spoke on district reorganisation and said that Kothagudem district will be removed by Congress government. "We made Kothagudem district to make governance accessible to the people of remote villages in the agency areas. Congress government wants to abolish this district."

2

'All regional parties must try to expand nationally'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS President K. Chandrasekar Rao said that he wanted to expand his party nationally and that all regional parties should try to do so if they can.

"I changed the name of TRS to BRS as I wanted to expand nationally. I started in Maharashtra. Some work was done in Odisha and Chhattisgarh. Unfortunately, we lost the elections in Telangana. I think regional parties should not remain constrained and should try to expand if they can," KCR said.

He predicted that a third-front government would be formed at the Centre after the Lok Sabha

Girls outperform boys with 93.23% in SSC public exam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Compared to the previous year, the pass percentage of Class X students of Telangana has increased by 4.71 per cent this year, as the overall pass percentage stood at 91.31 per cent, whereas last year it was 86.60 per cent in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Class X results that were released on Tuesday by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT).

The number of students who appeared for the exam was 5,05,813



out of whom 4,91,862 students cleared the exam. Telangana girls have outperformed boys with a high-

er pass percentage of 93.23 compared to boys at 89.42 per cent. As many as 3,927 schools secured 100 per cent pass percentage, while six schools recorded a zero percentage result.

Nirmal district secured the highest pass percentage of 99.05 per cent in Secondary School Certificate (SSC). Meanwhile, Vikarabad district scored the lowest pass percentage with 65.10 per cent.

Moreover, about 23 districts fared better than the State's overall pass percentage which is 91.31 per cent.

Continued on Page 2



Dr Tamilisai is BJP in-charge in Sec'bad

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan will be the BJP in-charge in Secunderabad Parliament Constituency where Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy is contesting as the BJP candidate.

2

PHONE TAPPING

Accused forced individuals to buy electoral bonds for a party

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The investigation into the phone tapping case has exposed that the accused in the case reportedly threatened private individuals to purchase the electoral bonds of a particular political party. The Nampally court heard arguments in the case on Tuesday.

The police submitted details regarding the electoral bonds based

on data submitted by the SBI at the Nampally court on Tuesday.

It was found that while the MCC was in force for the TG Assembly elections held in 2023 and before that the accused in the phone tapping case and others reportedly threatened businessmen and others to buy electoral bonds of a particular political party.

Sources said the police examined 13 witnesses and it is reported that

they are all public servants. During the investigation, the police allegedly found that the accused did their duties in a politically biased manner.

The police said in their remand report that the accused seized the then opposition party leaders' money during election time. However, the police have not traced the seized money and the political party.

2

Ten naxalites killed in Chhattisgarh encounter

PNS ■ NARAYANAPUR/RAIPUR

Ten Naxalites including three women were killed in an encounter with security forces on the border of Narayanapur and Kanker districts of Chhattisgarh on Tuesday morning, police said.

This was a second major blow to the Naxalites within 15 days. The site of Tuesday's encounter was 30 km south of Kalper village in Kanker where 29 Naxalites were killed in a gunfight with security forces on April 16, said a senior police official.

Deputy Chief Minister and home minister Vijay Sharma termed the latest operation as a major success while also appealing the Naxalites to come



forward for talks and give up the path of violence. The encounter took place around 6 am in the forest between Tekmeta and Kakur villages in Abhujmad area, a Naxalite stronghold.

2

Public bear heat to attend campaign for Rs300-500

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana is sizzling at 46 degrees Celsius but the public is bearing the scorching heat and attending the campaigns of political parties for Rs 300 to Rs 500.

Men and women covering their heads with white scarves, towels and sarees are attending meetings. Telangana is reeling under an intense heat wave. In Hyderabad and surrounding areas, Rs 500 is reportedly being paid to people to come to rallies. However, in districts, it is just Rs 200 to Rs 300 per event. Water and sometimes buttermilk are being supplied.

Vamsi, who attended a nomination rally in the district, said that they were paid Rs 300.

"Some are giving water, but it would have been better if they had given caps. They are saying that it



will be completed by 12 noon, but it is getting late. Sometimes the meetings end only at 2 pm," he said.

A BJP leader said, "The countdown is nearing and we need to organise rallies and public meet-

ings. We can't campaign door to door. We are providing caps to our karyakartas and also carry buttermilk and water. Our morning campaigns end by 10 am or 11 am and again starts after 4 pm or 5 pm and

it goes on till 10 pm as per rules." Parties are intensifying their social media campaign too due to the scorching heat.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has been campaigning throughout the day. KCR starts his bus Yatra at 4 pm and winds up by 9:30 pm.

The TSDPS said that until May 3 there is a high probability of heat wave in Mancheril, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Kamareddy, Jagtial, Rajanna Sircilla, Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Jayashankar, Mulugu, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Medak, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and Jogulamba Gadwal districts.

Maximum temperatures are expected to range from 41 to 45 degrees Celsius while minimum temperatures will range from 25 to 28 degrees Celsius.



State BJP leaders must not mortgage TG to Gujarat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that he had criticised him instead of praising him as he has been implementing schemes in Telangana which did not exist in Gujarat.

Addressing a roadshow at Saroornagar on Tuesday, Revanth said that Modi came to Telangana and brought only a donkey's egg. "Modi, will you give a donkey's egg to Telangana and golden egg to Gujarat," he asked.

He said that Indiramma Rajyam will be there in Telangana in the next four and a half years. The Congress government will solve the problems of Hyderabad. Modi is only a guest. He comes to Telangana only to eat, the CM said.



He appealed to Telangana BJP leaders that they should not 'mortgage' Telangana to Gujarat leaders.

He said he will solve NTR Nagar patta issue. Ensure the victory of Ranjith Reddy with a margin of one lakh votes, he said.

Revanth said that problems were not solved even though KCR and Modi ruled in Telangana and at the Centre for 10 years.

He said that Modi abol-

ished many firms in Telangana. The Centre didn't care when asked about the new metro rail in Hyderabad.

"Modi didn't give a single paisa for Musi cleaning. He didn't agree to give national project tag for the Palamuru-Rangareddy Project. The BJP is conspiring to abolish SC, ST, BC reservations. Modi sent the Delhi Police to Hyderabad as I spoke on reservations. People buried KCR in December. The game is not yet over. We won the semi-final. Telangana and Gujarat teams are fighting in the final. Rahul is the captain of Telangana and Modi and Amit Shah are the captains of the Gujarat team. The youth of TG should ensure the victory of the Telangana team. Modi sent the police thinking that the BJP won't get seats in Telangana," Revanth said.

BRS may join Cong-led INDIA, if latter forms govt at Centre

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

BRS president and former chief minister K Chandrababoo Naidu's statement at Khammam led to new debate in the political circles. As part of election campaign, the former chief minister who participated in a road show in Khammam, said that the BRS will win 12 Lok Sabha seats and Khammam BRS candidate and sitting MP Nama Nageswar Rao will become a union minister in the coalition government which is going to be formed at the Centre after Lok Sabha elections. KCR also said that the BJP will not win more than 200 seats across the country.

At present at the national level in the Lok Sabha elections the main fight is between the BJP-led NDA and the Congress-led INDIA bloc.

But the BRS is maintaining equidistance to the BJP and the Congress at the national level. In the present political circumstances, after the Lok Sabha elections, there will be a chance for the BJP-led NDA or the Congress-led INDIA to form the government at the Centre. If BRS MP Nama Nageswar Rao retains his seat and becomes the union minister, the BRS has to join the NDA or INDIA. When the BRS is maintaining equidistance to the BJP and the Congress, in which alliance it will join is the point.

We hit terrorists in their homes, says PM Modi

'DON'T SEND DOSSIERS ON THEM'

PNS ■ LATUR/SOLAPUR/DHARASHIV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted his government has adopted a bold new approach on national security and believes in hitting terrorists by entering their homes instead of sending dossiers on them which was the practice under the Congress rule.

Addressing three election rallies on the trot for the second consecutive day in Maharashtra, the BJP's star campaigner once again targeted NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar, and accused the Congress-led opposition of circulating artificial intelligence-powered fake videos on social



media in its fight against the saffron party.

He noted the BJP-led government's approach on tackling terror has seen a sea change to what was followed during the Congress regime.

Unlike the practice during the Congress rule of sending dossiers to Pakistan after the 2008 Mumbai attacks, the BJP-led government takes terrorists

head on, Modi emphasised.

"During the Congress regime, the news headlines were about India handing over another dossier to Pakistan about terror activities. It used to be big news. Some of our friends in the media used to clap after any such dossier was sent," the PM said at an election rally in central Maharashtra's Latur.

"Today, India doesn't send dossiers. 'Aaj Bharat ghar mein ghus ke marta hai' (Today, India enters homes of terrorists and hits them hard)," Modi said. The BJP stalwart highlighted anti-terror operations undertaken by his government after assuming office in 2014 and added this approach marks the rise of a 'New Bharat'.

Delhi court dismisses bail pleas of Sisodia



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Tuesday dismissed the bail pleas of former deputy chief minister and AAP leader Manish Sisodia in the corruption and money laundering cases lodged by the CBI and the ED in relation to the alleged excise scam.

Special judge for CBI and ED, Kaveri Baweja, denied the relief, saying the stage was not right to grant the bail.

The court had reserved the order after hearing arguments from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) as well as the counsel appearing for Sisodia.

The CBI as well as the ED had alleged that irregularities were committed while modifying the Delhi Excise Policy, undue favours were extended to the licence holders, licence fee was waived or reduced and licences were extended without the competent authority's approval. The beneficiaries allegedly diverted "illegal" gains to the accused officials and made false entries in their books of account to evade detection, the probe agencies have alleged. Sisodia was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on February 26, 2023 for his alleged role in the "scam".

HYDERABAD LOK SABHA SEAT

2,217,094 voters and 30 candidates

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Collector Anudeep Durishetty said that the number of voters in Hyderabad is now 2,217,094. Of these, 1,125,310 are men, 1,091,587 are women, and 107 are transgender individuals.

He said the nominations process has been completed. 58 nominations were accepted and 19 were rejected during scrutiny. Eight nomi-

nations were withdrawn. Collector Anudeep Durishetty was speaking at a press conference held at the Hyderabad Collectorate on Tuesday.

He said that 30 candidates are in the fray and that symbols were allotted in three categories on April 29. Form 7A has been finalised and sent to the ECI. Preparations for postal and EVM ballots are over and all arrangements will be in place by May 1.

He said that absentees will have the option of home voting through postal ballots. Over 129 physically challenged and essential services people will be provided home voting facilities and they can vote through postal ballots on May 3.

Route planning is being done door to door and teams carrying postal ballots are moving with police escorts, micro observers, and polling agents. Home voting arrange-

ments have been provided for voters aged above 85 on May 3 and 4.

The Collector urged people confined to homes to make use of the postal voting facility. "A voter facilitation centre for employees on election duty is provided at the All Saints High School in the Hyderabad LS constituency for those accepted on Form 12. 5,989 employee voters are expected to make use of this," he said.

LS POLLS Phase 1 turnout at 66.14%, Phase 2 66.71%, says EC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A voter turnout of 66.14 per cent was recorded in phase one and 66.71 per cent in phase two of the ongoing Lok Sabha polls, the Election Commission said on Tuesday.

On Tuesday, the Congress, CPI-M and TMC questioned the EC over the delay in announcing the final voter turnout figures for the first two phases of the Lok Sabha polls, 11 days after the first round of polling on April 19.

Officially sharing the turnout figure, the poll panel said in phase one of the elections, 66.22 per cent of male and 66.07 female electors turned up to vote. The turnout for registered third-gender voters stood at 31.

Rahul to candidates: Carry copy of Constitution to public meetings



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday urged all party candidates to carry a copy of the Constitution with them during nominations, meetings, speeches and public outreach. Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on Monday and in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind on Tuesday. "A boon for the poor, respect for the deprived and pride of every citizen -- our Constitution! I request all Congress candidates and leaders to keep the sacred Constitution with them during nominations, meetings, speeches and public outreach," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on Monday and in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind on Tuesday. "Announce it in every village and every street that as long as the Congress is there, let alone BJP, no power in the world can snatch away the Constitution."

The former Congress chief has been carrying a copy of the Constitution in his public meetings. He did so in Gujarat's Patan and Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur on Monday and in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind on Tuesday. "A boon for the poor, respect for the deprived and pride of every citizen -- our Constitution! I request all Congress candidates and leaders to keep the sacred Constitution with them during nominations, meetings, speeches and public outreach," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on Monday and in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind on Tuesday. "Announce it in every village and every street that as long as the Congress is there, let alone BJP, no power in the world can snatch away the Constitution of India."

PHONE..

Continued from page 1

The accused seized money from people during the Munugode by-election, Assembly elections and other elections but no one has reportedly complained about the seizures. It is learnt that all police officers involved in the case formatted their devices including personal phones except one police officer.

From that particular police officer, the police are reportedly gathering details of what they did during election time. The BRS received Rs 1,322 crore through electoral bonds. The BJP raised Rs 6,060 crore through electoral bonds and the Congress received.

'All regional parties..

Continued from page 1

On how the BJP-led NDA and INDIA will fare in the general elections, the BRS chief said that the NDA will get only around 200 LS seats.

"INDIA is nothing. Even the NDA is also not very big. Many parties have left the coalition but they can get around 200 seats," he said.

On being asked who could be the PM candidate of INDIA, he said, "It is too early to say now. Let's wait for the results. The NDA will not get a majority and the BJP will not reach 272 seats."

When questioned about his support for the BJP or the Congress, he said "The BRS will be fighting

against both of them. We have to fight with the Congress and the BJP. Both of them are 'enemies' of Telangana and this has been proved several times. So we need to fight both," he said.

KCR said that people will vote against the BJP. Attacking the Congress, he said the whole country knows about the 'corruption' of the Congress.

"The farmers are suffering. Both the BJP and the Congress did injustice to them. People will vote against Modi. I think the BJP won't attain a majority on its own," KCR said.

"The entire country knows about the corruption of the Congress. That is why they are called 'Scamgress'," he added.

6 cases filed against BRS convenor in 4 months

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Six cases were filed against BRS Social Media Convenor Krishank Manne in the last four months. All these cases are connected to posts on X.

"Under pressure from the Congress, the Chief Warden of OU filed a police case which makes it the sixth case against me in the last four months of Congress rule. I posted exactly the circular released on May 12, 2023. It is Revanth who posted a fake circular. I will fight in court," Krishank said on Tuesday.

In March, the Madhapur police seized the mobile phone of the BRS Social Media Convenor regarding a post about Anumula Mahananda Reddy.

No place for quotas based on religion in Constitution: Modi

Continued from page 1

That dream was pending all these years due to the absence of a strong government at the Centre. The construction of the beautiful Ram Mandir in Ayodhya was possible due to the votes of the people. "We will fulfil the dreams behind every vote cast by you," Modi said.

He said that people ensured the victory of the Congress in 2004 and 2009 but the people saw how they violated the rights of SCs, STs and BCs. The Congress did not do justice to Lingayats and Marathas staying in Telangana. The Congress included Muslims in the OBC quota for reservations instead of including

26 castes in the Central OBC list, he said.

"I favour the SC categorising reservations. The assets of the people can be protected only if the BJP comes to power again," Modi said.

The PM said that Congress has a history of imposing emergency on the country. "There is no place for reservations based on religion in the Constitution. The Constitution is like a holy book for Indians. The Congress has no respect for the Constitution and Dr Ambedkar. The first Prime Minister Nehru mocked the Constitution and Indira Gandhi destroyed it. The BJP is the only party protecting the Constitution," Modi said.

Girls out..

Continued from page 1

Hyderabad district stood in the 30th place with a pass percentage of 86.76, a slight improvement over 2023 performance of 80.29 per cent.

The officials also stated that SSC Advanced Supplementary Examinations will be scheduled from June 3 to 13 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Students who failed in one or more subjects in the SSC public examinations should pay examination fees by May 16. Candidates should pay late fee of Rs 50 which lasts up to two days before the commencement of examinations in their subjects concerned in June 2024.

Principal Secretary Burra Venkatesham said, "This year, we have seen an increase in pass percentage compared to the last two years.

Dr Tamilisai is BJP in-charge in Sec'bad

Continued from page 1

BJP sources revealed that Dr Tamilisai will stay in Telangana from Tuesday till the election process is completed.

The party thinks that her contacts will be useful in the election as she was the Governor of Telangana for a long time.

As the BJP in-charge of Secunderabad, Dr Tamilisai will stay in Secunderabad itself and campaign for BJP candidate Kishan Reddy. BJP leaders think that Kishan Reddy's chances will improve with Dr Tamilisai campaigning for him.

KCR asks Modi to Initiate inquiry on CM over 'R-Tax'

Continued from page 1

He asked why now there is no 24 hours electricity is not possible. He said that Mission Bhagiratha water was also given to a Chinnagudem in Pinapaka Constituency. Tribal Tandas are given 3 phase electricity Land titles were given for one lakh and fifty thousand acres and Rythu Bandhu was given to them. "Are you getting Rythu Bandhu now. Are you getting overseas scholarship? Adivasi Bhavan Banjarabavan was built in expensive Banjarahills in Hyderabad. CM Revanth Reddy has also put Singareni on the agenda, Bade Bhai Chote

Boy is handing over Singareni to corporates. Modi pressured me to buy Adani coal but I didn't listen"

He said, "Now BJP is the evil regime. It is trying to get votes by dividing the religion Modi wants to take Godavari and hand it over to Tamil Nadu. And why CM Revanth Reddy is silent. The center is looking to install meters for the motors"

He said, "If the Congress party provides free buses, the lives of the auto rickshaw drivers will come to an end. If their lives are to improve, BRS must win. BRS must win if the self-respect of Telangana exists"

Ten Naxalites ..

Continued from page 1

when a joint team of the police's District Reserve Guard and Special Task Force was out on an anti-Naxal operation, a senior police official said. The operation had been launched on Monday night based on inputs about the presence of armed Maoists in the region, he said.

After the guns fell silent, the bodies of ten Naxalites, including three women, were recovered, he said. An AK-47 rifle and an INSAS rifle besides other arms, ammunition and explosives were recovered from the spot, the official said. The identity of the slain Naxalites was yet to be ascertained. Deputy CM Sharma congratulated the security personnel for the success. No personnel was harmed during the gunfight, he noted.

Warden's circular turns a bone of contention between BRS & Cong

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University's hostel Chief Warden's circular has become a bone of contention between the Congress and the BRS.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said, "Goebbel seems to be born again if you see K Chandrashekar Rao on Monday in Suryapet and Mahabubnagar. KCR is trying his best to spread wrong information about Osmania University. Even in May 2023, when KCR was the chief minister, the university chief warden issued a similar notice regarding the closure of hostels and messes for a month in connection with summer vacations (dated May 12, 2023 to June 5, 2023.) It also mentioned the shortage of electricity and water. KCR's depravi-

OU hostels to remain open during summer vacation

HYDERABAD: Osmania University on Tuesday has announced the commencement of the summer vacation from May 10 to May 31, 2024 as part of the academic calendar. Traditionally, this period marks a time when students temporarily vacate the university hostels to spend quality time with their families or engage in various extracurricular activities off-campus and facilitates the university administration to take up any minor repairs and renovation. However, acknowledging the diverse academic needs of the student body, the university administration has received a formal representation from a group of



students who expressed a sincere desire to utilise the summer vacation period for intensive preparation aimed at various competitive examinations. Recognising the significance of their request and the commitment to their academic pursuits, the administration has undertaken a thorough review of the situation. Following the review, the varsity announced that the hostels will remain operational during the summer vacation. This decision is intended to accommodate those students who wish to stay back on campus and leverage the available facilities for their exam preparation and academic endeavours.

ty was high when he started campaigning about the bankruptcy of the university as soon as the Congress came."

He also shared the circular issued by the chief warden on May 12, 2023 over closure of hostels and messes on Twitter platform and accused KCR for circulating false information on the issue.

Countering the statement made by CM Revanth Reddy, BRS members had circulated another letter on the issue.

However, the statement made by the BRS party is false as the hostel chief warden has filed an FIR in the police station seeking to stop the circulation of fake letters as it damages the reputation of the university. Hence, it was requested to stop the circulation of fake messages immediately.

153 Gurukulam schools secure 100% pass in SSC examination

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

About 153 schools under Mahatma Jyothiba Phule Telangana BC Gurukulam (MJPTBCG) educational institution have created a record by achieving 100 per cent pass percentage in the Class Tenth results this year on Tuesday. The students have achieved a pass percentage of 98.25 and recorded a pass percentage of 6.94 higher than the State average.

Students of 261 schools across the State wrote the exams and those from 153 schools passed the exam with 100 per cent pass percentage. This year 17,845 students

appeared for Class 10th examination and 17,533 students passed the exam. Out of them, 8,853 girls and 8,680 boys have passed. About 391 students achieved 10 GPA. Government Education Board Principal Secretary Burra Venkatesham, along with Secretary BC Gurukul Society Badugu Saidulu and teaching staff congratulated the students who have secured high marks in the recent board examinations.

Meanwhile, out of the 35 schools managed by the Telangana Gurukulam Vidyalyas Institutions, 2,475 students appeared for the SSC public examinations out of

whom 2,443 students secured 98.71 per cent and 24 schools have achieved 100 per cent consecutively for the last three years. Telangana Gurukulam Vidyalyam Institution has stood in the forefront of all Gurukula Vidyalyam institutions.

About 89 students achieved 10 GPA out of whom 55 female students and 34 male students scored 10 GPA. Principal Secretary of Education Department Burra Venkatesham and Commissioner of School Education Department Sreedevaseena congratulated the officers concerned and the students.

UPSC topper from TG files cyber crime complaint

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The All India third ranker in UPSC Civil Services Exam 2023 and the topper from the Telangana State, Donuru Ananya Reddy has filed a cyber crime complaint in the Cyber Crime police station on Saturday, where she alleged that some people have created numerous fake accounts on social media to impersonate her. She said that these fake accounts have been created on social media platforms like Instagram, Telegram and X to impersonate her.

She further alleged that some channels are using her identity to promote their mentorship programmes to the civil services aspirants. Those channels are collecting money from these aspirants, she added.

TG continues to sizzle as temp rises to 46°C

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The heatwave continued to prevail in Telangana as Jagtial recorded the highest maximum temperature of 46.2°C Celsius. Temperature soared to 43.2°C Celsius in Hyderabad, said a report by the Indian Meteorological Department - Hyderabad (IMD-H).

As per the report on April 30, dry weather prevailed over Telangana; on May 1 heatwave is likely to prevail over Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtial, Rajanna Sircilla, Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Mulugu, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubnagar, Medak, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool and Wanaparthy. Similar conditions are likely to prevail over Telangana till May 4. Nalgonda followed Jagtial



(46.2), Karimnagar (46), Siddipet (45.9), Mancherial (45.7), Mulugu (45.6), Jogulamba Gadwal (45.5), Nirmal (45.5), Warangal (45.4), Narayanpet, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Suryapet, Khammam, Kamareddy, Nizamabad all recorded 44 degrees; Rajanna/Sircilla, Jangaon, Adilabad, Ranjga Reddy and Sanga Reddy recorded 43°C Celsius.

As per Telangana State Planning and Development Society (TSDPS), Telangana is likely to experience dry weather from April 30 to May 3. The maximum temperature is expected to remain between 41-45 degrees; whereas the minimum temperature is expected to remain between 26-29 degrees Celsius.

Areas under the GHMC are likely to experience dry weather from April 30 to May 3. The maximum temperature is expected to remain between 41-43 degrees Celsius; the minimum temperature is expected to remain between 27-29 degrees Celsius. Among areas under the GHMC, LB Nagar recorded the highest temperature (43.2) followed by Jubilee Hills and Moosapet (43), Alwal and Begumpet (42.9) and Khairatabad (41.8).

State Model Schools secure 95.06% in SSC exams

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

About 17,592 candidates from 194 Telangana State Model Schools have appeared for SSC public examinations out of whom 16,723 candidates passed the exam. The total pass percentage secured by the Telangana State Model Schools is 95.06 per cent.

Out of 8,468 female students who appeared for the exam, 8,201 students passed. In the case of boys, out of 9,124 students who appeared for the exam, 8,522 students passed the exam. The pass percentage achieved by female students is 96.85 per cent while the pass percentage of boys is 93.40 per cent. About 137 students out of 2,987 students from 60 schools achieved 10 GPA.



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Sri Chaitanya Schools have once again demonstrated their academic excellence by securing remarkable results in the Telangana State Board of Secondary Education (TSBSE) 10th class examinations for the academic year 2023-24.

With a stunning 1,402 students secured a perfect 10/10 GPA, Sri Chaitanya has set a remarkable feat by the outstanding performance of 2,803 students who secured 9.8 GPA and above, 5,207 students who secured 9.5 GPA and above and 8,216 students who secured 9.0

GPA and above. The school's overall GPA stands at an impressive 9.2, with an overall pass percentage of 99.2%.

Notably, 84 branches of Sri Chaitanya have achieved a 100% pass rate, showcasing the institution's commitment to holistic education. Additionally, 17,913 students have secured A Grades in both Maths and Science, highlighting the school's focus on strong foundational skills.

"Sri Chaitanya's exceptional results, with 1,402 students securing a perfect 10 GPA, are a testament to our unwavering commitment to providing quality education and empowering

students to reach their full potential," remarked Seema, Director of Sri Chaitanya Schools. "These results far surpass those of any other educational institution in the State, further solidifying our position as the premier educational provider in Telangana. We are incredibly proud of our students, parents and teachers for their unwavering dedication and commitment to excellence," added Seema. She also recalled that the students of Sri Chaitanya have secured the 1st ranks in the All-India Open Category in the IIT-JEE Main, Advanced and NEET in 2023.

Centific funds RCTS for AI project to detect malnutrition

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Raj Reddy Centre for Technology and Society (RCTS) at the International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad (IIITH) received funding of Rs 18 lakh from Centific, a consultancy firm, for its project on 'AI for automated malnutrition detection' on Tuesday.

Centific's financial support will propel the project's first phase, encompassing: Platform development to build the core infrastructure for the AI-powered malnutrition detection system; the first phase of pilot deployment for implementing the platform on the ground; Data collection for gathering initial data sets to train and refine the AI model; Performance optimisation



enhancing the platform's accuracy and efficiency; and Prototype delivery of the first version within an estimated timeframe of six months.

IIIT Hyderabad has partnered with i-Saksham, a non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering women and enhancing educational opportunities in Bihar. This col-

laboration aligns with the New Education Policy (NEP) focus on foundational learning outcomes. This project aims to streamline growth monitoring, enhance data accuracy and provide reliable data to government agencies for effective interventions to combat malnutrition.

According to IIITH officials, existing workflows for obtaining and recording the measurements of height and weight are completely manual thereby introducing data-entry errors into the system by frontline staff like Anganwadi workers. Maintaining weight and height measuring tools has also been problematic, leading to unreliable data due to malfunctioning equipment. Due to this, the staff do a guesswork to note the height and weight of the children sometimes. There is no proper data available currently to take action towards eliminating the same from the government side. The current project aims to minimise these errors in data collection by automating the process of recording height and weight information from the measuring device to the database.

Early Bird scheme: GHMC collects Rs 34 cr in property tax

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The GHMC has collected Rs 820 crore property tax for the year of 2024-25 under Early Bird scheme. For the 2023-24 year the GHMC collected Rs 785 crore. On Tuesday the GHMC mentioned that this year, it

has collected over Rs 34.16 crore more in property tax compared to the previous fiscal year.

This scheme offers a 5 per cent rebate to those who pay their property tax before April 30 at a time. The GHMC has recorded over Rs 96.61 crore on the final day, on April 30.

This has been achieved despite the fact that it has largely been an election year with the bill collectors and tax inspectors immersed in election duties.

GHMC acknowledged the invaluable contributions of bill collectors, tax inspectors,

SCERT includes personality development courses

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) officials on Tuesday announced to include personality development courses in the upcoming school academic year.

The officials stated that apart from academics and sports, personality develop-

ment courses aid students in fostering soft skills which is crucial to their future especially in career. The courses include public speaking (speaking on stage), leadership roles and group discussions. Based on the teachers and other officials' suggestions, it was decided to implement these courses in the upcoming year.

UoH-Malaviya Mission to foster education

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A strategic collaboration was forged between University of Hyderabad (UoH)-Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Centre (MMTTC) and the Commissionerate of Collegiate Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh on Tuesday for elevating the standards of higher education.

The MoU was signed in the presence of esteemed dignitaries including Prof. BJ Rao, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hyderabad and Dr Pola Bhaskar,

Commissioner of the Commissionerate of Collegiate Education.

The MoU delineates a clear vision and mission for the programme, emphasising the importance of equipping educators with the requisite tools to nurture intellectual capital. Dr Pola Bhaskar, Secretary, Higher Education, Andhra Pradesh, Dr P Anil Kumar, OSD, Commissionerate of Collegiate Education, Prof. P Prakash Babu, Director of MMTTC, have been instrumental in shaping and executing this collaborative endeavour.

Hyd sees rise in luxury segment residences

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad saw a rise in luxury segment residences, a growth driven by a pro-business environment, claiming the third spot with an almost 10% share of the country's luxury inventory. According to a real estate report, the city has witnessed a rush of luxury apartments and a surge in demand within this segment. Areas such as Jubilee Hills, Banjara Hills,HITEC City, Raidurg and Neopolis reported sales with average ticket sizes ranging from Rs 20 crore to over Rs 40 crore.

In terms of city-wise data, Mumbai recorded the highest surge in unit sales during the review quarter, registering a 15% year-on-year increase in luxury segment residences. This was followed by Delhi-NCR, Hyderabad and Pune. Hyderabad and Pune saw sales



activity increasing by more than two times and 4.7 times year-on-year, respectively.

CBRE's India's real estate consulting firm announced the findings of its report, India Market Monitor Q1 2024. According to the report, the luxury segment housing (units priced Rs 4 crore and above) recorded a 10% year-on-year sales growth during Jan-March 2024. The percentage share of the luxury segment in the overall residential unit sales

stood at about 5% in Jan-March 2024. The report further points to approximately a 64% year-on-year increase in launches of luxury segment units during Jan-March 2024.

The resurgence in India's luxury residential real estate has grown, with about 45% of the overall luxury stock injected in the last five years alone. The segment has also grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 9% since 2019 across the gateway cities.

In terms of the overall residential sector, sales across categories reached almost 85,000 units in Jan-March 2024, registering an 8% year-on-year growth.

Chairman & CEO - India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, Anshuman Magazine said, "The Indian luxury real estate sector demonstrates strong fundamentals for sustained expansion, supported by consistent increases in household income and consumer spending power. These factors are expected to cultivate a segment characterised by discerning buyers prioritising quality, financial prudence, and a desire for an elevated living experience. Going forward, he also said, capitalising on the positive sales trend, developers nationwide are speeding up activity and are expected to launch new units in the segment."

चुनाव का पर्व
DESH KA GARV
LOK SABHA ELECTIONS 2024

Chief Electoral Officer
Telangana

Lok Sabha Elections
Polling Date: 13th May, 2024

DO YOU KNOW YOUR POLLING STATION?

To find out Scan here

Voter Helpline App electoralsearch.eci.gov.in

or through "Voter Sahaya Mithra"
Chatbot on CEO, Telangana website
www.ceotelangana.nic.in

Siddu Jonnalagadda
Famous Cine Actor (DJ Tibu)

Personal accusations dominate poll campaign in AP

Ideally, victory in an election should spring from the merits of individual contestants that are highlighted in a proper manner through the prescribed democratic process. If a contestant does not hope to win by this process, he will resort to mudslinging over his opponents in the electoral battle. In the process of such skewed battles, issues relating to the families of leaders and contestants surface.

In the foregoing context, 'win the election at any cost' becomes the motto of all such contestants in modern-day politics. Today, electioneering in Andhra Pradesh presents the quintessence of such debased politics with the principal political players in the



state latching on to extraneous issues, instead of sticking to core issues impacting the public.

As the state is going to polls on 13th May, political parties have drafted questionable strategies to gain an upper hand over their opponents. What stands out in their strategies is that leaders of the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) and the principal opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) are engaged in raking up personal and family matters. In this unseemly contest, the ruling party has moved a step forward in making accusations with a view to weaken TDP. On its part, TDP, in association with the Jana Sena Party (JSP) and the

In the foregoing context, 'win the election at any cost' becomes the motto of all such contestants in modern-day politics. Today, electioneering in Andhra Pradesh presents the quintessence of such debased politics with the principal political players in the state latching on to extraneous issues, instead of sticking to core issues impacting the public.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has raised its voice against the alleged corruption under the YSRCP regime with Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy at the helm.

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is facing serious criticism even from his sister and Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee chief YS Sharmila

Reddy. He could become an MP in 2009 by virtue of being "CM's son", thanks to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi. He later left the Congress to form his own outfit ostensibly because the party did not permit him to take up 'Odarpu yatra' (programme of consoling families of those who had reportedly ended lives or died of shock over the



death of former AP CM Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy under tragic circumstances). Many people believe that the real reason for Jagan to form YSRCP was that the Congress did not allow him to be the 'natural'

successor of YSR. So, he formed YSRCP (Yuvajana Shramika Rythu Congress Party, with the initial letters of the first three words resembling his father's initials). He engaged his sister Sharmila and mother Vijaya Lakshmi in party activities. Sharmila in fact took up 3,500-km padayatra when her brother was in jail for 16 months, following criminal cases filed against him for serious economic offences.

After becoming the Chief Minister, Jagan marginalised his mother and sister in the party. Feeling suffocated within the party that she had helped grow, Sharmila moved to Telangana State to float YSR Telangana Party, which ultimately merged with the Congress. The Congress lead-

ership then assigned her the job of PCC chief with the main task of working against Jagan.

As TDP, JSP, BJP are working together to unseat Jagan under the banner of NDA with the support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sharmila is working with the Left parties in one voice against the YSRCP regime. Leaders and cadre of YSRCP believe that the damage being done by Sharmila cannot be wished away. Sharmila has accused Jagan of shielding those behind the gruesome killing of Dr. YSR's brother and former minister YS Vivekananda Reddy. This prompted Jagan to give a series of explanations that he was innocent along with his cousin and MP YS Avinash Reddy

who had allegedly confronted with late Viveka for the Lok Sabha seat at the behest of Jagan.

Jagan too hit back at his sister. He accused her of being a pawn in the hands of those who had been working to defeat him. Political circles in AP feel that it is not an issue that can be brushed aside. They say it has disappointed the women folk in the party, though they are not in a position to counter the words of their leader.

The political situation appears to be grim with the exchange of personal barbs. Vijayalakshmi is nowhere in the picture these days, perhaps because she is torn between her son and daughter amid too much washing of dirty linen in public.

Voter awareness programmes being conducted in Hyderabad

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

'I Vote for Sure' campaigns are being conducted on a grand scale under the guidance of District Election Officer Ronald Rose, large-scale outreach programmes are underway throughout the district to raise voter awareness.

Ronald Rose said, these initiatives include field-level sweep programmes aimed at creating awareness among voters along with programmes being conducted in all Assembly segments, where Self Help Group (SHG) members engage with urban women's federations, TLF, and SLE, encouraging them to vote for their preferred candidate. He said the teams are going door-to-door, sticking polling date



Women from self-help groups taking out a procession in Hyderabad on Tuesday to create awareness among voters

stickers, and distributing voter slips, increasing awareness and informing to Vote on May 13. Strong sweep programs have been conducted in Secunderabad Cantonment, GHMC zones, and all assem-

bly segments of Hyderabad district. Special efforts are being made to educate Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and senior citizens about voting procedures through apps, promising that their voices

will be heard.

Ronald Rose also said these awareness campaigns focus on the significance of voting, verifying voter registration status, locating polling booths, and more. Rallies and meetings have been held at various locations, including Vikrampur, Karkhana Main Road, Bhasha Showroom, and others, under the banner 'I Vote for Sure' along with thorough voter awareness programs ongoing across the district, ensuring that voters are well-informed about all relevant issues.

The voter awareness programmes are conducted in all constituencies in Telangana. The District Collectors in their respective districts are organising programmes to bring more voters to polling booths.

Production of cloth for school uniform by TESCO may be delayed

PNS ■ SIRCILLA

Distribution of uniforms to school children in the government-run school as well as school under Zilla Parishads and Mandal Parishads may be delayed. The government gave time to the weavers to complete the task of making ready uniforms till May 15.

The uniforms for school children may not be ready when the schools reopen on June 12 after the summer vacation if the tardy progress of weaving the uniform cloth was any indication.

So far only 15 lakh meters of uniform cloth was produced against the total target of 39 lakh meters, forcing the government to extend the deadline to May 15.

The Telangana State



Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Society Ltd (TESCO) was given orders by the School Education Department to weave the uniform cloth. The task was assigned to Textile Park units in Tangallapalli mandal to weave 39 lakh meters of cloth and powerlooms of Sircilla town were given the task to weave 3 lakh meters of cloth. This year, TESCO has supplied the yarn keeping in mind the quality of the yarn. In fact, only 15 lakh

meters of cloth was produced. The Textile Park units are required to produce 50,000 metres of cloth per day, but they have been producing only 25,000 meters.

Therefore, the authorities have extended the deadline to May 15. This time, 100 per cent cotton yarn was supplied as against the previous supply of 67% polyester yarn and 33% cotton yarn. The cloth is being produced by 48

units of Textile Park, which has been facing severe shortage of workers.

The handlooms and textile department has set up a call centre here to provide training and employment to the interested candidate wishing to undergo training in running rapier machines. The weavers working on powerlooms in Sircilla do not know how to operate rapier machines. The training will be helpful to them in operating the more efficient rapier machines.

Weaving of coarse polyester cloth will enable the weavers to get a wage of only Rs 2 per metre. However, the government officials have fixed Rs 4.25 per meter as the wage for the workers. Therefore, over 200 weavers have been gainfully employed here.

Rangareddy district to play a major role in LS polls

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Rangareddy district shares borders with seven districts. The district is mix of rural and urban areas. The district has been well-developed. It is surging ahead all sectors like information technology and real estate.

The district was nationally and internationally acclaimed. The district is unique and the district spread over 5 Lok Sabha constituencies, which is unprecedented. The sheer size of the district has triggered problems too along with growth.

Malkajigiri Lok Sabha constituency is regarded as the first constituency in the nation to have the highest number of voters, 37,28,417. Of them,

the number of voters in LB Nagar Assembly segment alone are 6,00,552. The other assembly segments are Malkajigiri, Kukatpally, Qutubullahpur, Uppal, Contonment and Medchal.

Chevella Lok Sabha constituency is the second largest constituency in Telangana having the highest number of voters. The total number of voters here is put at 29,19,465. Besides Vikarabad, Parigi and Tandurupet, the Assembly segments of Chevella, Maheshwaram, Rajendra Nagar and Serilingampalli have been included under the constituency.

The Ibrahimpatnam constituency of Rangareddy district is included under Bhongir Lok Sabha constituency having

a total of 18,04,930 voters. Ibrahimpatnam segment alone has a total number of 3,37,134 voters.

The Kalwakurthy constituency in Rangareddy district has been listed under Nagarkurnool Lok Sabha constituency, which has a total of 17,34,773 voters, including 2,43,098 voters of Kalwakurthy segment.

Shad Nagar segment has been listed under Mahabubnagar Lok Sabha seat. The total number of voters in the LS constituency are 16,80,417. Of them, 2,38,392 voters belong to the Shad Nagar segment.

The voters of Rangareddy district largely decide the fate of many Lok Sabha contestants.

Actor Venkatesh to campaign in Khammam on May 7

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tollywood hero Victory Venkatesh will campaign on May 7 in Khammam on behalf of Congress contestant and his daughter's father-in-law Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy. The news has energised the.

According to reports reaching here, he is going to campaign only in Khammam.

Earlier, there was a precedent of late Soundarya campaigning on behalf of BJP candidates, Junior NTR campaigning for the electoral success of TDP candidates. Currently several TV serial actors have been campaigning in support of Pawan Kalyan. Various parties have been deploying film stars to

lend cine glamour to the election campaign as star campaigners. In this backdrop, the Congress is also trying to cash in on the cine glamour.

Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy has been contesting from Khammam Lok Sabha seat on Congress ticket. Therefore, Tollywood hero is gearing up to campaign in Khammam district.

Raghuram Reddy's son Vinayak Reddy married Venkatesh's daughter Asrita. Therefore, the campaign schedule has been fixed for Venkatesh to seek votes for Congress candidate in Khammam city on May 7. The news stirred a lot of interest among Venkatesh's fans and also among the Congress



rank and file.

Having tasted electoral success in Assembly election, the Congress leaders feel that the campaign by Venkatesh is going to become a plus factor, according to followers of Raghuram Reddy.

Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy is also related to Raghuram Reddy. Therefore, he has stepped up campaign for the electoral success of Raghuram Reddy.

DGC orders release Rs 3.20 cr of seized cash by ECI teams

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

District Election Officer (DEO) Ronald Rose said that out of total of seizure of cash, the District Grievance Committee (DGC) ordered administration to release Rs 3.20 crore in respect of 123 cases. The money was released to those who had shown the relevant documents to the DGC.

The DEO said that Rs 49.47 lakh has been referred to the Income Tax and Commercial Tax Departments in three cases where people were transporting more than Rs 10 lakhs. Similarly, the Income Tax Department seized Rs.66.49 lakh in three cases. Out of Rs 47.55 lakh which was seized in nine cases related to Cantonment constituency was referred to the DGC, where the committee ordered the release of Rs 12.50

lakh belonging to six people who have shown proper evidence. Rs.35.04 lakh has been referred to the Income Tax Department in connection with the three cases. In case of any doubt, the DEO suggested the people to call 9618888110 of DGC chairman or committee convener at Cell No. 9177872240. Meanwhile, DEO Ronald Rose said that in the last 24 hours, from 6 am on Monday to 6 am on Tuesday, enforcement teams in the district seized Rs 46,63,220 in cash, Rs 1.21 cr worth of other material goods, 152 liters of liquor, 8 FIRs have been registered and 41 licensed weapons have been deposited in the police stations in the city. A total of Rs 19,67,06,705 in cash, and other goods worth of Rs 9,43,95,567 have been seized by various enforcement teams and 21,618 liters of liquor have been seized.

Woxsen University's School of Arts holds design show

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Celebrating a new era of design excellence and providing a much-needed platform for emerging talents in the field to showcase their work, Woxsen University's School of Arts and Design organised Hyderabad's first design show, 'Design Vanguard 2024', at T-Works in Hyderabad. The tagline of Design Vanguard was 'Design for Everyone,' which unequivocally emphasised the inclusivity and diversity inherent in design.

Twenty innovative projects were unveiled at the event, themed on socially relevant and important issues such as Climate Change, MedTech, Disaster Management, Craft Innovation, Inclusive Design, Mental Wellness, and Heritage

Conservation. With sustainability as a key factor behind the selection of materials, the entire event showcased the University's commitment to addressing contemporary challenges and shaping a better future through design innovation.

This first-of-its-kind initiative displayed the finest works of Woxsen University's talented students and provided a glimpse into the innovative design endeavours at the university. The event was attended by Adivi Sesh, renowned Actor and Director, who served as the Chief Guest; Dr. S. Arun Kumar Pandu, Director and Head of Office Development Commissioner for Handlooms at the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

Speaking about the event, Adivi Sesh, renowned Actor

and Director and Chief Guest, said, "I wish I had access to something like this when I was 18 or 19 years old. The Design Vanguard is beautiful, and Woxsen University is doing a wonderful job with the students here. I loved all the student projects showcased, particularly the one where a student made a film using Kondapalli toys. If given a chance to design, I would love to join here as a student."

The event also hosted young fashion enthusiasts, accompanied by their parents. The platform not only ignited their interest in the field of fashion design but also provided insights into the developments in this field and industry to help them in building a promising future in the fashion world.

NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

TDP-JSP serves 'Super Six'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, JSP president Pawan Kalyan, and BJP AP incharge Siddharthnath Singh have jointly unveiled the alliance manifesto for the upcoming 2024 elections. The manifesto, a collaborative effort, aims to address the pressing issues of the State and fulfil the aspirations of its citizens by amalgamating TDP's 'Super Six' initiatives with JSP's 'Shanmukha Vyuham' vision.

At the manifesto launch, Naidu reiterated the alliance's commitment to creating 20 lakh jobs within the next five years. He also announced a Rs 3,000 unemployment allowance for youth until they secure employment.

Naidu emphasised the importance of enhancing productivity for economic growth, announcing plans for a statewide 'Skill Census' to bolster people's productivity - a pioneering initiative in the country.

The manifesto promises monthly financial aid of Rs 1,500 to women aged between 19-59 years, totalling Rs 18,000 annually and Rs 90,000 over five years, along with free bus travel for women on RTC buses. Additionally, it outlines plans for nine hours of uninterrupted power supply for agricultural purposes and the free installation of solar pump sets, along with the integration of rooftop solar energy initiatives from the Central government. The alliance manifesto also reaffirms the commitment to Amaravati as the State capital, the completion of the Polavaram project, and the repeal of the



Land Titling Act.

It pledges to increase the old age pension to Rs 4,000 from April 2024 and provide a Rs 6,000 pension for differently-abled individuals.

Highlighting the commitment to the BC community, the party chiefs announced a spending of Rs 1.5 lakh crores through the BC sub-plan over five years. They also pledged various measures, including pension increments, reservations in local body and legislative elections, and allocation of funds for self-employment opportunities for BCs.

Speaking on the 'Skill Census,' the party chiefs emphasised its groundbreaking nature, aimed at identifying individuals with specific skills and providing them with appropriate training for a brighter future. They reiterated plans for uninterrupted power supply for agriculture and the promotion of solar energy, emphasising the decentralisation of power generation.



Desperate Naidu mimicking YSRCP's schemes: Jagan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, taking a swipe at the TDP alliance manifesto, addressed a gathering in Pileru, stating, "In the 2014 manifesto, Chandrababu's photo was prominently featured alongside Modi and the adopted son (Pawan Kalyan), distributed to every household in the State."

However, before unveiling the 2024 manifesto, the BJP headquarters instructed him not to use the Prime Minister's photo. This incident underscores the unfeasibility of his promises, as even the BJP does not endorse them."

CM Jagan attributed the government's pension dis-

tribution challenges to complaints from Chandrababu Naidu during his initial campaign meeting of the day near Tanguturi in Kondepi in Prakasam district.

Jagan also participated in another meeting in Mydukur, urging people to juxtapose the unsubstantiated claims of TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu with the tangible progress under YSRCP.

"A leader's credibility lies in fulfilling promises. I stand before you having delivered on our commitments over the last 58 months. Contrastingly, a leader who held office for 14 years has not a single pro-poor scheme worth recalling," asserted CM Jagan.

Girl rescues father from Godavari river, but drowned

PNS ■ MULUGU

A girl risked her life while saving her father from drowning in the Godavari river in the district on Tuesday.

According to villagers, Nikhita, who hailed from Kamalapuram village under Mangapat



maanda, went to the river along with her father. Her father ventured into the river for a bath. As the girl saw her father drowning, she tried to pull her father from the river by extending her hand. But he fell into the river and drowned, while her father survived.

INDIA CORNER

Puri railway station to be adorned with wheels of chariots

The Indian Railways will procure three wheels, one each from the three chariots that represent the famous Jagannath Rath Yatra, to place them at the centre of the concourse of Puri railway station being redeveloped under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. "Every year when the Rath Yatra ends, the three chariots are dismantled and the timber is used in the temple kitchen to cook 'Kotha Bhoga' (dishes for the gods)," said Manoj Pande, one of the principal architects from Rath Architectonic that has designed the new station. He added, "However, the Indian Railways, in accordance with our design, will procure one wheel from each of the three chariots from the upcoming Rath Yatra to be held in late June or early July this year and these will be placed in the world-class railway station at Puri." Puri railway station is one of the 1,321 stations of the country which is being redeveloped to offer world-class passenger amenities under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, and it is expected to be ready by July, 2024.



Another NEET aspirant commits suicide in Kota

A 20-year-old NEET aspirant allegedly hanged himself here days before appearing for his third attempt at cracking the exam. "Sorry papa, I couldn't do it this year as well," a note found in the room said. This is the ninth case of suspected suicide by a coaching student in Kota since January. The number of student suicides in the coaching hub stood at 26 in 2023. Rajasthan native Bharat Kumar Rajput was found hanging from the ceiling fan on Tuesday morning, police said. They said a one-line suicide note was recovered from the room saying 'Sorry papa, me is saal bhi nahi kar paya' (Sorry papa, I couldn't do it this year as well). Rajput had taken the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) twice before and was scheduled to appear for his third attempt on May 5, Jawahar Nagar Sub Inspector Gopal Singh said. The student lived in a paying guest (PG) room in Rajiv Gandhi Nagar and was preparing for the medical entrance exam for the past one year.



Woman kills self in AIIMS hostel room in Delhi

A 21-year-old woman allegedly died by suicide by hanging herself in her hostel room at AIIMS here on Tuesday and a suicide note was recovered, police said. According to police, one of the hostel staff found the woman hanging from the ceiling fan in her room around 11.30 am and alerted the authorities. Upon investigation, the police recovered a suicide note in which she had stated that she was depressed because of her nursing studies and preparations for the Bihar Public Service Commission exam, police said. The woman was a second-year BSc student. Her family, who lives in Bihar were informed about their daughter. Further investigation is underway, they said.



'Self-reliance key to deal with future security challenges'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Warfare has transcended into new domains, such as space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum and information systems, and India must develop indigenous capabilities to deal with future security challenges, Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande said on Tuesday.



The Army chief especially underlined the importance of "technology infusion" and "self-reliance" in the armed forces, saying both are distinct yet interconnected. Gen Pande said India must develop its indigenous military capabilities as no country will share the latest, advanced and critical technology with it.

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Gen Pande said India must develop its indigenous military capabilities as no country will share the latest, advanced and critical technology with it.

"Warfare has transcended into new domains, such as space, cyber, electromagnetic spectrum and information. Consequent to these developments, conventional force ratios, which was the measure of military strength and superiority in the past, stand blunted today," he said.

Gen Pande made the remarks at the fourth Gen K Sundarji memorial lecture.

He highlighted the need for embracing technology in order to maintain a competitive edge on the battlefield.

"The imperative of technology infusion into warfighting systems and to keep pace with technological progression, remains enduring to this day," he said.

"The impact of external dependency for critical components, supply chain disruptions and weaponisation of denial regimes came to the fore, during the (Covid-19) pandemic and also from the lessons of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict," he said.

"We need to recognise that no country will share the latest, advanced and critical technology with us," he said.

The Army chief said being import dependent for critical technologies entails the risk of remaining behind in niche areas.

"The answer, therefore, lies in being self-reliant and achieving self-sufficiency in critical technologies through indigenous research and development," he said. Gen Pande said the growing centrality of cyber domain in critical infrastructure has resulted in it emerging as a new battleground of digital confronta-

tion. "Information operations today have gained new dimensions," he said. "When we talk about digitisation of the battlefield, we are witness to a manifold increase in the lethality and accuracy of kinetic instruments and increased proliferation of technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, robotics and nano-technology," he said. The Army chief said disruptive and dual use technologies and their proliferation at unprecedented scale are transforming the character of modern wars.

"A suite of digital technologies, encompassing electronic warfare, micro-electronics, drones, precision attack systems, loiter munitions and star link terminals are challenging traditional force multipliers," he said.

"Swarming is contesting surgery, surveillance and precision are scoring over fire and manoeuvre, and the light and small are prevailing over the large and heavy," he added.

Gen Pande said his force has been focusing on developing indigenous capabilities.

SC directs inspection of detention camps for foreigners

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Noting that a number of foreigners have been languishing in detention centres for years, the Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the State Legal Services Authority of Assam to apprise it about the foreigners detained for more than two years.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan also directed the legal services authority to constitute a team to visit the detention centres to find out the facilities made available to foreigners.

A report in this regard will be submitted by May 15, 2024, the bench said.

The top court observed that the Centre and the state government will have to take some action on the issue of foreigners languishing in detention centres for years.

"We direct the State Legal Services Authority of Assam to visit the detention centres of foreigners and ascertain from the records therein how many foreigners have been detained for a period of more than two years."

SC questions ED on timing of Kejriwal's arrest, seeks its reply

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Terming life and liberty as "exceedingly important", the Supreme Court on Tuesday questioned the Enforcement Directorate on the timing of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest ahead of the general elections in the excise policy-linked money laundering case.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta, which continued hearing on the Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest for the consecutive day, posed several queries to Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the ED, and sought his reply on Friday.

"Life and liberty are exceedingly important. You can't deny that," the bench told Raju and sought his reply, saying, "the last question is with regard to the timing of the arrest, which they have pointed out, the timing of the arrest, soon before the general elections."

The bench also flagged the long time gap between initiation of adjudication proceedings in the case and the action of arrest, saying the section 8 of the



Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) provides a maximum limit of 365 days.

The apex court is likely to continue hearing on Kejriwal's plea on Friday as the two judges will be sitting in different combinations from Wednesday.

It said, "Mr. Raju, we have some questions, which we would like you to answer, when you make your submissions. First is without there being any adjudicatory proceedings, can the ED initiate a criminal proceedings in view of several judgements of this court on PMLA."

The bench said in this case

there are no proceedings of attachments so far and if there are any such proceedings, then the ED will have to show how petitioner (Kejriwal) is connected to it.

Justice Khanna said the verdict on the bail plea of former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who is in custody in the excise policy scam case, was divided into two parts – the first part was in favour of Sisodia and the second part was against him.

"You (Raju) have to tell us which part of Sisodia verdict does the petitioner (Kejriwal) case lie," the bench said.

Congress means corruption and commission: BJP chief Nadda

PNS ■ HAVERI (KARNATAKA)

BJP president J P Nadda on Tuesday said Congress means corruption and commission, while the INDIA bloc is an alliance to save dynasts and corrupt.

He questioned whether the INDIA Alliance have any prime ministerial candidate.

"Congress means corruption, Congress means commission, What is INDI Alliance? (We say) our leader Modi ji will become the prime minister (if BJP comes to power) and INDI Alliance says they will have five prime ministers in five years (if they come to power)," Nadda said.

Addressing a gathering at the end of a roadshow at Byadagi here, in support of BJP's Haveri



Lok Sabha candidate and former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, he asked: "Who is their (INDIA bloc) prime ministerial candidate? Do they have any leader like Narendra Modi, who can tackle situations like COVID?"

"INDI Alliance is just for power, they don't have anything

to do with you. The INDI Alliance is for two reasons -- 'Pariwarwad bachao' (save dynasts) and 'Bhrashtachariyonko bachao' (save the corrupt), -- they don't have any other work," he added.

Highlighting various "scams" of Congress and its INDIA bloc partners, Nadda said, "...they are all corrupt. D K Shivakumar (Karnataka Deputy CM) was involved in a scam or not? Isn't Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, P Chidambaram, Lalu Prasad Yadav, ...D K Shivakumar are out on bail or not?"

Also listing out various INDI Alliance leaders who are in jail, including Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, he said, "All these people are either on bail or in jail."

'My soul is 'restless' for common man'

Pawar hits back at Modi over 'bhakti aatma' jibe

PNS ■ PUNE

NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Tuesday hit back at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the "bhakti aatma" jibe, saying his soul is "asvatha" for the cause of farmers and the common man, and ready to be restless "100 times" to highlight their plight.

"There is a 'bhakti atma' (wandering soul) in Maharashtra. If it does not manage success it spoils others' good work. Maharashtra has been a victim of it," Modi had said at a rally on Monday, hitting out at Sharad Pawar without taking his name.

Addressing an election meeting on Tuesday, Pawar recalled PM Modi's 2016 statement about having come into politics holding the former's finger, and said "Modi is angry with me of late".

"Some years ago, PM Modi had delivered a speech in Pune stating that he (Modi) had come into politics by holding the finger of Pawar



saheb. Yesterday, he said a 'restless' soul in Maharashtra has been causing restlessness across the state for the last 45 years.

"Modi had also said this soul was creating obstacles for the government. He also spoke about the need to safeguard against this soul," Pawar said while addressing an election meeting in Junnar tehsil for NCP

(SP)'s Shirur Lok Sabha candidate Amol Kolhe. Pawar further said he has read Modi's speech and the (bhakti aatma) statement.

"It is correct that the soul is 'asvatha' (restless) but not for the self but to highlight the hardships faced by farmers. I am restless to put forward the plight of the common man

suffering from inflation. I am ready to be restless 100 times to highlight the woes of the people," the veteran politician said.

Pawar also criticised the prime minister for dubbing Congress leader Rahul Gandhi a 'shehzada' (prince), saying three generations of his family had served the country and sacrificed their lives. The Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) chief further said that hardships faced by the common people and other issues should be raised.

"I imbibe these values from the first chief minister Yashwantrao Chavan. We will not compromise on these values," said Pawar.

He said Modi had promised to bring down the prices of fuel and LPG cylinders after coming to power (in 2014).

"But check the prevailing prices of these commodities," he said.



Education is greatest gift to society: Dhankhar

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday said that education is the greatest gift for society and the most effective medium to bring about a change. He emphasised that all children should get opportunities to explore their talents as per their interests.

"I have been saying this for a long time. As soon as a child is born, people decide that he will become a doctor, an engineer, and so on. No one pays attention to what the child wants. Let them create their own path," Vice President Dhankhar, who was addressing students of a private school here, said.

He termed education as the greatest wealth and said that special attention has been given to education in the Constitution.

According to an official statement, the vice president said, "What is the greatest wealth? The greatest wealth is knowledge. And, what is the greatest gift? Education."

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Terming health an "orphan", Indian Medical Association chief Dr R V Asokan says no lessons have been learnt after the Covid crisis and it doesn't figure as a top priority for political parties with everyone in the "all is well" zone.

In an interaction with editors, Asokan also described the government's flagship Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme as "poorly structured and underfunded" and called for increasing investments in the health sector.

"Health is an orphan. Nobody wants to talk about health even after the Covid

'Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme poorly structured'



pandemic, where it was acutely felt even as a matter of internal security. We have not learnt

any lessons. We continue to be in the same 'all is well' zone," he said.

"Health sadly does not figure among the top priorities of political parties," Asokan said in response to a question on attention to the sector during the ongoing elections.

Dwelling at length on the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) scheme, Asokan said the scheme had "great vision" and there were great

expectations from it.

"But it was structured poorly. And underfunded to the extent that it will collapse. Why I say this is because it was envisioned by the prime minister for people below the poverty line but perhaps it was structured by the NITI Aayog and bureaucrats," Asokan said.

"The care in government hospitals is already free. So what is the new that the patient gets? Whether it is routed through the government hospital or through Ayushman Bharat, the patient does not get anything new. So the goodwill that had to be generated in the public did not develop. That political dividend didn't occur."

Cong workers hold sit-in, demand Gandhi family member as Amethi candidate

PNS ■ AMETHI (UP)

Congress workers here in Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday held a sit-in, demanding that the party name a member of the Gandhi family as its candidate from the Amethi Lok Sabha seat.

The constituency goes to polls on May 20 in the fifth round of the seven-phase general elections.

Only three days are left for the filing of nomination

papers but the Congress is yet to declare a candidate for the seat, the party's district spokesperson, Anil Singh, said.

Leaders and workers, including Congress district president Pradeep Singhal and former district president Yogendra Mishra, were gathered at the party office here with posters reading "Amethi maange Rahul Gandhi, Amethi Maange Priyanka Gandhi (Amethi wants Rahul

Gandhi or (his sister) Priyanka Gandhi Vadra".

"People of the constituency and Congress workers want a member of the Gandhi family as their candidate. We want Rahul Gandhi to contest from Amethi to bring back its lost honour," Singh said.

The demonstrators demanded that the Congress immediately declare a candidate in Amethi and that its nominee be from the Gandhi family.

Healthy lifestyle could counter genetic risk of shorter life, says study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adopting a healthy lifestyle could counter the effects of life-shortening genes by more than 60 per cent, according to new research published in the British Medical Journal Evidence-Based Medicine.

Researchers found four factors to make up the most favourable lifestyle combination -- not smoking, regular physical activity, adequate nightly sleep, and a healthy diet.

The team, including

researchers from Zhejiang University School of Medicine, China, found that while genes and lifestyle together impact a person's lifespan, an unhealthy lifestyle could heighten the risk of dying prematurely by 78 per cent, regardless of their genetic inclinations.

However, "the genetic risk of a shorter lifespan or premature death might be offset by a favourable lifestyle by approximately 62 per cent", the authors wrote.

The researchers analysed



The genetic risk of a shorter lifespan or premature death might be offset by a favourable lifestyle by approximately 62 per cent

the data of more than 3.5 lakh adults, recruited to the UK Biobank between 2006 and 2010, and whose health was tracked up until 2021. Each participant's genetic predisposition to a longer or shorter lifespan was arrived at using a polygenic risk score (PRS). Lifestyle factors including diet and sleep habits were also studied.

The authors found that starting a healthy lifestyle at the age of 40 years could enhance life expectancy by roughly 5.5 years in those

having a high genetic risk of a shorter lifespan.

They added that given how lifestyle habits tend to be cemented before middle age, measures taken to address the effects of life-shortening genes are needed before then.

The researchers also found that regardless of lifestyle, individuals having genes favouring a shorter lifespan were 21 per cent more likely to die early than those having genes favouring a long life.

Further, the combination of life-shortening genes and an

unfavourable lifestyle could place an individual twice as likely to die compared to one having both long-life genes and a favourable lifestyle.

"This study elucidates the pivotal role of a healthy lifestyle in mitigating the impact of genetic factors on lifespan reduction," the authors wrote.

The team acknowledged that European ancestry of the participants could limit applying the findings to a wider population. Further, being an observational study, no causal links could be established, they said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Repeat offenders

Pro-Khalistan slogans raised again at Toronto event in front of Trudeau; India hits back

Yet another event which saw pro-Khalistan slogans being raised, this time in Toronto, has triggered diplomatic tensions between India and Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was also present in the programme, which made it look like the Canadian Government was condoning the act. It prompted India to summon in New Delhi a Canadian diplomat and express strong disapproval. The event, celebrating cultural diversity and inclusivity, took an unexpected turn when a group of individuals began chanting slogans in support of Khalistan, a separatist movement. The unfortunate incident is indeed a setback to ongoing discussions between the countries on various issues. For India, the incident struck a sensitive chord as it perceives the Khalistan movement a threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Indian authorities view any display of support for Khalistan, especially in the presence of heads of State, with utmost seriousness. The Indian Government, therefore, wasted no time in conveying its concerns to Canadian authorities. The summoning of their diplomat serves as a clear signal of India's displeasure and underscores the gravity with which it views the matter. Meanwhile, in Canada, the incident has sparked discussions about the limits of freedom of expression and the implication of such incidents on diplomatic relations.



While Canada may uphold the principles of free speech and assembly, the chanting of pro-Khalistan slogans on its soil in the presence of its Prime Minister raises questions about the appropriateness of such actions, particularly in a diplomatic context. Trudeau, who has been an advocate for multiculturalism and diversity, has yet to publicly comment on the incident. However, it is expected that he will address the matter in due course, considering the diplomatic ramifications and the need to maintain constructive relations with India. Given the history of the roots of the Khalistanis in Canada, it was a foregone conclusion that something of this sort might come up. The Canadian Prime Minister should have ensured in advance such a thing would not happen as it reflects badly on his Government and strains relations with India. Indeed, pampering Khalistanis on its soil is going to be a problem for Canada as history repeats itself and all those regimes that once harboured such elements have paid a heavy price for it. The incident also underscores the complexities of managing diaspora politics, particularly when it intersects with sensitive geopolitical issues. Canada is home to a significant Sikh population, many of whom have strong ties with India and hold varying views on the Khalistan movement. Ultimately, the Toronto incident highlights the interconnectedness of global politics and the need for vigilance in safeguarding the principles of sovereignty, unity and respect for diverse perspectives. It is a stark reminder that actions and words uttered in one corner of the world can have far-reaching implications, shaping the course of international relations for years.

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PICTALK



Fireworks light up the sky at the Golden Temple on the birth anniversary of Sikh Guru Teg Bahadur, in Amritsar PTI

Recognising workers' resilience and struggle

On International Labour Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to worker welfare and advocate for fair, empowering policies

On May 1st, as we celebrate International Labour Day, these words of Karl Marx resonate with renewed significance. May Day is not merely a day of rest; it is a powerful reminder of the resilience and collective strength of workers worldwide. It is a day to honour the countless individuals who have fought for the rights and dignity of labourers and to recognise the ongoing struggle for justice in the workplace. Every year on May 1st, International Labour Day serves as a poignant reminder of the struggles, sacrifices and triumphs of workers worldwide. It is a day to honour the contributions of labourers across various countries and industries, while also acknowledging the ongoing battle for labour rights and social justice. As we commemorate International Labour Day on May 1, 2024, let us reflect on the significance of this day and recommit ourselves to advocating for the rights and welfare of workers. The roots of International Labour Day trace back to May 1, 1886, when workers in



Chicago staged a massive protest demanding an eight-hour workday. This pivotal event led to the establishment of International Workers' Day, symbolising the collective struggle for fair labour practices. Since then, May Day has evolved into a global movement, with workers from all walks of life coming together to advocate for their rights. May Day holds immense significance in highlighting the importance of workers' rights. It serves as a platform to address issues such as fair wages, equal opportunities, maternity benefits, healthcare and safe working conditions. By amplifying the voices of workers, May Day fosters solidarity and empowers individuals to strive for better living standards and dignity in labour. In India, May Day was first celebrated in 1923 by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan in Madras (now Chennai). Led by visionary leaders like Singaravelu Chettiar, this event marked the beginning of a movement to champion the rights of workers. Since then, May Day has been observed with fervour across the country, with various labour organisations leading rallies and campaigns to advocate for workers' welfare. Dr BR Ambedkar, a towering figure in India's labour movement, played a pivotal role in advocating for the rights of marginalised labourers. He emphasised the principles of equal pay for equal work, maternity benefits, eradication of discrimination and fair treatment of workers.

Through his leadership and advocacy, Dr Ambedkar laid the groundwork for a more inclusive and equitable society. While we have made significant strides in advancing labour rights, challenges persist. Many workers, especially those in the informal sector, continue to face exploitation and lack of protection. We must address these issues and work towards creating a more just and equitable working environment for all. As we celebrate International Labour Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the welfare of workers. We must advocate for policies that promote fair labour practices, empower workers and ensure their wellbeing. As International Labour Day dawns upon us once again on May 1st, 2024, let it serve not just as a commemoration of past struggles, but as a beacon lighting our path towards a future where every worker's dignity is honoured, every voice is heard and every dream finds its fulfilment in a world of equality and justice. (The writer is an associate professor, views are personal)



SANTOSH MATHEW

Why is the BJP avoiding China in campaigning?

The BJP's election focus has shifted away from recent China tensions, opting instead to highlight Nehru's actions during the 1962 conflict



ASHOK K MEHTA

China has been generally missing from election manifestoes and campaigning so far. Former Army Chief Gen Naravane at a literary festival in Ajmer recently called China India's primary threat adding confrontation along LAC was a good thing as it exposed this ground reality that Delhi was shy to admit. EAM S Jaishankar and especially Defence Secretary Giridhar Armane have made unkind references to Beijing. In his book Four Stars of Destiny Naravane has written extensively about the India-China confrontation which started under his watch. It was a serious failure of intelligence which allowed the Chinese PLA to occupy nearly 2000 square km of territory on the Indian side of LAC corresponding to their 1956 claim line. The avoidable tragedy at Galwan and the refusal of the Chinese to restore the status quo ante April 2020 even after 21 rounds of military dialogue (the last round on 21 February) place India at a serious disadvantage. In 1998 India gave China as the reason for conducting nuclear tests which incensed the Chinese, requiring then foreign minister Jaswant Singh to travel to Beijing to "untie the knot". I was witness to the repair exercise in Beijing even as then our Army was retaking Tololing Heights, Kargil. Singh had to say that China was not a threat. Later then defence minister George Fernandes called China the number one threat though it was misreported as "No 1 enemy". This caused a diplomatic furore as China is acutely sensitive to being seen as or worse a threat by any country. The Government is careful in its articulations on China as it hopes to secure full disengagement diplomatically. But the gloves came off Feb /Mar. Jaishankar speaking at the Raisina dialogue said that China should not be allowed to play mind-games to counter which India must use other means (implying US help) to seek better equilibrium. His comments came a day after Armane at the INDUS-X FORUM in Delhi unprecedentedly called Beijing a bully adding "we expect our friend US will be



there in case we need their support". Not since 1962 have we sought unequivocally US military support. This is bound to have upset China. Worse, no Indian official had ever called China a bully. Surprisingly China has not reacted. Naravane's book and excerpts have been withheld by the Government in damage control after publishers circulated excerpts of Operation Snow Leopard Night 29/30 August 2020 which belittle the Government's political control in war and explosive comments on Agniveer. Armed with material from the horse's mouth, the opposition is targeting the Government in China and Agniveer — during election rallies where foreign policy is an issue. How Army intelligence cleared the book for publication is a mystery. In parliament on 10 Feb 2021. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had informed Parliament about withdrawals in the North Pangong Tso Lake Fingers area. But he made no mention of vacation from Kailash Heights, which presumably was implied in 'mutual withdrawal'. But Singh added: "Chinese side is aware of our resolve not to allow an inch of territory to be taken". Former NSA, Shiv Shankar Menon in his writings has observed: "we don't know what happened in South Bank (Kailash heights) as we know

FORMER ARMY CHIEF GEN NARAVANE RECENTLY HIGHLIGHTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S CAUTIOUS ARTICULATIONS ON CHINA AIM TO SECURE FULL DISENGAGEMENT DIPLOMATICALLY, DESPITE THE SERIOUS INTELLIGENCE FAILURE ALLOWING CHINESE OCCUPATION OF INDIAN TERRITORY ALONG THE LAC

about North Bank (Pangongtso Lake)". Recently Congress leader Jairam Ramesh cited an X post by Chushul Councillor Konchok Stanzin of autonomous Ladakh Hill Development Council that the Rezangla battle 1962 memorial was dismantled as it fell in the 'buffer zone' negotiated with China during the vacation of Kailash Heights. That undisputed Kailash Heights in Indian territory had been made a buffer zone is a revelation that the Government never even informed parliament. In the critical operational situation replete with vertical and horizontal escalation that developed at Kailash Heights that critical night, no political guidance had been provided by CCS/RM/PM to Naravane which became clear from his conversation with Singh urgently seeking orders. With Naravane's book and excerpts embargoed for release, the book may never materialise as it showed the political direction of a war-like situation in poor light. But Naravane will know why he didn't become CDS even as critical Kailash heights are lost for perpetuity. In the election campaign, no BJP leader has so far mentioned Galwan or Kailash heights which were examples of valourous use of force against China as it could open a can of worms. Keeping Naravane out of the fray, the opposition is attacking the Government for losing 2000 sq km of land as well as 26 of 65 patrolling points. Campaigning in Pune and speaking to the media on 12 April, Jaishankar emphasized "there was no encroachment by China; it has not occupied any of our land; but the situation is sensitive, competitive and challenging." The PM, HM and RM have all also denied loss of territory. In his interview with *Newsweek* in response to a question on China, PM Modi's terse reply was: "New Delhi ties with Beijing are important and the prolonged situation at the border should be addressed urgently, for peace and tranquillity to be restored and sustained at the borders". The Chinese welcomed the statement adding sound and stable ties were in common interest. Restoring the LAC to April 2020 as sought by India, the Chinese will never do. It's tough to conceive of a compromise formula. Consequently, the C word is almost missing from the BJP election discourse, cleverly diverted to Nehru's follies in 1962. But Naravane deserves praise. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka and a founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. Views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHALLENGES FOR NEW GOVERNMENT

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Challenges loom ahead of the July Union Budget," published on April 30, this is my response. The forthcoming union budget already stirs anticipation, underscoring the critical juncture India faces. Economic discourse dominates electoral debates, eclipsing divisive issues. However, the electorate's focus on core economic woes signals a paradigm shift. Spiralling inflation, mounting household debts and sluggish job creation demand urgent attention. Yet, electoral promises veer towards populism rather than pragmatic solutions. The fiscal landscape is daunting, with staggering debt repayments curtailing budgetary flexibility. Amid global economic headwinds, India's export slump exacerbates trade deficits. Addressing structural issues like low productivity and high taxation is imperative for sustained growth. Furthermore, infrastructural development must align with socio-economic welfare, assuage rural discontent and foster inclusive growth. A judicious blend of public and private sector involvement and prudent fiscal policies can steer India towards its lofty economic aspirations. Ultimately, the onus lies on the new Government to navigate these challenges deftly, prioritising the populace's wellbeing over partisan agendas. Neha Iyer | Pune

ENGAGING YOUTH IN POLITICS

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Why are the young not joining politics?" published on April 30, this is my response. Witnessing the apathy of young voters towards participating in the political process is disheartening. While some may feel disillusioned with the quality of politicians, others might believe their voices won't make a difference. However, by abstaining from voting, they relinquish their right to shape the nation's future. On the other end of the spectrum, the

State Assembly sessions



Apropos the news article, "Delhi, other state legislative meetings dwindle," published on April 29, this is my response. As someone who follows daily news, the pattern of state assembly sessions raises concerns. The data compiled by PRS Legislative Research reveals a significant disparity in the number of days assemblies convene. While some states meet

the constitutional mandate of at least one session every six months, others fall drastically short. The emphasis on budget sessions, evident from the majority of sittings concentrated within these periods, indicates a rushed legislative process. Such haste might compromise the quality of debate and scrutiny essential for robust policymaking. Moreover, the prolonged sessions in some states, stretching beyond a year in extreme cases, question the efficiency and accountability of legislative bodies. The instances of bills being passed swiftly after introduction raise doubts about thorough deliberation and stakeholder consultation. Efforts to streamline legislative processes and ensure meaningful engagement during sessions are imperative to uphold democratic principles and deliver effective governance. Nisha Menon | Bhopal

lack of interest among older individuals in entering politics is concerning. The decline in ethical and social values, coupled with the high cost of electioneering, deters many from pursuing political careers. Addressing these issues requires systemic changes, such as the delimitation of electoral constituencies and measures to reduce election expenses. Compulsory voting could also enhance participation and diminish the influence of vote-bank politics. Moreover, curbing the distribution of freebies is crucial to prevent elections from devolving into mere transactions. True democracy demands active engagement from all citizens, irrespective of age or background. Meera Patel | Ahmedabad

NUTRITION FOR ORAL HEALTH

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Diet, Mint, Ginger Impact" published on April 29, this is my response. Maintaining oral health extends beyond brushing and flossing; it's about what we eat too. Sugary and starchy foods can

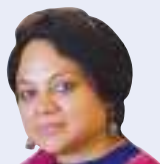
feed harmful mouth bacteria, leading to gum disease. A balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, protein, calcium-rich foods and whole grains not only supports a healthy body but also promotes a bright smile. Opting for natural foods over processed ones is key to oral and overall wellbeing. Remember, oral health impacts your entire body; bacteria from the mouth can spread, increasing the risk of various diseases. Mint and ginger offer natural remedies for oral care. Mint's antiseptic properties combat bacteria, freshen breath and prevent cavities. Meanwhile, ginger, with its gingerol compound, fights infections and inflammation, strengthening teeth. Incorporating these ingredients into a refreshing drink like Mint & Ginger Healthy Drink adds flavour and health benefits to your routine, promoting a radiant smile and robust health. Arjun Reddy | Hyderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Visual storytelling can promote sensitivity and empathy



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

A scared figure crouching in a corner, a large hand covering a mouth trying to muffle a scream, outstretched arms pleading for help, tattered clothes. More often than not, images like these accompany media reports of sexual violence against women. As a survivor of sexual harassment, Ankita Anand felt insulted looking at these images. She didn't want to be depicted this way.

What upset her most were drawings meant to represent the survivors and create awareness that served to titillate. She decided to take matters into her own hands. The activist-turned-journalist started a campaign with a Change Org petition and directed her attention to one of the major news channels to set an example by not using disrespectful images of women in sexual violence reporting. What was needed to transform the way society perceived women was images that were not about helplessness but about the rage that challenged the oppression. Pictures that showed that women are "doers," not always the "done upon-s." were shared by Anand in her piece about her innovative campaign for the Network of Women in Media, India.

While her 2018 petition garnered over 47,000 signatories and also helped to spotlight an earlier Redraw Misogyny campaign by Breakthrough, an organisation working to end violence against women, many media platforms continue to churn out images that strip the victim of agency and perpetuate shame and stigma attached with rape and sexual harassment, creating a biased perception of women who have experienced sexual violence.

But now Anand and the many survivors in India and the region, no longer have to be depicted in this disempowering way thanks to the just-launched free-to-use image bank reframing visual narratives around women and sexual violence in South Asian media.



Conceptualised by the Hri Institute for Southasian Research and Exchange, Kathmandu and developed with the help of a team of artists and photographers from India and Nepal, the image bank re-imagines visual depiction of women and sexual violence to address the wide spectrum of women's experiences. It is an outcome of a unique collaborative effort to explore the role images play in forming perceptions around sexual assault, women and gender equality. The project 'Challenging Visual Depiction of Women and Sexual Violence in Southeast Asia' led by Laxmi Murthy and Pawas Manandhar united researchers, activists, filmmakers, and artists to redefine visual portrayals of gender-based violence in cinema, media, and popular culture across Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

The one-year project focused on challenging problematic imagery and promoting more meaningful depictions of violence and trauma. South Asian artists utilised textiles alongside illustrations and photos to narrate stories of injustices against women. It is an important artistic medium of expression, especially for those who have suffered violence, repression and discrimination as textiles are inextricably linked to the lives of people, particularly women. "I Never Ask For It," a campaign by Blank Noise, a Bengaluru-based volunteer-led project, has been working to generate awareness of gender-based violence and end victim shaming/blaming by building testimonies of clothing. Images from this campaign can also support survivors of violence to feel heard and believed.

A picture is worth a thousand words. It can transform the way sexual violence against women is framed in the media when used sensitively and appropriately. It just needs the will to do it.

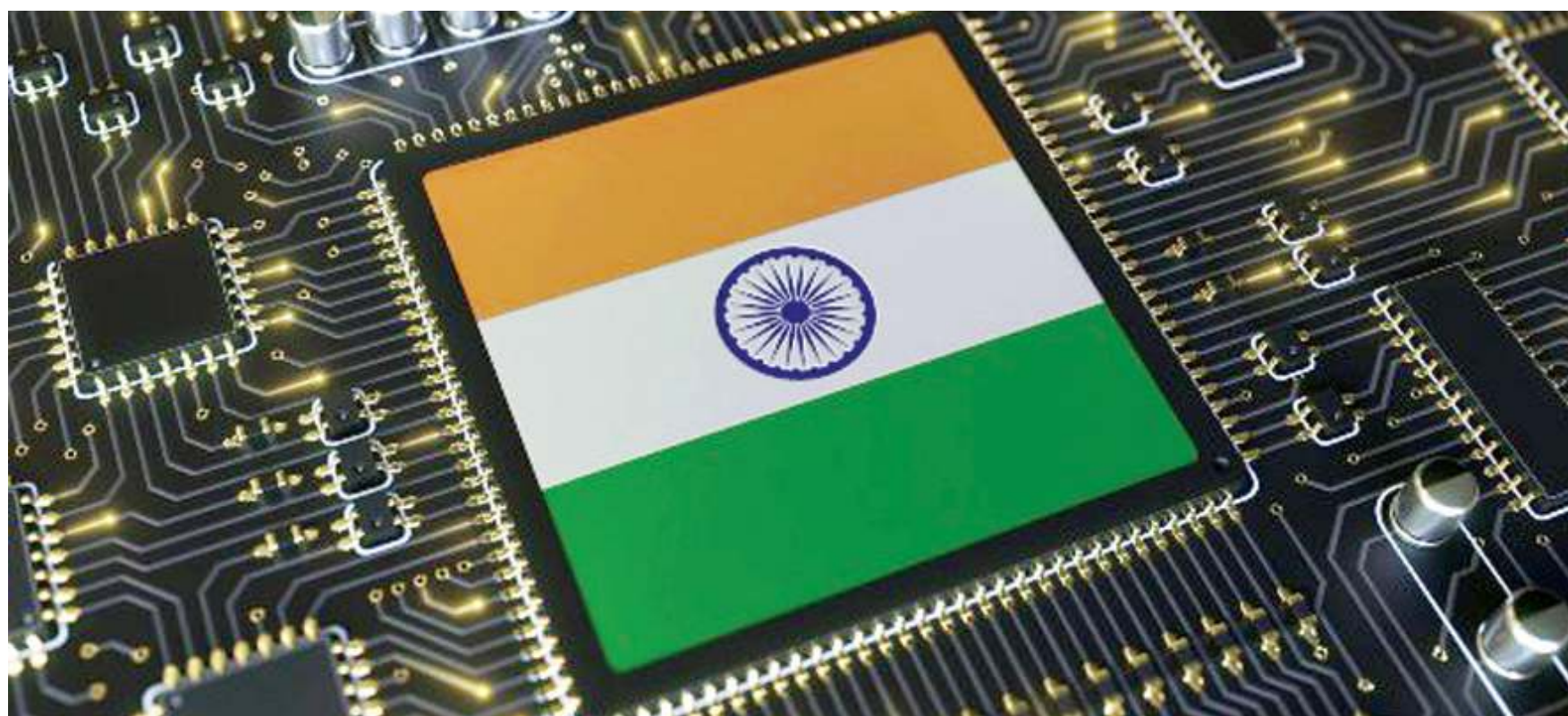
(The author is a journalist writing on development and gender. The views expressed are personal)

Semicon ecosystem: A revolution in India



A S MITTAL

India's talent, resources and infrastructure position it to excel in the semiconductor sector and becoming a global leader



As our lives become increasingly reliant on technology, semiconductors have become the essential foundation of society. These tiny chips are the powerhouses behind our electronic devices, communication systems and even the functioning of our agricultural implements, medical equipment and vehicles. India has recognised the enormous socio-economic potential and strategic importance of this silent revolution of technology and is taking the lead in building a robust semiconductor ecosystem and developing a talented workforce.

India's goal of becoming self-sufficient and a global leader in semiconductors is supported by the fact that the semiconductor industry is expected to generate over one million job opportunities for semiconductor design engineers, manufacturing engineers, R&D scientists, operators, technicians and skilled workers in chip design and semiconductor fabrication, packaging and sales facilities over the next five years. "Around 30 per cent of the new global capability centres established in India during the December quarter of last year were in the semiconductor space, indicating a growing interest in leveraging the local talent pool in areas such as front-end design, performance testing and post-silicon validation", according to the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) and Zinnov latest report. The world's leading chip design companies, including Intel, Texas Instruments, AMD, Nvidia and Qualcomm, have design and R&D centres in India. AMD recently inaugurated its largest global design centre in Bengaluru. In March, an event - 'India's Techade: Chips for Viksit Bharat', witnessed the foundation stone of three semiconductor projects worth Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

Tata Electronics in partnership with Taiwan's Power Chip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC), set up the country's first semiconductor fab plant in Dholera (Gujrat) with an investment of Rs 91,000 crore and another plant in Morigaon (Assam) with investment of Rs 27,000 crore, with the first chips to



INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR MARKET IS VALUED AT AN ESTIMATED \$15 BILLION AND IS EXPECTED TO REACH \$55 BILLION BY 2026. SMARTPHONES AND WEARABLES, AUTOMOBILE COMPONENTS, COMPUTERS AND DATA STORAGE ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 60 PER CENT OF THE MARKET

begin coming off the production line in 2026. US-based semiconductor manufacturer Micron India plant with an investment of Rs 22,500 crore in Sanand (Gujarat), is expected to roll out the first "Made in India" memory chips by December. It is contributing its bit to the Chandrayaan-3 mission Semiconductor Corporation of India (SCL) proposed to update and expand its chip facility in the Mohali plant with an investment of Rs 20,000 crore, to enhance its contribution to ISRO and other space research organisations globally.

95 Percent Import Dependency: Despite the upward trajectory of India's current semiconductor chip ecosystem, the country remains dependent on the US, Taiwan, China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea, with over 95 per cent of semiconductors imported from these countries.

To reduce this dependency on imports, India recognised the strategic importance of a robust domestic semiconductor industry. It unveiled the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) offering 50 per cent capital expenditure support to new entrants, production-linked incentive (PLI) and design-linked incentive (DLI) schemes with an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore, as well as state Government incentive support, international partnerships and a focus on talent development. The Electronic and IT Ministry plans to train over 85,000 engineers in chip design over the next five years to address the skill gap. Such focused efforts aim to steer the ecosystem through nurturing policymaking to develop a self-sufficient ecosystem.

Moreover, the geopolitical uncertainties involving the China-US trade war have compelled companies to seek alternative production bases or sourcing locations outside

China. Amid this relocation in the industry, India and Southeast Asian nations like Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia have been preferred for front-end manufacturing in the future. India's entry into this ecosystem is timely and strategically important for diversifying the global supply chain and positioning India as a global hub for semiconductor design, manufacturing and technology development, fostering the creation of employment opportunities for the nation's youth.

Present Landscape and Scope of Growth: Bengaluru and Hyderabad together host about two-thirds of India's semiconductor global capability centres (GCCs), which is over two-thirds of the total 55 semiconductor GCCs in the country. With more than 95 GCC units and a specialised workforce of 50,000, this demonstrates India's strong commitment to the semiconductor industry. Presently, India's semiconductor market is valued at an estimated \$15 billion and is expected to reach \$55 billion by 2026. Smartphones and wearables, automobile components, computers and data storage account for more than 60 per cent of the market.

Challenges: Semiconductor manufacturing is an extremely complex process that requires precision at the smallest level. Since the global chip world is closely connected, Indian companies need to collaborate with countries like Taiwan and South Korea to gain access to advanced technology that will enable them to support emerging applications with more chip content, such as autonomous machines, smart medical devices, futuristic communications at 6G onward and AI across electronics. **Bridge the skill gap:** India needs to bridge the skill gap, especially for advanced chip design and fabrication. The global semiconductor

manufacturing industry has a talent pool of 2.3 million, with nearly 25 per cent of senior talent being Indian.

To attract and retain this talent, Indian companies are holding roadshows in Taiwan's chip manufacturing centre of Hsinchu. Communications and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw says, "The engineers who have decided to return to India from the US are younger, while those from Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia are generally over 45 years and with more experience. We expect many of them to come back to participate in India's high-tech manufacturing revolution."

Road Ahead: The future of the semiconductor industry in India holds immense promise. It will play a crucial role in shaping the country's advanced technological landscape, driving economic growth and positioning India as a global leader in innovation. The semiconductor industry will also generate opportunities for an entrant and Indian talent working in this sector globally, many of whom wish to return to their roots.

India's ambition to become a self-reliant and dominant player in the semiconductor industry is clear. With the talent, resources and infrastructure in place, India is poised to make significant strides in the semiconductor sector and establish itself as a global leader in the years to come.

-The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, Vice-Chairman (Cabinet Minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Investment Council and President, of Tractor and Mechanisation Association (TMA). Views expressed are personal

Driving innovation: Role of intellectual property in India

India can emulate Japan's post-Meiji transformation by harnessing innovation, embracing change and cultivating a risk-taking culture

In the 76th Independence Day speech on August 15, 2022, the Prime Minister called for innovation with a focus on indigenous innovations highlighting "Jai Anusandhan". Innovation is the key to India realising a self-reliant, competitive and USD 30 trillion economy by 2047. Innovation has the potential to unlock major productivity gains and will allow the nation to leapfrog towards higher value-added products and services across sectors.

In the last few years, globally we have witnessed a fundamental and rapid shift from a knowledge economy to an era of artificial intelligence (AI) and virtuality. During the same time, the unprecedented nature and



KRISHNA SARMA

scale of the pandemic affirmed the importance of having an innovation ecosystem for finding new cures — vaccines, medicines and diagnostics.

For a country with a legacy of scientific and technical knowledge base, the private sector in India has previously made modest investments in research and development (R&D). India has taken a different approach to innovation

to meet its unique challenges. The transformational digital public infrastructure, starting with the Aadhar platform, is a case in point.

Similarly, against the backdrop of concerns regarding public health, access and affordability of medicines and protecting the domestic industry, India's approach to innovation in the biopharmaceutical sector is primarily based on public-sector-led collaborative innovation, where the private sector has merely been 'encouraged' to invest in R&D in priority areas.

While in many cases, publicly supported research provides a wellspring of initial discovery, it is the private sector that must develop new technologies and bring them to the

market. To be a leader in a rapidly changing marketplace across sectors, private sector innovation is critical. How does one measure innovation? One way could be to determine how much a company spends on R&D as a percentage of its revenue annually. As patents secure exclusive rights to an invention, the innovative index of a company can be additionally judged by the number of granted patents, patent applications filed, whether the filings are in multiple countries, the quality of the patents and so forth. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce's 161st Report on IPR Regime in India (July 2021) expresses concern that the rate of increase in the number of

patents in India in the last four years has been very low compared to the US and China. It goes on to say that this is co-related to the microscopic spending on R&D which is a meagre 0.7 per cent of India's GDP. Globally, companies with the highest R&D spend are big tech US companies like Amazon, Meta, Alphabet, Microsoft, Intel Corp. and bio-pharmaceutical companies like Roche, J&J, Pfizer, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Merck & Co. This list also includes three companies from China — Huawei, Tencent Holdings and Alibaba; Samsung from S. Korea; and European automobile manufacturers like Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz.

Regarding the biopharmaceutical sector, the removal of product patent protection for drugs in 1970 allowed reverse engineering, which led to the exponential growth of the domestic generic industry and helped India be 'the pharmacy of the world'. At the same time, however, the lack of effective patent protection profoundly impacted corporate investment in R&D and the discovery of new molecules. Zydus Cadila's Saroglitazar, launched in 2013, remains so far, the only compound that was entirely indigenously discovered.

India has the potential to spur its innovative spirit by leveraging its strengths, embracing change and fostering a risk-taking culture.

Japan's transformation after the Meiji Restoration from being an importer and imitator of foreign technologies, to a global powerhouse in innovation that has defined the world's technological landscape exemplifies that necessity is the mother of invention.

There is no silver bullet for creating an enabling environment for innovation. Bryce Hoffman in his book Red Teaming shows how disruptive innovation requires critical and contrarian thinking. So, to inculcate the scientific temper and risk-taking and entrepreneurship spirit, there is a dire need to shift the emphasis of our education system from rote memorisation and conformity. Second, we must vigorously

pursue closer collaboration between academia and industry to commercialise innovation. It is a matter of great pride that Prof. Rahul Purwar, IIT Mumbai obtained marketing approval for the first indigenously developed cell and gene therapy for the treatment of cancer.

Last but not least, a robust, meaningful and predictable intellectual property rights system can most optimally provide economic incentives to inventors and investors to invest risk capital in inventive activity — a very high-risk undertaking.

(The author is Managing Partner, Corporate Law Group, a New Delhi-based law firm; views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

Gold slumps Rs 150; silver plunges Rs 750

Extending the losses for the second straight session, gold prices on Tuesday slumped Rs 150 to Rs 72,600 per 10 grams in the national capital amid a fall in precious metal rates in the global markets, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had closed at Rs 72,750 per 10 grams in the previous session. Silver prices also plunged Rs 750 to Rs 83,750 per kg. In the previous close, it had ended at Rs 84,500 per kg. "Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 72,600 per 10 grams, down Rs 150 taking bearish cues from overseas markets," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities said. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at US\$ 2,320 per ounce, down US\$ 13 from the previous close. "Gold prices continued to weaken... as this sell-off was attributed to the anticipation of a hawkish stance from the US Federal Reserve in the upcoming interest rate policy announcement scheduled for May 1."



GMR Airports Infra to buy stake in WAISL for Rs 57 crore

GMR Airports Infrastructure on Tuesday announced acquiring an 8.4 per cent stake in WAISL, which provides digital infrastructure services at airports, as the company looks to strengthen its presence in airport-related businesses. The company has entered into an agreement to buy 4,60,000 shares or an 8.4 per cent stake of WAISL from Utthista Virat Fund for Rs 56.66 crore, according to a regulatory filing on Tuesday. Incorporated in 2009, WAISL is into the business of delivering digital infrastructure at airports and operates as an exclusive partner for IT services at airports. In the filing, GMR Airports Infrastructure said it has been "exploring opportunities of investing in entities engaged in airport adjacencies/ airport related businesses etc. to strengthen its presence in all aspects of airport related / airport adjacent businesses". GMR Airports Infrastructure operates through GMR Airports Ltd (GAL), which operates various airports, including at Delhi, Hyderabad, Goa and the Philippines. Shares of the company declined 2.75 per cent to Rs 85.19 apiece in late afternoon trade on the BSE.



UCO Bank aims to bring down govt stake to 75 per cent : MD

UCO Bank on Tuesday said it aims to reduce the government's stake in the bank from the current 95.39% to 75% in several tranches by fiscal 2024-25, to comply with the minimum public shareholding norms set by SEBI. The lender has time until August to comply with this but it hopes to receive a further extension, a top bank official said. Four other public sector banks have also laid out plans to pare down government holdings to meet SEBI regulations. "We don't need equity for growth as our capital adequacy is at 16.98%. However, we must reduce the government's stake to 75% to meet listing regulations, and we aim to do so within this fiscal year. The board has approved the issuance of 400 crore equity shares for this purpose. We will execute this in tranches," said UCO Bank MD & CEO Aswani Kumar. He said various options will be explored as issuance plans get firmer. "To comply, the issuance of 330-340 crore equity shares at Rs 10 each would have been sufficient, but we have allowed some additional headroom," he said at a post-earnings interaction. Speaking about the credit growth outlook, Kumar mentioned that the bank is targeting a growth of 12-14%, and corporate lending is expected to remain robust with a growth target of 3-4%.



Indian economy likely to grow over 7% : NCAER

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian economy could grow more than 7 per cent during the current fiscal amid a benign global outlook and expected above-normal monsoon, economic think tank NCAER has said. In its April 2024 issue of Monthly Economic Review (MER), NCAER said a range of high-frequency indicators reveal the resilience of the domestic economy with the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for manufacturing at a 16-year high and UPI, the leading digital payments system, touching the highest volume since its inception in 2016.



"Projected acceleration in both global growth and trade volumes, as well as a forecast of an above-normal monsoon, indicate that the Indian economy can again attain growth rates higher than 7 per cent during the current fiscal year," said NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta.

said NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta.

March 2024, the highest since its introduction, registering a growth of 55.3 per cent on a year-on-year basis.

"These high-frequency indicators, coupled with a more benign global outlook projected by the IMF and WTO bode well for the Indian econ-

omy during the current year," Gupta added.

According to the report, Consumer Price Index (CPI) headline inflation was down to 4.9 per cent in March from 5.1 per cent in February, while core inflation came down to 3.2 per cent during the same period.

The report said employment indicators again showed mixed trends, with an increase in the number of net new subscribers under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on a year-on-year basis.

However, the overall online hiring activities, as per the Naukri JobSpeak Index, moderated year-on-year, it added.

While the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Fitch Ratings have estimated India's growth at 7 per cent, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), S&P Global Ratings and Morgan Stanley projected a 6.8 per cent growth rate for FY25.



Adani Total Gas net profit rises 59 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Total Gas Ltd, the city gas retailing joint venture of Adani group and TotalEnergies of France, on Tuesday reported a 59 per cent rise in March quarter net profit on the back of a surge in CNG sales volumes.

The company posted a net profit of Rs 165 crore in the January-March period as against Rs 104 crore in the same period a year back, the company said in a statement.

The firm, which retails CNG to automobiles and pipes natural gas to household kitchen for cooking purpose, saw a revenue increase of 5 per cent to Rs 1,257 crore while EBITDA surged 49 per cent to Rs 305 crore the quarter.

Sebi takes steps to curb unfair trades in mutual funds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi board on Tuesday decided to amend norms governing mutual funds, whereby asset management companies (AMCs) need to put in place an "institutional mechanism" for identification and deterrence of potential market abuse, including front-running and fraudulent transactions in securities.

The mechanism should consist of enhanced surveillance systems, internal control procedures, and escalation processes to identify, monitor, and address specific types of misconduct, including front running, insider trading, and misuse of sensitive information.



tion, Sebi said in a statement issued after the conclusion of the board meeting.

Intending to address the issues faced by venture capital funds (VCFs) registered under the erstwhile VCF norms to their inability to fully liquidate the investments of their

schemes within the tenure of the scheme, the Sebi's board has approved a proposal to provide an option to such VCFs to migrate into AIF (Alternative Investment Fund) rules and avail the facilities available for AIFs to deal with unliquidated investments

Markets wipe out early gains on fag-end sell-off; Nifty slips

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower on Tuesday as a fag-end sell-off wiped out early gains, with IT and power stocks playing spoilsport amid a mixed trend in global markets.



74,482.78. During the day, it had jumped 440.11 points or 0.58 per cent to 75,111.39.

The NSE Nifty dipped 38.55 points or 0.17 per cent to finish

at 22,604.85. In the late afternoon trade, the benchmark hit its all-time peak of 22,783.35, up 139.95 points or 0.61%. From the Sensex basket, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, HCL Technologies, Tata Consultancy Services, Larsen & Toubro and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the biggest laggards. Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank and Maruti were the major gainers.

India to grant full cost of Lanka northern port development

PNS ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan Cabinet on Tuesday decided to implement the renovation of the Kankesanthurai Port in the Northern Province with India agreeing to grant US\$ 61.5 million-the entire cost of the project.

Situated in the northern region of Sri Lanka, the Kankesanthurai Port or the KKS Port, with an area of approximately 16 acres, is located at a

distance of 104 kilometres (66 nautical miles) from Karaikal Port in Pondicherry. The direct passenger ship service connecting Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu to Kankesanthurai port near Jaffna covers a distance of 111 kilometres (60 nautical miles) in approximately three and a half hours. "Considering the importance of the project, the Indian government has agreed to grant the entire estimated cost of the project," a statement said on Tuesday.

ED seizes Rs 90-cr funds kept in Binance, ZebPay, WazirX wallets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday said it has taken possession of funds worth Rs 90 crore, kept in cryptocurrency wallets of exchanges like Binance, ZebPay and WazirX, as part of a money laundering investigation linked to an online gaming app "scam".

"These crypto assets were subsequently taken into possession and transferred into the crypto wallet of the ED," the federal agency said in a statement.

The investigation pertains to an online gaming scam app "scam" called 'E-Nugget' that masqueraded as a gaming platform and "promised" users high returns on their investments.

An FIR filed at the Park Street Police Station of Kolkata became the basis of the ED case that was registered under the provisions of the

Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The app offered a series of enticing games designed for real-money wagering promised users hefty commissions and painted a picture of a "golden investment" opportunity, the ED said. However, this facade quickly fell apart once investments were made with the app going dark and leaving investors stranded without a way to reclaim their funds, it said.

The ED said it exposed the alleged illegal activities of the app in 2022 and found that a part of the ill-gotten gains was invested in

digital assets. About 2,500 mule or dummy bank accounts were identified, it said.

The agency said it sought details of crypto wallets involved in this case and held with cryptocurrency exchanges like Binance, ZebPay and WazirX.



India will become leader in offshore mining: Official

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India will become the leader in offshore mining as not many countries have done much in this area, a government official said on Tuesday. Offshore mining is the process of retrieving mineral deposits from the deep seabed, at a depth of more than 200 metres.

Speaking at the Critical Minerals Summit here, Joint Secretary in Ministry of Mines, Veena Kumari D said the government has amended the offshore mining legislation. "We have done amendment to the Act for offshore

mining and we are working on the rules for that and India will be the leader in offshore mining because not many countries have done much of offshore mining and we were working on it since August 2023," she added.

Mines Secretary V L Kantha Rao in his address on Monday had said that the auction of offshore mines will begin in three months' time. The Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act, 2002 has been amended to provide an auction route for awarding production leases for offshore minerals.

Wipro bags multi million dollar deal to transform Nokia's digital workplace services

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT services company Wipro Ltd on Tuesday announced that it has been selected by Nokia to overhaul its employee service desk and offer real-time IT support to a global network of employees, in a multi-million dollar deal.

Wipro team will build a bespoke AI-powered, cloud-based solution for Nokia's workforce comprising around 86,700 users globally in 130 countries of operations.

The solution aims to enhance the employee experience by providing modular, secure, and automated services, Wipro said in a release. The release said Wipro has



clinched a multi-million-dollar deal to transform Nokia's digital workplace services.

Designit, a Wipro company that specialises in user experience strategy and implementation, will conduct user research to ensure personalised assistance is offered to employees at the right time.

The project will result in the creation of an experience-driven, omni-channel, and always-on global service desk, which

will provide employees with flexible and secure services to empower them to effectively navigate a hybrid work environment, the release added.

"Generative AI is fast becoming a critical component of Digital Workplace services. We are proud to work with Nokia on building an IT support solution that will improve the employee experience," Vinay Firake, Senior Vice President and Managing Director

Nordics of Wipro, said.

Marije van Donk, Vice President, Head of User Experience at Nokia, said, "At Nokia, we are increasing our efforts to elevate and secure user experiences with our IT Services".

A key pillar is a modernised remote support concept that uses the latest technologies to provide seamless, secure, and efficient support, regardless of location, device, or network.

"Implementing this concept will empower our users to self-serve their issues, give intelligent and contextual guidance, and connect users with experts. We have chosen Wipro as our partner in this transformation journey," Donk said

SAIL staff settles case with Sebi; pays Rs 45.50 lakh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A SAIL employee on Tuesday settled with markets regulator Sebi a case of the alleged violations of insider trading activities in the company's shares by paying Rs 45.50 lakh towards the settlement charges.

The terms of the settlement also included the disgorgement of alleged unlawful gain of Rs 40.09 lakh (which includes interest of 12 per cent per annum).

In the revised settlement terms (RST), the applicant (Arun Verma) proposed to voluntarily abstain from the securities market for a year. The order came after the

applicant filed an application with Sebi, proposing to settle the pending proceedings through a settlement order without admitting or denying the findings of fact and conclusions of law.

"...it is hereby ordered that the instant proceedings initiated against the applicant (Arun Verma) vide show cause notice dated October 10, 2023, are disposed of," Sebi's Chief General Manager G Ramar said in the order.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) conducted an investigation into the scrip of Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) based on the internal alert.



TO ACHIEVE NET-ZERO CARBON EMISSION

Aluminum industry requires additional Rs 2.2 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian aluminium industry would require an additional capital expenditure of nearly Rs 2.2 lakh crore (USD 29 billion) to achieve net-zero carbon emission, according to a new study.

The study by independent think-tank Council on Energy, Environment, and Water (CEEW) said renewable energy power sources could abate 49 per cent of the total emissions from the industry.

However, fully switching to renewable energy is not feasi-



ble right now because it is not always available. So a backup plan is needed, it added.

India has committed to achieving net-zero emissions (a balance between greenhouse

gases emitted and removed from the atmosphere) by 2070 and 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.

Aluminum is widely used, especially in the power sector, and it is one of India's fastest-growing industries. But achieving net-zero emissions could make it 61 per cent more expensive, with a yearly operational cost of about Rs 26,049 crore (USD 3.5 billion).

Even though India does not use a lot of aluminum per person (2.5 kilogrammes) compared to the global average (11 kilogrammes), the industry emitted a whopping 77 million tonnes of CO2 in 2019-20. Most of this comes

from electricity used by the plants.

The study suggests that improving energy efficiency in aluminum production and using waste heat recovery can help cut emissions without making aluminum more expensive. However, most other ways to cut emissions, like using more renewable energy or capturing carbon, will make aluminum production more costly.

CEEW also launched a study on what it would take for the fertiliser industry to achieve net-zero emissions.

'NH construction to decline by 7-10 pc to 31 km/day'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi, Apr 30 (PTI) The pace of National Highways construction in India is estimated to slow down by 7-10 per cent to around 31 km/day in the current fiscal due to heightened execution challenges, CareEdge Ratings said on Tuesday.

The pace of National Highways construction in India during FY24 registered a healthy uptick of 20 per cent



to 34 km/day. "CareEdge Ratings expects National Highways Construction to slow down from 12,350 km in FY24 to 11,100-11,500 km in

FY25," it said.

However, according to the rating agency, despite the uptick, the pace of construction fared lower than 37 km per day reported in FY21 due to execution woes and an increasingly competitive landscape.

It said BOT (build, operate and transfer)-HAM remained the preferred mode of award, constituting around 55 per cent of the total projects awarded during FY21-24.

FROM WATCHING ON-SCREEN TO STARRING ALONGSIDE

SUBODHINI PUROHIT

SHIV JYOTI'S DREAM COMES TRUE WITH FATEH

Actress Shiv Jyoti Rajput, who will soon be seen in the Sonu Sood-starrer *Fateh*, gets candid with *The Pioneer*, sharing the dynamics of filmmaking, portraying Shehla Rashid in JNU, and more.

Shiv Jyoti Rajput has become a well-known figure in the entertainment industry thanks to her exceptional performance in the OTT field and her noticeable presence in commercials. She is well-known for her captivating roles in films such as *Special Ops 1.5: The Himmat Story*, where her talent and adaptability enthralled viewers! She is now ready to make her mark on the big screen. She will star with renowned actor Sonu Sood in the eagerly awaited movie *Fateh*. She's also getting ready for her part in the next film, *JNU: Jahangir National University*, in which she plays Shehla Rashid, a renowned activist.

The dynamics of the filmmaking industry change along with it. She explains, saying, "It was all going great, barely any changes at all, until I realised that filmmaking has changed into a whole new world. The amount of money spent on movies these days is staggering, especially when compared to the amount of money spent on OTT shows. But since it was announced that I would be making my debut with other younger stars, the scene has changed dramatically and has come under intense scrutiny. The sudden limelight took me entirely by surprise."

Shehla Rashid, a well-known activist and former JNU student leader, takes over. She discloses the following about the character: "She's far from ordinary, navigating life's challenges effortlessly. Her steadfast faith in the great power of kindness is what makes her unique. She exudes a unique goodness that makes an impression on everyone she encounters with her unwavering warmth and contagious happiness. She has had an incredible impact on everyone who had the good fortune to know her."

Occasionally, we find ourselves approached for the most unexpected roles in the chaos of auditions and opportunities. For the actress expatriates, this was the situation. "Hehe! It's funny how the role came to me with little effort on my part. I

did, in fact, try it out, but I promptly forgot about it. Admittedly, I don't have the knowledge to perform a thorough SWOT analysis to determine whether or not to accept it. However, I reasoned, my parents would be proud if I began my career with this movie. Given the traditional nature of Rajput families, it seems likely that they would be among the first to watch it."

It was her desire to work alongside Sonu Sood and Jacqueline Fernandez too. She reveals, saying, "Living the dream! It was one thing to see them on TV on the big screen, but I get so much excitement from working with them and spending time with Sonu, sir? It seemed unreal! His enthusiasm for imparting anecdotes, films, and life experiences was incredibly motivating. He had music I could listen to for hours on end. However, as they say, "Jack is a dull boy if he works all the time and plays none at all." I therefore liked to playfully rile him up or break into song to make him grin and brighten the mood. The team always had a good laugh as a result."

Every endeavour had its share of difficulties, and she overcame them all. "Even though I had health issues, I decided to join *Fateh* a few days after getting over a viral infection. I was often feeling cold in Amritsar because of the unexpectedly low temperatures. I have to say, though, that this film was the most comfortable I've done thus far." She talks about her pre-role rituals. "I would be more than happy to divulge my secret to you! Let's hold off until I'm positive that I left a posi-

tive impact on the audience. When I'm satisfied that they're having fun with the movie, I'll be pleased to share it. Keep checking back!"

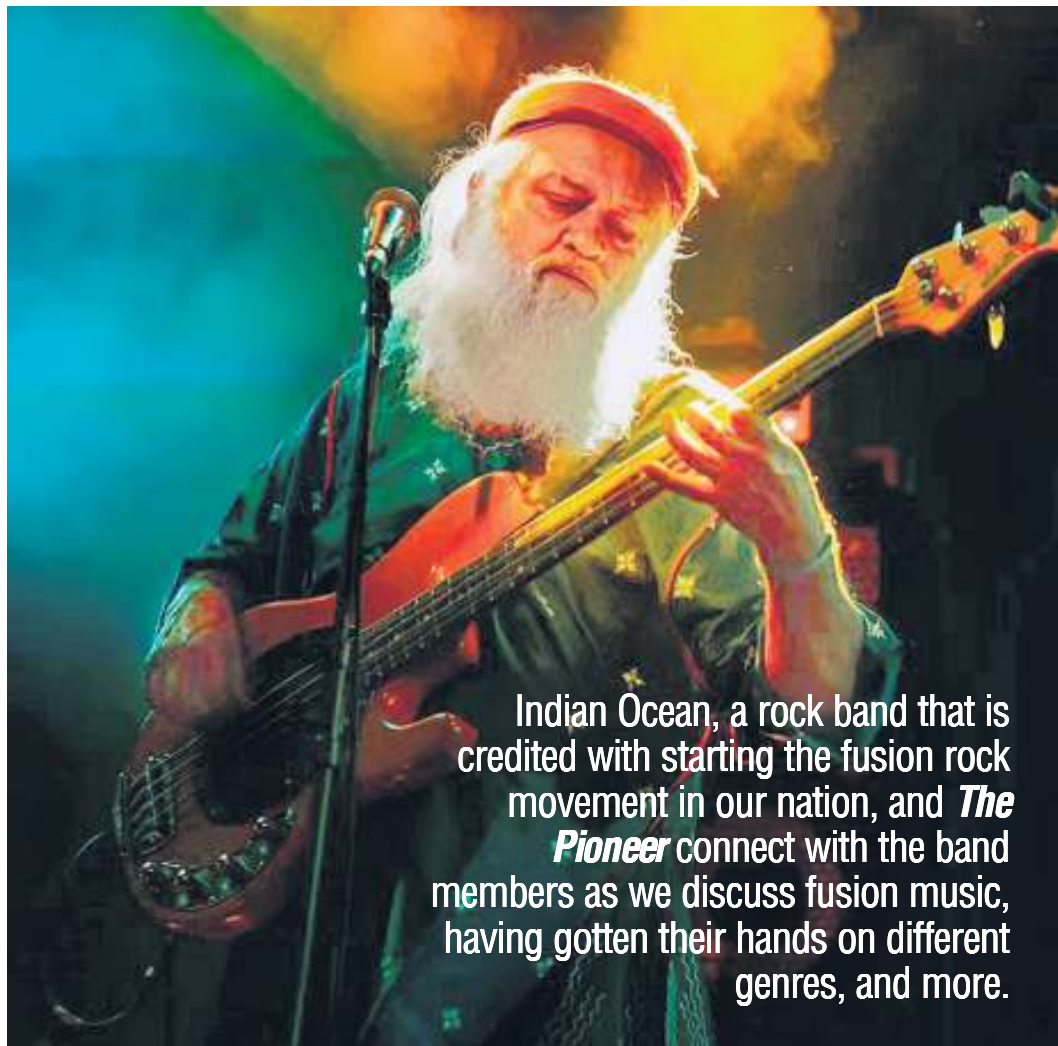
"Everyone's journey and mindset are unique, so I'm not in the habit of giving advice," is her advice to young people who want to be actors. "But I can tell you this: never waver from your convictions and never feel the need to apologise. You can succeed in this." She says that she is passionate about a variety of topics outside of acting, including exploring new areas of study. "I'm really good at athletics; I can sketch; and I have a passion for cooking."

Get ready to enter a world where performances are soul-stirring and beyond the ordinary. An experience unlike any other is promised by her extraordinary ability to incorporate magic into her work. She says, "I have a very special ability to use magic in my performances. The delight, joy, and empathy they inspire in your heart will make you laugh. I can guarantee that you will have an incredible experience that will bring tears of pure delight to your eyes."



Jamming through jazz-laced rhythms and tunes

SUMMER HYDRATION: Keeping your kidneys healthy with ample water intake



Indian Ocean, a rock band that is credited with starting the fusion rock movement in our nation, and *The Pioneer* connect with the band members as we discuss fusion music, having gotten their hands on different genres, and more.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

We had an exclusive interview with Indian Ocean, a rock band that was founded in 1990 and is largely credited with starting the fusion rock movement in our nation. Before Asheem Chakravarty passed away on December 25, 2009, the band's members included Susmit Sen, Rahul Ram, Amit Kilam, and Himanshu Joshi. Tuheen Chakravarty and Joshi were formally admitted into the band as Chakravarty's heirs. Rahul Ram is the only original member who was featured on the band's debut album, *Indian Ocean*, since Susmit Sen left in 2013!

Fusion has advanced significantly, as the band members asserted in a recent interview with *The Pioneer*. "People are singing and performing linguistic fusion with confidence these days. Agam is a fantastic band that performs fusion Carnatic music. Bollywood is now incorporating fusion rock into some of its films, which is a big thing. We have performed fusion rock in a few movies." Jazz fusion is the most appropriate genre to describe the band's sound.

But, we were told, "We really don't set out to do some specific instruments. We get together and jam, and the various genres of music we grew up with have become a part of who we are. Additionally, as the band has developed over time, new members have added character-



istics of their own. For instance, Himanshu is well-versed in ancient Punjabi and Uttarakhandi folklore, as well as Ghazal and Urdu poetry. Former heavy metal guitarist Nitin Rao is now interested in jazz and Carnatic music. You will have to sit with us and experience the music for yourself to gain any further insight into how we truly came up with it."

The band has been defying record labels' policies since 2010. Their most recent album, *16/330 Khajoor Road*, was made available for free online. This decision was mostly motivated by unhappiness with contract negotiations with record labels and legal disputes around copyright! The band members don't seem to be phased, though, and go on, "We didn't want to engage with music companies because of how terrible their con-

tracts operate. We therefore made the decision to record the music ourselves and only grant them distribution rights following Black Friday. These businesses are no longer relevant; their primary role now is to distribute your music across several channels. However, other factions have taken control of even that. Since music firms have been exploiting musicians for so long, it's about time they realise that's not the way to make money, so it's not a bad thing that they are slowly but surely becoming obsolete."

Instead of playing to record labels, they are now making money through concerts and sponsorships. Johnnie Walker briefly provided sponsorship for them!

"After Asheem's death and Susmit's retirement, the current line is devoid of any members from the 1990s. In 1991, I became a member. However, Nikhil Rao has had a fantastic impact. He is humorous and full of life, but more significantly, he is interested in a wide range of genres, which has greatly increased the band's diversity. In terms of both creativity and interpersonal dynamics, the band is in fantastic shape. The solos are incredible. Ultimately, Susmit's leaving is beneficial for both him and the band," said band member Rahul Ram.

As one of the five featured artists, they are also members of the world's first music personalisation initiative, called *DRP*. "Every song, with the exception of the title tune, revolves around the environmental problem. *Jadu Maya* and *Iss Tan Dhan's* music, for example, speaks to resisting materialism. A major element of revolution or protest music is there aside from that. Actually, Asheem contributed to a few of the tracks on *16/330*. And the incomplete work we made with Asheem is the second CD of *16/330*, which most people have never heard of. Asheem had left by the time it was released, but he was still very much a part of it. After Asheem and Susmit parted ways, the album *Tandanu* was released. We had moved on at that point, and a lot of time had passed. We speak lovingly and affectionately about Asheem and miss him every single day. We tell everyone about him, and we cherish our memories of him. We were fortunate to have spent nearly two decades with him."

Sen's father proposed the name Indian Ocean back in 1990. As the new drummer, Shaleen Sharma was joined by bassists Anirban Roy and Indrajit Dutta. Sen sold his electric guitar to help the band acquire the necessary funds, and together they recorded a demo. The seven tracks on the 45-minute recording were all recorded in a single day. The demo tape was recorded in a hurry, but its quality pleased HMV, and they were offered an album deal. It has been a major pleasure working with lyricist Sanjeev Sharma for the whole band. Could you give more details on the band's collaborations with the lyricist? Well, one of the team members says, "It was at a music rehearsal for a play that we truly first got together. He told us, when we sat down with him, that lyrics are not poetry, and it's true that he's created so many lovely songs for us. Every chance we have, we attempt to collaborate with him. We begin with the music and then turn it over to the lyricist after providing a quick synopsis of the song. The song came together over a few conversations and idea sharing. The focus is on giving the lyrics significance, as evidenced by other Indian Ocean tunes."

A song's creation for *Masaan*, starring Vicky Kaushal, involved the input of multiple parties, including the director, producer, and lyricist he chose. In addition, there are time constraints, such as the length of songs for motion pictures, which place a strong emphasis on the words and less emphasis on the music, which is typically the focus of the Indian Ocean. But in spite of all of these difficulties and limitations, they managed to produce a respectable quantity of work that is really engaging!

In the heat of the summer, it may be difficult to think about how important drinking more water is. While you might think that adequate water intake is related to your kidneys, it is in fact essential for ensuring their health. These active organs are the key to eliminating most excess water from your body, and just imagine the added workload of the summer heat.

A lack of water intake leads to the accumulation of waste products in the blood, which in turn puts extra pressure on the kidneys, making them work harder. Eventually, this straining of the kidney will lead to the formation of stones, the development of urinary tract infections, and other forms of chronic kidney disease.

But fear not! It is a very simple and outstanding way to keep your kidneys healthy by drinking a sufficient amount of water. That is probably how they have this good state with so much water inside the body. Extensive fluid intake in this case assists in the removal of toxins and the dilution of waste products, guaranteeing that this is achieved by the optimal functioning of the kidneys.

Maybe at this point you are asking, "How many water glasses will be enough?" The answer would be a minimum of eight, but preferably two liters. Similarly, in the scorching summer months, when the increased sweat loss is experienced, you may have to drink more fluids to compensate for the high water loss.

Making sure you're keeping yourself hydrated easier, include these simple ideas into your everyday routine:

Carry a reusable water bottle: The fact that you can see the water and its constant presence will be a helpful and touchable

indicator. Just refill your water bottle from time to time; instead of buying soda or juice, you'll end up with plenty of water in your cup, which will help you a lot with your daily water intake limit.

Infuse your water: If you think that plain water is not appealing enough, give it a change by adding fresh slices of fruits, herbs, or vegetables. A combination of cucumber, lemon, and mint dilutions will turn water into a fruit-fresh alternative.

Embrace hydrating foods: When it comes to thirst quenching, water is a perfect liquid, but many other items, such as fruits and vegetables, are able to assist you in keeping your hydration number high. Feast on luscious watermelon, crispy cucumbers, or urgeable grapes to replenish the lost fluids.

Don't forget to set reminders: The daily grind of life rushes by, and the intake of water is one of the things that slips the mind. Probably, set an alarm on your phone or wearable, and be mindful that taking a break from hydration every hour or so will make it better for you.

Don't forget to appreciate your kidneys, the silent protectors whose function includes maintaining your health and well-being. When you let them indicate their lack of hydration on the hottest days of the summer, you are helping them perform their task better and, as a result, preventing other, more general health problems. Hence, raise a glass or a water bottle to your kidneys and embark on a journey for the rejuvenating power of proper water intake!

(The author, Dr. Sujit Chatterjee, is the CEO of Dr. L.H Hiranandani Hospital.)



JOURNEYS OF EMPOWERMENT

Mamta Trivedi's innovative women's empowerment project, Mrs. India Telangana, unveiled its 2024 edition brochure.

● Chaya Devi
● G Smithy
● Sumathi Churukanti
● Ranu Sharma
● Mamta Trivedi
● Shilaja

PARTY

Vamsi Art Theaters Hyderabad, which has been serving in various fields since 1972, and Tirumala Bank, which has been serving in the banking sector for the last 25 years, presented the "Vamsi Tirumala Bank Ugadi Kamadhenu Puraskaralu" to 100 national and foreign dignitaries from different fields for the first time.

● Sujatha
● Suman
● Rojaramani
● Rakesh

With Pat Cummins serving as brand ambassador, Carrera, the Italian lifestyle and sports eyewear brand owned by the Safilo Group, has formally unveiled its summer 2024 collection. At the lavish opening of Helvetica Eyewear Boutique, in Hyderabad, the captain of the Sunrisers Hyderabad team and captain of the Australian cricket team unveiled the newest eyewear line

Photos by- SV Chary

Team Cellbay of Telangana's fastest-growing multibrand retail network, opened a new showroom in Tupran town. The locals emphasised how happy they were to have a Cellbay store in their community, which will meet all of their demands.

The winners of the pageantry "Miss & Mrs. Gujarati Telangana-2024" were announced during the Grand Finale at the Gujarati Ekta Mahotsav-24 Closing Ceremony at De Sury Arena Convention, Shamshabad, Hyderabad.

FUN

ARCHIE

MOOSE GOT AN "A" ON HIS TEST IN GRUNDY'S CLASS!
WOW! THAT'S GREAT, MOOSE!
YOU SHOULD TAKE THAT TEST PAPER HOME AND HANG IT ON THE WALL!
I'M GONNA ...
JUST AS SOON AS MS GRUNDY'S THROUGH WITH IT!

CALVIN AND HOBBS

BOY, CALVIN TAKES THAT STUFFED TIGER EVERYWHERE HE GOES.
YEAH, THEY'RE INSEPARABLE.
DO YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT? I MEAN, SHOULDN'T HE BE PLAYING WITH REAL FRIENDS?
OH, I THINK HE WILL WHEN HE'S READY. DIDN'T YOU EVER HAVE AN IMAGINARY FRIEND?
SOMETIMES I THINK ALL MY FRIENDS HAVE BEEN IMAGINARY.

GARFIELD

ARE YOU GOING TO SLEEP ALL DAY?
ALL IN FAVOR?
Z

REALITY CHECK

EVERYONE THOUGHT THAT SALT WOULD BE THE KILLER WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT IT WAS THE ENRICHED WHITE FLOURS ALL ALONG!

SPEED BUMP

I COULD ONLY FIND A COUPLE OF PILLOWCASES.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	
6			7		8
9			10		
12	13			14	15
				16	
17					
19					

NANCY

IRMA IS MY BEST GIRL-FRIEND-- BUT LIKE ALL FRIENDS-- WE STILL FIGHT SOME-TIMES
ALINT FRITZI-- THE PLACE CARDS ARE ALL SET FOR MY PARTY
I HOPE YOU INVITED IRMA
I INVITED HER-- BUT I'M STILL MAD AT HER--

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Not sure
- Grape plants
- Get to
- Litters
- Choose
- A passenger's document
- Accompanying
- Less wet
- Finished
- A big, important church
- Called in on
- Emerged from an egg
- Look everywhere for
- Porcelain
- New Delhi is the capital of this country
- No longer alive

DOWN

- A nursemaid for children
- A compass direction
- This has a bull's-eye
- Mirror reflection

SOLUTION

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

GINGER MEGGS

THIS IS IT, BENNY. IT'S MAN VERSUS THE UNIVERSE!
YOU MEAN MAN VERSUS MACHINE?
NOT WHERE WE'RE GOING!

'Darling is the best script I have heard so far'

EXCLUSIVE

K. RAMYA SREE

Actress Nabha Natesh is gearing up to make a striking comeback to Tollywood with not one but two intriguing projects, each offering a distinct narrative and character arc. While one film, *Swayambhu*, sees her portraying a princess alongside actors Nikhil and Samyuktha Menon, the other, *Darling*, pairs her with Priyadarshi in a role that holds special significance for the actress.

The unveiling of Nabha's first-look poster from *Swayambhu* has already created waves, with the actress exuding elegance and charm. These projects hold a special place in Nabha's heart as they offer her

roles that she has never explored before in her career, with *Darling* holding particular importance.

In conversation with *The Pioneer*, Nabha spoke candidly about her decision to take on these projects, emphasising her desire for diversity and novelty in her roles. She shared, "I have been on a hunt for the right kind of film for me for a long time. When I decided to come back and start making movies, I was 100 percent sure that I didn't want to do the same stuff I had already done. I want to do something new because, first of all, I'll be bored with myself. If I am not enjoying it, I am pretty sure that I can't expect the audience to feel something really good about it."

Regarding her choice to sign *Darling* first, Nabha expressed her enthusiasm for the script and her character, highlighting the extensive preparation she underwent to embody the role fully. "I signed *Darling*, because it has the best script I have heard," she revealed, adding, "Writing for the girl in this movie, for me, is the best writing ever. I did a workshop for about a month, which helped me get into the character. Even release-wise, I think *Darling* will be coming first."

As for *Swayambhu*, Nabha emphasised the allure of exploring a period film and portraying an extremely classical character, a departure from her previous roles. "My character has had a great journey. There is a part of transformation in my role in the film. I think both movies will have two different strong dimensions. It is going to show a facet of me as an actor," she expressed.

Moreover, Nikhil learned martial arts,

Samyuktha learned horseback riding for *Swayambhu*, and Nabha plays a classical dancer in the film, and it gets even easier for her and more efficient for the movie because the actress is already a trained classical dancer and is also perfect with horseback riding.

Reflecting on her growth as an artist, Nabha expressed her commitment to delivering her best performance yet. "In the last two years, with the training I have done and the content I have watched, I am coming with the best possible foot I can," she affirmed.

Offers have always knocked on Nabha's door, even when she was injured and was at home for two years. "I am only about 8 movies old in Telugu; I always had characters, and movies had the potential to impress the audience. But now I want *Darling* to release before I take up other projects. Because even for the audience and for filmmakers who haven't seen me in movies for a long time, I want them to know what I can do and offer me the kind of potential work I can do justice to. As you grow, your ideas and approach to any art form will grow; it can only be shown. It can't be spoken."

How could we not ask about the viral video where Nabha gets offended by what Priyadarshi says during the promotional event of *Darling*? Nabha chose to take it in stride, focusing on the positive aspects of her collaboration with co-star Priyadarshi. She shared, "He is one of the finest artists the Telugu industry has seen so far. He is a very giving actor and a supporting artist. It has always been intense for me on the sets. It has been so comforting with him, and he was very accommodating to understand what I had to do in the film."

Teaser release date announced for Hari Hara Veera Mallu

The highly anticipated film *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* has been generating buzz ever since its announcement.

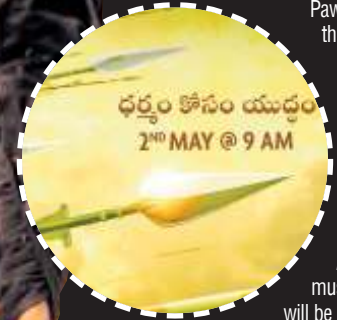
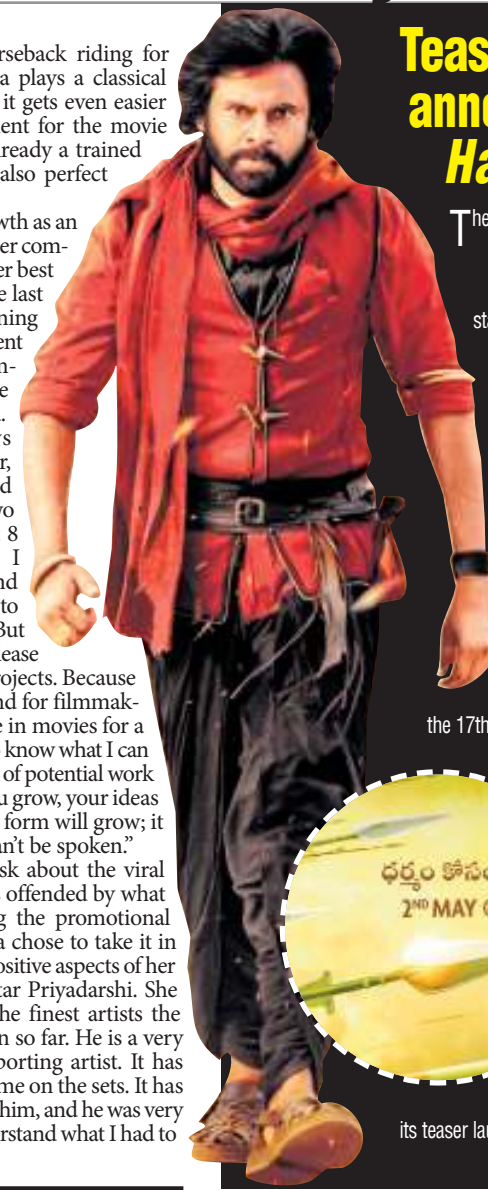
Directed by Krish Jagarlamudi, the film stars Power Star Pawan Kalyan in his first pan-India venture. Adding to the excitement, the makers have unveiled a new update: the teaser of *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* will be released on May 2nd at 9:00 AM.

Accompanying the announcement is an intriguing image from the film, teasing "The Battle for Dharma." This glimpse into the movie's world promises an epic tale of valor and righteousness.

Starring Nidhi Agerwal as the female lead and Bollywood actor Bobby Deol as the antagonist, *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* transports viewers to the 17th century, offering a fresh perspective on historical drama.

Pawan Kalyan is set to rejoin the sets of the movie soon, bringing his charismatic presence to the screen in a new avatar.

Bankrolled by A Dayakar Rao and presented by AM Rathnam under Mega Surya Production, *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* boasts music by MM Keeravani and will be released in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and Hindi. With its teaser launch imminent, anticipation for this epic saga is at an all-time high.



Actress Nabha Natesh, who is gearing up to make a striking comeback to Tollywood, gets candid with *The Pioneer*, as she speaks of her decision to take on these upcoming projects, emphasising her desire for diversity and novelty in her roles.

THUG LIFE WILL SEE Silambarasan TR in a key role

Excitement is building up as the highly anticipated film *Thug Life* gears up for its next big reveal. A new promotional teaser is set to drop this week, promising to enthral audiences with the mesmerising background music of none other than the legendary AR Rahman.

Adding to the anticipation is the imminent confirmation of actor Silambarasan TR's involvement in the project, according to sources. While details of his role remain undisclosed, his potential inclusion has sparked speculation and heightened curiosity among fans eager to see him in action. Currently, the film's production is in full swing, with shooting underway in Delhi. The bustling capital city sets the stage for captivating scenes featuring an ensemble cast, including the dynamic duo of Kamal Haasan and Trisha, alongside Silambarasan TR.

For Silambarasan, *Thug Life* marks a significant milestone as it becomes his 49th venture in the film industry. With each project, the versatile actor continues to push boundaries and redefine his craft, leaving audiences eager to witness his latest performance unfold on the silver screen.

As anticipation mounts and excitement reaches fever pitch, *Thug Life* promises to deliver a cinematic experience like no other. Stay tuned for the latest updates as this enthralling journey unfolds, promising thrills, drama, and the unmatched magic of AR Rahman's music.



Hombale Films, Rishab Shetty, to recreate divine magic of Kantara with huge set

Hombale Films, the powerhouse production house behind cinematic blockbusters like *KGF Chapter 2* and *Kantara: A Legend*, is once again set to captivate audiences with their upcoming project, *Kantara: Chapter 1*. Teaming up with acclaimed director Rishab Shetty, the film promises to deliver an unparalleled cinematic experience, reminiscent of its predecessor's divine allure.

As prolepsis mounts for this highly anticipated film, an exciting update has emerged, shedding light on the meticulous preparation underway. Set to commence this week, the full-fledged shooting schedule will span 20 days, with the production team gearing up to film pivotal scenes amidst the lush forests and scenic coastal backdrop of Kundapura.

To authentically recreate the enchanting setting of Kundapura, a colossal set spanning 200x200 feet has been meticulously crafted, employing the expertise of 600 carpenters from Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad. This elaborate endeavour, coupled with intensive training sessions for the cast, underscores the dedication and commitment invested in bringing the film's

vision to life. Directed by the versatile Rishab Shetty, who also assumes the lead role, and featuring mesmerising music by Ajaneesh Loknath and cinematography by Aravind Kashyap, *Kantara: Chapter 1* promises to transport audiences to a realm of divine enchantment.

The first installment in the franchise, *Kantara: A Legend*, left an indelible impression on audiences, earning accolades for its immersive storytelling and visual splendour. With the announcement of *Kantara: Chapter 1*, expectations have soared, with cinephiles eagerly awaiting another transcendent theatrical experience.

In addition to *Kantara: Chapter 1*, Hombale Films has an exciting slate of projects in store, including the much-anticipated *Salaar Part 2: Shouryanga Parvam*, ensuring a thrilling cinematic journey ahead for audiences.

As the stage is set for the grand unveiling of *Kantara: Chapter 1*, fans can brace themselves for an epic tale of divine proportions, crafted with precision and passion by the formidable duo of Hombale Films and Rishab Shetty.

Kousalya Tanaya Raghava gearing up for release

Amidst the bustling landscape of contemporary cinema comes *Kousalya Tanaya Raghava*, an upcoming film poised to capture the hearts of audiences with its timeless portrayal of love and family values.

Starring Rajesh Konchada and Shravani Shetty in the lead roles, this story unfolds against the picturesque backdrop of rural life in the 1980s. Produced by AR Movie Makers and helmed by the visionary director Swamy Patnaik, the film promises to deliver a cinematic experience that transcends generations, offering a poignant blend of nostalgia and heartfelt storytelling.

Billed to be a feel-good entertainer, according to makers, the viewers will be transported on a journey of love, laughter, and

emotional resonance, making it a perfect watch for the entire family.

The makers announced on Tuesday that the film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release soon. On the technical front, cinematographer Yogi Reddy captures the rustic beauty of Palakonda, lending authenticity to the film's narrative tapestry. Meanwhile, the editor, Mr. Krishna Prasad, meticulously crafts each frame.

As the film nears its much-anticipated release, expectation among cinephiles continues to soar. With the final stages of post-production underway, audiences can expect an announcement regarding the release date in the coming days, setting the stage for a cinematic celebration of love, values, and the enduring spirit of storytelling.



Director Trinadha Rao Nakkina mourns his father's death

Trinadha Rao Nakkina, the acclaimed director behind numerous Tollywood hits, including *Cinema Choopista Mava* and *Menu Local*, is currently grappling with a personal loss. On April 29, tragedy struck the director's family as his father, aged 72, passed away in the city. He succumbed to an age-related illness. The unexpected loss has undoubtedly cast a pall of grief over the filmmaker and his loved ones.

As the industry mourns alongside Trinadha Rao Nakkina and his family, fans and colleagues alike extend their heartfelt condolences during this period of mourning. Trinadha Rao Nakkina's contributions to Telugu cinema extend beyond his directorial ventures; he has also made a mark as a prolific writer, earning acclaim from audiences and critics alike. Additionally, reports suggest that the filmmaker is gearing up to launch his production house, further expanding his creative endeavours to offer fresh and engaging content to audiences.



FAMILY STAR FINDS SUCCESS ON OTT

As has been the case with Vijay Deverakonda's films in the recent past, his latest theatrical outing, *Family Star*, was also affected by extensive and targeted negative propaganda. There was a clear attempt to choke down the film right from the outset by a group of negative propagandists.

But Vijay's connections with the masses and families helped *Family Star* register relatively good revenues in spite of all the negativity that was spun around it.

As of now, there's a clear positive vibe surrounding the Vijay Deverakonda starrer. There are multiple social media posts where individuals are saying they indeed enjoyed watching *Family Star* on OTT and are unable to comprehend the negativity that was seen during the time of the theatrical release. The common opinion is that *Family Star* has its flaws, but at the heart of it, the Vijay starrer is a summer entertainer that can be enjoyed with families.

This trend is prevalent not just domestically but also in the USA, as we are hearing cases of the audience enjoying the film on Amazon Prime and later commenting that they were tricked by the negative press during the time of theatrical release; otherwise, they could've enjoyed the film on big screens along with their families.

This, in a way, could work very well for Vijay's future films, as the audience who realised *Family Star*'s actual content and realised that they got sucked into a negative narrative will disregard the negativity batch's propaganda for Vijay's upcoming films and make it a point to watch them in theaters regardless of the negative press.



Rashmika Mandanna's intense workout regimen amidst busy schedule

Actress Rashmika Mandanna, known for her dedication to fitness, recently gave her followers a glimpse into her rigorous workout routine. Despite her packed schedule with back-to-back shoots for her upcoming films, including *Pushpa 2: The Rule* and *Kubera*, Rashmika remains committed to her fitness journey.

Taking to her Instagram Stories, Rashmika shared a video showcasing her impressive strength as she successfully completed a 100 kg deadlift. The actress, who described the experience as feeling like a "powerful beast," emphasised the importance of maintaining her fitness amidst her demanding work commitments. In a candid message to her fans, Rashmika detailed her hectic shooting schedule, revealing how she juggles late-night shoots and early morning workouts. Despite the challenges, she expressed her enthusiasm for her projects, particularly her collaboration with Dhanush in *Kubera*, which she describes as "so much fun".

Known for her versatility on screen, Rashmika has a slew of exciting projects lined up, including *The Girlfriend*, *Chhaava*, *Rainbow*, and *Animal Park*, among others. With her unwavering dedication to both her craft and fitness, Rashmika continues to inspire her fans with her relentless pursuit of excellence.



CSK EYE ALL ROUND STABILITY AGAINST UNPREDICTABLE PBKS

PTI ■ CHENNAI

An inconsistent Chennai Super Kings will have to display all-round solidity when they face an unpredictable Punjab Kings in their Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday. The Super Kings have 10 points from nine matches, similar figures as that of Lucknow Super Giants, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals, and the defending champions would certainly like to breakaway from that mid-table gridlock with a win. However, the defending champions will be a worried lot as Punjab Kings, who have six points from nine games, are coming to this match after scaling down 262 against Kolkata Knight Riders, the highest chase in the history of T20 cricket. But the Chepauk deck is a different beast, offering a semblance of assistance to the bowlers and it was evident in CSK's impressive 78-run win over SRH in their previous match. There was no dew in Chennai on that night, and the CSK bowlers defanged SRH's potent batting unit with their

accuracy and variations after their batters put on board a 200-plus total. They need an encore against Punjab, and all eyes will be on skipper Rituraj Gaikwad, who is on a hot streak. Gaikwad has registered scores of 108 and 98 in his last two innings and New Zealand man Daryl Mitchell too seemed to have regained his touch at just the right time with a 32-ball 52 against Hyderabad. However, the real storm-force in the CSK line-up is Shivam Dube, who has pulverised the opposition bowlers while coming as an Impact Sub. While Dube has always been a spin-basher, the left-hander has now added another angle to his batting with his effective tackling of pacers. Dube so far has made 350 runs, second highest for CSK behind Gaikwad's 447, and those runs came at a strike-rate of 172.41, second only to MS Dhoni's 259.45. However, the CSK opening combination continues to be a bit iffy. Gaikwad has been a solid presence but both now-dropped Rachin Ravindra and Ajinkya Rahane have not been able to play the support role to



their skipper. Rahane's last four outings as opener produced scores of 5, 36, 1, 9, and those numbers don't reflect his experience or skill-level. However, CSK in all likelihood will continue to back him. Batting coach Michael Hussey had remarked that the 35-year-old was close to getting a big knock under his belt. On the other hand, PBKS will be desperate to carry the momentum after that record chase and climb up the ladder from the current eighth place. For that, their batters need to fire in unison once again and the onus is on Jonny Bairstow, who made a hundred against KKR, Shashank Singh and Prabhshimran Singh. But they will eye a more impact outing from wicketkeeper batter Jitesh Sharma. However, PBKS' bowling department looks a bit shaky despite having experienced campaigners such as Kagiso Rabada, Harshal Patel, Arshdeep Singh and Sam Curran in their ranks. The visitors will also require a much-improved effort from their spinners — Harpreet Brar and Rahul Chahar — as they

have scalped just seven wickets among them this season. **TEAMS (FROM):** CSK: Rituraj Gaikwad (c), MS Dhoni (wk), Aravelly Avanish, Ajinkya Rahane, Shaik Rasheed, Moeen Ali, Shivam Dube, RS Hangargekar, Ravindra Jadeja, Ajay Jadav Mandal, Daryl Mitchell, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Nishant Sindhu, Deepak Chahar, Tushar Deshpande, Mukesh Choudhary, Mustafizur Rahman, Matheesha Pathirana, Simarjeet Singh, Prashant Solanki, Shardul Thakur, Maheesh Theekshana and Sameer Rizvi. **PBKS:** Shikhar Dhawan (c), Matthew Short, Jonny Bairstow (wk), Prabhshimran Singh (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Sikandar Raza, Rishi Dhawan, Liam Livingstone, Atharva Taide, Arshdeep Singh, Nathan Ellis, Sam Curran, Kagiso Rabada, Harpreet Brar, Rahul Chahar, Harpreet Bhatia, Vidwath Kaverappa, Shivam Singh, Harshal Patel, Chris Woakes, Ashutosh Sharma, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Shashank Singh, Tanay Thyagarajan, Prince Choudhary, Rilee Rossouw.



This IPL is different, need to mentally accept challenge, says Varun Chakravarthy

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders spinner Varun Chakravarthy said the teams have understood the concept of Impact Player better in this iteration of IPL and now bowlers will have to find ways to counter the ultra-aggressive approach of batsmen to make an impact on the game. Chakravarthy's spell of three for 16 played a vital role in KKR's thumping seven-wicket win over Delhi Capitals on Monday. "The Impact Player rule was there last year also. The teams have now understood how to use the impact player rule better. So, they know that there is extra batting and they want to charge from the first ball. That's how it's going," Chakravarthy said in the post-match press meet. "However much the bowlers cry, that's how it is. We've to accept that this IPL is different and mentally accept that challenge. You can't change the side of the ground or you can't change anything." Chakravarthy also said the Eden Gardens pitch offered a good amount of help to the bowlers against Delhi. "The last two matches before this, we didn't defend that well because the wickets have become very placid in the second innings. But this pitch was a little bit more turning. "That was the difference. The length is basically the same for all the matches. It's just how the wicket behaves." Chakravarthy said the KKR players and management went into a huddle to find solutions after Punjab Kings managed to chase a record 262 in their previous match. "Definitely, the last match (vs PBKS) was a very hard pill to swallow. We had many conversations with the management, everyone chipped in. We spoke with the coaches Carl Crowe, Bharat Arun sir, (Gautam) Gambhir, Chandrakant (Pandit) sir, Abhishek Nair." The 32-year-old said even the KKR owner Shah Rukh Khan pepped them up with a quick motivational talk. "Even Shah Rukh bhai, he came up to us yesterday and

spoke to me a lot he said 'don't take it personally, whatever is happening this IPL is just going at a crazy rate, just don't self-doubt yourself.'" **DC OPTIMISTIC TO MAKE PLAYOFFS:** After their defeat against KKR, Delhi have slipped to sixth with three just matches left for them, and bowling coach James Hopes said they are optimistic of making the playoffs. Delhi next face Rajasthan Royals at home on May 7, before travelling to Bengaluru (May 12). Their last fixture in the league is against Lucknow Super Giants at home on May 14. "We have a week off now. Our destiny is still in our own hands, you might say," Hopes said. "If we can win three games and get to 16 points, that should be good enough. But we do have a week off now where we can readjust and see if we need to think a little different about anything." "Yeah, tonight was a missed opportunity, and we won't hide behind any excuses there," he said. Hopes said they could have recalibrated the target on a slow pitch. "This has been a high-scoring venue, and even though we'd lost three wickets in the power play, we had no reason to really think it wasn't going to be anything other than that. "We were still going 11 and half an over. So, we were still thinking 200-220. But I think once the spinners started to grip the ball, we saw it in Sunil (Narine) first over, it gripped a bit for him in the sixth over. "So our mistake probably lay in that we didn't recalibrate our sights on something slightly lower. I think everyone assumed that it was going to be a 240 game. "The trick is understanding that it's not that way sometimes, and you have to actually put a defendable score on the board and not go too hard." Crediting the KKR bowling, Hopes said: "You saw a slight shift in (bowling) tactics today. Mitch (Starc) almost tried yorkers every ball. I think he (Jack Fraser-McGurk) only faced yorkers, bouncers and slower balls."

MI camp divided, they are not performing as a team, says Clarke

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Winning major tournaments hinges on teamwork rather than individual brilliance, according to former Australia captain Michael Clarke, who reckons the Mumbai Indians camp is divided into groups, hindering players from functioning cohesively. After the sudden pre-season change in captaincy when Rohit Sharma was unceremoniously replaced by Hardik Pandya, the five-time champions are in descension. They need to win all their remaining five matches to even have a shot at qualifying for the playoffs. "Yeah, I don't know (they will make it

to the playoffs). I think it's wishful thinking for Mumbai this entire IPL." "I think there's a lot more going on than what we are seeing on the outside and you can't have that many good players and perform this inconsistently. "So, I think there are different groups inside that changing room and something is not working, they are not gelling together, they are not playing as a team," Clarke said on Star Sports Cricket Live. Despite having proven match winners like Rohit, Suryakumar Yadav, Pandya, Tim David and Jasprit Bumrah, MI have found it difficult to find victories this season, slumping to six losses from nine outings. Their three wins can be attributed to



the individual brilliance of pacer Bumrah and the big-hitting Romario Shepherd. "Individual brilliance can get them over the line, if Rohit Sharma comes in and gets another hundred or Hardik does something with the bat or Bumrah bowls like a genius again, you never know," Clarke said. "I think to win big tournaments you need to be a team and not just have individual performances and unfortunately they haven't played well as a team so I hope they turn it around, but I can't see them winning this game," he added. MI, who occupy the penultimate spot on the points table, take on Lucknow Super Giants on Tuesday in Lucknow.

T20 WC bound England players to leave IPL in time to play series against Pakistan: ECB

PTI ■ LONDON

The upcoming T20 World Cup-bound England players who are currently fulfilling their IPL commitments will "return in time" for a preceding four-match T20I series against Pakistan, the country's cricket board said on Tuesday. England on Tuesday named a 15-member squad for the T20 showpiece, which will be held across June in the USA and the West Indies, with Jofra Archer returning to international cricket after a hiatus of more than 14 months. The same squad has been selected for the T20I series against Pakistan, which will commence on May 22 in



Bengaluru), Moeen Ali (Chennai Super Kings), Sam Curran, Jonny Bairstow and Liam Livingstone (Punjab Kings). The most affected teams will be Royals and Knight Riders as they are poised to make the playoffs at this stage of the tournament. The English stars' departure though may not hamper teams such as Punjab Kings and RCB as they are unlikely to qualify for the playoffs. The league matches of the IPL conclude on May 19. The England World Cup squad will fly to the Caribbean on May 31 ahead of England's opening group match against Scotland at the Kensington Oval, Barbados, on June 4.

Headingley. "Selected players, currently playing in the Indian Premier League, will return in time for the series against Pakistan, which gets underway at Headingley on Wednesday 22 May 2024; the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said in a statement after naming the T20 World Cup squad. Some of the prominent English players who would have to leave the IPL before the start of the Pakistan series are: Jos Buttler (Rajasthan Royals), Phil Salt (Kolkata Knight Riders), Will Jacks and Reece Topley (Royal Challengers

Dube lot more complete player, will make an impact in T20I World Cup: Stephen Fleming

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Shivam Dube's enhanced game understanding and completeness have impressed Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming who is confident in the left-handed allrounder's ability to make an "impact" in the upcoming World Cup. The 30-year-old, who is the second leading run-scorer for the defending champions in the ongoing IPL, made the cut to the 15-member Indian squad for the T20 global showpiece in the USA and West Indies beginning on June 1. "He is a lot more complete in terms of what he is trying to do, understanding his game, and that comes from experience," Fleming said ahead of their match against Punjab Kings. "We have worked hard on areas he wasn't so strong, but also continuing to develop his strength. So, if that form continues, he is going to be an impactful player for India (at the World Cup)." Dube has 350 runs in nine outings at a strike rate of 172.41, including three half-centuries. "He has been fantastic. He has proven this year that there is a lot more to him than just playing spin (better)," said the former Kiwi skipper. CSK skipper Rituraj Gaikwad, who is their leading scorer with 447 runs including one century and three fifties, missed out in the squad.



Asked if it was harsh to Gaikwad, Hussey said: "No... I understand the quality of players India have to try and select, (it) is very difficult. Rituraj has done what he can, and he must be close," he said. "We hold him in the highest regard. I love the craft that he shows, and his (last) two performances have been quite majestic. "It's not just wham-bham, but he has displayed the mastery of batting. And the form that he is right now and the control that he has, it's quite outstanding. "It's not now, but there will be another

change for him. If he continues his form and keeps playing well throughout the year, I will be very surprised if he is not called in." Commenting further on his batting and leadership, Fleming said: "His batting has continued from what it was. He has been spectacular the last few years. "As for captaincy, he has taken it up in his stride as he has also led his domestic team. He is very much in the mould of CSK. Very understated, lowkey and incredibly calm." The Impact Player rule continues to be a topic of debate in this IPL, with some experts expressing their apprehensions about it, remarking that it could affect team selections. Asked if the overseas T20 league also should embrace it, he said: "No, I wouldn't (take it overseas)." "I like the challenge of picking all-rounders to get a bit more balance in your team across departments. The way I see it now, you could hardly bowl a team out as the batters just keep coming. "The challenge here is entertainment. If you want fours and sixes, it's (Impact Player rule) a tick. But, from the purest cricketing point of view, it's shifted the balance too far in favour of batting. "It also hides selection issues, rather than having the subtle challenge of getting your selections right and nurturing all-rounders, who are an important part of the game," he concluded.



Rana suspended for one match, fined 100 per cent match fees

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders seamer Harshit Rana was on Tuesday fined 100 per cent of his match fees and suspended for one match for breaching IPL Code of Conduct during their seven-wicket win over Delhi Capitals here. Rana, who was fined 60 per cent of his match fees for giving a flying-kiss send off to Sunrisers Hyderabad batter Mayank Agarwal in an earlier match, almost repeated the same offence when he knocked over Abhishek Porel in their game against Delhi on Monday. Rana was seen pointing his hand towards Porel, indicating him to go back to pavilion and was about to give another flying kiss before he stopped short of doing that. He was also seen appealing excessively after hitting Rasikh Salam high on his pads. "Rana committed a Level 1 offence under Article 2.5 of the IPL's Code of Conduct. He admitted to the offence and

accepted the Match Referee's sanction. For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," the IPL said in a statement. "The player was earlier penalised under the same level and article of the IPL Code of Conduct," it added. Rana will now miss KKR's next match against Mumbai Indians in an away game on Friday. Article 2.5 of the IPL Code of Conduct addresses offences related to "Using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from another player in the match." In KKR's IPL opener against SRH on March 23, Rana committed two Level 1 offences under Article 2.5 of the IPL's Code of Conduct. He was fined 10 per cent and 50 per cent of his match fees for the two respective offences. Rana is KKR's joint leading wicket-taker with the spin duo of Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy. The trio have 11 wickets each.