

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The pioneer
Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been collecting 'AA' tax in the nation. PM is doing a false campaign saying that the Congress is collecting 'RR' tax in Telangana. Alliance government will come at Centre and Rahul Gandhi will become PM
 - Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, TG Minister

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Cong's hand is with enemies of India: Yogi Adityanath
 5

ANUSHKA SEN 'CAN'T HELP, BUT FALL IN LOVE' WITH K-DRAMAS
 9

Ashu Reddy says, 'My body is SUPER DELUXE'
 P11

DON'T MISS...

50 cr travelled by Metro Rail...

L&T Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (L&TMRHL) on Friday announced a milestone achievement of completing 50 crore passenger journeys since its inception. Besides celebrating the achievement it has unveiled the Green Miles Loyalty Club, a first-of-its-kind programme in Hyderabad's public transport system. The Green Miles Loyalty Club is a customer loyalty programme designed to revolutionise the way commuters experience public transportation in Hyderabad. It aims...

-PAGE: 3

Cong tally to be all-time...

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday asserted that Congress' tally in the Lok Sabha polls will be an "all-time low", as the grand old party would struggle to cross even the "half-century" mark in the hustings. He also mocked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's decision to contest from Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly seat, "sensing defeat" in Kerala's Wayanad, where he is a sitting MP. Addressing back-to-back rallies in the Bardhaman-Durgapur and Krishnanagar...

-PAGE: 5

Seven Adani group firms say...

Seven out of the 10 listed firms of Adani group have received show cause notices from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for alleged violation of related party transactions and non-compliance with listing regulations, the companies said in their regulatory filings to the stock exchanges. While group's flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd, renewable energy firm Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) and city gas distributor Adani Total Gas Ltd said SEBI sent...

-PAGE: 8

RCB, GT eye must win to keep...

From a maths perspective, Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Gujarat Titans can still reach the IPL playoffs, but they need to ward off inner gremlins on Saturday to notch a mandatory win to keep that dream flickering. The Royal Challengers are the bottom-dwellers with six points from 10 matches, while the Titans are placed eighth with eight points from 10 matches. However, the floundering outings of Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals (10 points each)...

-SPORTS

SC bench in Hyd ♦ ITIR ♦ Rail coach factory at Kazipet

Congress' Special Manifesto for Telangana has it all

- 5 villages merged with AP will be given to TG
- Implementing the commitments made to Telangana in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress' Special Manifesto for Telangana assured that the Congress would establish a Bench of the Supreme Court in Hyderabad, merge five Andhra Pradesh villages with Telangana and revive the Information Technology and Investment Region (ITIR) project in Hyderabad if the Congress came to power at the Centre.

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge of Telangana, Deepa Dasmunshi, released the manifesto along with the TG Minister for Information Technology and Industries, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, who is also the Chairman of the Manifesto Committee, Vem Narender Reddy, an Advisor to the TG Government



and other Congress leaders. The Congress promised to implement the commitments made to Telangana in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act and 23 other promises in the manifesto.

Addressing the gathering, Sridhar Babu said the manifesto has been released keeping in view the state's requirements. He said that if the Congress came to power at the Centre all promises would be fulfilled. The party has promised to set up a rail coach factory in Kazipet, the Bayyaram Steel Plant, a mining university, an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Hyderabad and a rapid railway system by the side of the Hyderabad-Vijayawada

highway as committed in the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014.

Five villages around Bhadrachalam, Yetapaka, Pichkulapadu, Purushothapatnam, Kannayagudem and Gundala, which were merged with Andhra Pradesh after the bifurcation of United AP in 2014 will be merged with Telangana to develop the Bhadrachalam Sri Rama Temple.

These villages were part of the seven mandals which were transferred to Andhra Pradesh by the BJP-led NDA Government to facilitate the construction of the Polavaram Project by Andhra Pradesh across the Godavari River. The Congress has promised to

revive the ITIR project in Hyderabad. The project was approved by the Congress-led UPA Government but was scrapped by the NDA Government.

Sridhar Babu said the project would generate employment for lakhs of people and would change the face of Telangana as the state would be able to attract huge investments.

Other major promises are national project tag for the Palamuru-Rangareddy irrigation project, a regional office of the NITI Aayog in Hyderabad, establishment of new airports, the Ramagundam-Manuguru railway lane, four new Sainik schools, increasing the number of Kendriya Vidyalayas, doubling of Navodaya schools, a National Sports University, establishment of the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), establishment of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) and the National Aviation University.

The manifesto also promised the transfer of Central funds directly to gram panchayats as per the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution.

Continued on Page 2

'Reservations main item on agenda of LS polls'



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that 'reservations' is the main item on the agenda of the Lok Sabha elections.

He said the Congress decided to increase SC, ST and BC reservations by conducting a caste census. However, the BJP is conspiring to 'change' the Constitution as well as reservations, he said.

The BJP will scrap reservations if it wins 400 seats in the LS. 50 per cent of states have to agree to scrap reservations in the country. So the BJP toppled eight opposition governments and replaced them with BJP governments. Casting a vote for the BJP will help in the scrapping of reservations. Reservations will be increased if people vote for the Congress, Revanth added.

CM: When BJP says it will scrap quotas, why is BRS silent?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy asked the BRS to reveal why it is not responding when the BJP is stating that it will scrap reservations.

Addressing the Sircilla Janan Jatara public meeting on Friday for Karimnagar Congress LS candidate Velichala Rajender Rao, the CM asked BRS Working President KT Rama Rao why he is not responding when the BJP is saying that it will end reservations.

Continued on Page 2

'Modi and Revanth will give SCCL to Adani after LS polls'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS supremo KCR said that a coalition government would take charge at the Centre after Parliament elections. He said that there are reports that the BJP would get only around 200 LS seats. KCR was speaking at a roadshow organised at Ramagundam in Peddapally LS constituency. He asked the Left to question the CM.

"In Gujarat, it is all about investors. No one cares about the workers. Revanth met Modi's chote bhai Adani in Davos. Adani is 'tak-



ing over' the public sector including ports and airports. The PM wanted us to import coal from Australia through the Adani group when I was the CM. We have SCCL coal costing Rs 4,000 a tonne. Then why should we purchase Australian coal for Rs 28,000 per tonne? I rejected the offer. But now the CM went to Switzerland and opened the gate for Adani to come to Telangana and 'loot'. After the Lok Sabha elections, SCCL will be given to Adani by Modi and Revanth.

Continued on Page 2

TPCC contradicts INC, Opposition makes hay

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The TPCC contradicting the Indian National Congress is coming as a boon for the opposition. Both the BRS and the BJP are making hay out of the situation.

The Congress' Special Manifesto for Telangana contradicts its national manifesto. The national manifesto of the Congress speaks about enacting the Rohith Vemula Act to address discrimination faced by

The Congress' Special Manifesto for Telangana contradicts its national manifesto. The national manifesto of the Congress speaks about enacting the Rohith Vemula Act to address discrimination faced by students belonging to backward communities in educational institutions.

students belonging to backward communities in educational institutions.

However, on Friday, the Telangana police submitted in the High Court

that Rohith did not belong to a Scheduled Caste and that he might have committed suicide fearing that his real caste would be discovered.

While the Congress is trying to

'Kejriwal's guarantees visible, Modi's guarantees 'jumla'
 P5

HC sets aside BRS MLC Vithal's election

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Friday set aside the election of BRS MLC Dande Vithal.

Pronouncing the order on a petition filed by Congress leader P. Rajeshwar Reddy, the court also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on the BRS leader.

Vithal was elected to the Legislative Council from Adilabad Local Authorities' constituency in 2022.

Rajeshwar Reddy, who was then in the BRS, was in the race for the BRS ticket. As he was denied a ticket he had filed his nomination as an Independent. Later, the Returning Officer declared that Rajeshwar Reddy had withdrawn his nomination.

Continued on Page 2

TS focussed on repeating success in EoDB rankings



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari exhorted the officials to strive to repeat the success achieved by the State earlier in Ease of Doing Business rankings and retain the top achiever status this year. The CS held a meeting with senior officials and took stock of the various reforms initiated by various departments under EoDB. She directed the departments to complete all the compliances envisaged under EoDB by the end of

July. All the GOs/circulars/notifications should be issued in a time-bound manner. Officials were also told to be ready with necessary inputs for the legislative changes which need to be taken up to comply with implementation of reforms relating to ease of doing business.

During the meeting, a power-point presentation was made and departments were sensitised about the number of reforms which have to be initiated this year.

Continued on Page 2

Modi imposed 'AA tax' on country: Komatireddy Venkat

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and Dudilla Sridhar Babu said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been collecting 'AA' tax (Ambani-Adani tax) across the nation.

Addressing the media during Congress Graduates MLC candidate Theenmar Mallanna's nomination filing programme R&B Minister Venkat said that Modi is engaging in a campaign of lies by saying that the Congress is collecting 'RR' tax in Telangana.

Only 'Modi tax' collected across India: Madhu Yashki

TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki Goud said that the Modi tax is the only tax collected in the country. Modi tax is intended to benefit private companies, Madhu said and added that if Modi comes to power again it is certain that the Constitution will be scrapped and reservations removed. Participating in a Meet the Press programme at the Basheerbagh Press Club on Friday organised by TUWJ, Madhu said that the Modi tax is running in the nation.

Continued on Page 2

Social media violation cases increase as polls approach

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Cases connected to social media violations are on the rise with even the Chief Minister getting notices.

On Friday, Delhi Police arrested Arun Reddy, who handles the 'Spirit of Congress' X account, in the Union Home Minister Amit Shah doctored video case.

On the same day, five Telangana Congress Committee and SM members were arrested by the Hyderabad police and granted bail for reportedly sharing an edited video of the Union HM.

BRS Social Media Convener Krishank was arrested and was remanded to judicial custody for reportedly sharing a doctored letter about the closure of OU hostels. The police are requesting custody and the bail hearing is scheduled for Monday. Congress Karimnagar candidate



V. Rajender Rao has been booked for reportedly sharing an edited audio of a BJP MP on Friday.

In the Amit Shah doctored video case, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has sought four weeks from the Delhi cops to appear before them.

The Telangana Chief Minister's lawyer had also responded to the Delhi Police, and Revanth has denied that the Telangana Congress X account is being operated by him. In the doctored video of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, he was seen issuing a statement on reserva-



tions. On April 19, acting on takedown requests by the Election Commission of India (ECI), X (formerly Twitter) announced that it had withheld four posts, one each by the Aam Aadmi Party, the YSRCP, Telugu Desam Party President N. Chandrababu Naidu, and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and state BJP president Samrat Choudhary.

On April 19, acting on takedown requests by the Election Commission of India (ECI), X (formerly Twitter) announced that it had withheld four posts, one each by the Aam Aadmi Party, the YSRCP, Telugu Desam Party President N. Chandrababu Naidu, and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and state BJP president Samrat Choudhary. While the social media platform agreed to the ECI's requests to withhold the said posts during the Lok Sabha elections, it said in a statement that it did not agree with the orders.



Uttam hails CPI support, says Cong & CPI natural allies

Irrigation Minister attends Nalgonda district CPI meet

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The tie-up between the Congress and the Communist Party of India (CPI) for the Lok Sabha elections has garnered public support, Civil Supplies and Irrigation Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said. Speaking at the district CPI unit meeting on Friday, Uttam hailed the CPI's decision to support Congress candidates across Telangana.



Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy and Congress LS candidate Raghuveer Reddy donned the CPI's colours and attended the CPI district party meeting held on Friday in the Nalgonda Lok Sabha constituency.

He noted that the CPI has not only verbally declared its support but has also aligned its members with Congress workers, creating a strong coalition in all TG constituencies. Uttam stressed the common ground between the Congress and the CPI and added that both parties support secularism as a core value, advocate a clear separation between religion and state and stand for the rights of religious minorities in India. Uttam emphasised that both parties share a commit-

ment to social justice, aim to improve the condition of marginalised communities like Dalits, Adivasis, Backward Classes and other underprivileged groups. They also support pro-poor policies, labour rights, minimum wages and steps aimed at helping the working class and the economically disadvantaged. He said that the Congress and the CPI have both practised coalition politics in India. The Congress led coalition governments while the CPI joined coalitions with

Left, secular parties to counter 'communal' forces. Now the CPI is part of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA). Uttam said that the Congress and the CPI oppose right-wing nationalist ideologies and position themselves as alternatives to the BJP and other right-wing parties. Despite ideological differences, he said that both parties are committed to India's democratic framework, free and fair elections, civil liberties, and democratic govern-

nance. He criticised the BJP and the BRS for failing to fulfil their promises to the people of Telangana. He claimed that the BJP-led Centre had not implemented any of the commitments in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, with Prime Minister Modi repeatedly 'insulting' and 'depriving' Telangana of its fair share of funds.

He said that the BRS Government had failed to stand up against the injustices done to Telangana as Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu was busy making false promises.

He said that the Congress has released a special manifesto with 23 specific promises for Telangana, including the establishment of a Railway Coach Factory at Kazipet, the construction of a Steel Plant at Bayyaram and the establishment of an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Hyderabad.

BRS to field Rakesh Reddy in Warangal MLC by-poll

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS named Enugula Rakesh Reddy as its candidate in the Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal graduate by-poll. BRS supremo KCR formally announced this.

On November 4, 2023, Rakesh joined the BRS from the BJP in the presence of BRS Working President KTR. Rakesh is from the Hasanparthi mandal of Hanmakonda district's Vangapahad. Rakesh, who belongs to a farmer's family, completed a Masters in Management Studies and has a Masters in Finance from BITS Pilani.

He worked with Citibank as a manager and with global companies like JP Morgan and Facebook in Bengaluru and in the US for seven years and then entered politics.

Kishan Reddy terms Cong govt rule as 'Gadida guddu palana'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Alleging that the Congress regime in State was like the people fell in the fire from an oven in Telangana, Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy termed the Congress rule as 'Gadida guddu palana.' Kishan Reddy alleged that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was moving about carrying a symbol of 'Gadida guddu' and suggested Revanth Reddy to change Congress symbol from hand to 'Gadida guddu.'

While addressing the media at the State BJP office on Friday, Kishan Reddy demanded the Congress government to reveal the number of grievances solved by Revanth Reddy instead of mudslinging on BJP to hide his failures.

Kishan Reddy alleged that the Congress means corruption, drought, cheating, family rule and camouflaging the



people and it is proved in Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and now in Telangana.

Finding fault with the Congress special manifesto for Telangana that was released on Friday, Kishan Reddy alleged that change means the departure of Kalvakunta family rule and arrival of Sonia Gandhi family rule in Telangana.

Kishan Reddy alleged that KCR had deceived the people by giving impossible assurances and Revanth Reddy is

doing the same now. Revanth Reddy is giving 'Gadida guddu' by giving assurances. Revanth Reddy has shown Congress party mark corruption within five months.

He said that the Telangana people defeated KCR expecting to see the end of the bad rule of KCR. However, the Telangana people entered into a rule of atrocious lies of the Congress.

Kishan Reddy alleged that the Congress resorted to falsehood campaigns with hoardings in regard to guarantees. The Congress government did not give a single white ration card in the last five months rule but it is campaigning in its hoardings that it gave white ration cards. In the same manner, the Congress indulged in a falsehood campaign in regard to interest-free loans to women groups and Rs 10 lakh accident insurance.

KCR sure to join Congress, says Laxman

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS supremo K. Chandrababu Naidu would certainly join the Congress, BJP Rajya Sabha Member Dr K. Laxman said while addressing the media at the State BJP office here on Friday.

He said BRS Working President KTR has been day-dreaming of making Hyderabad a Union Territory. Laxman reminded that KCR had assured Muslims of 12 per cent reservations and warned that Chief Minister Revanth

Reddy would face the fate of KCR in the matter of reservations.

Laxman said that the Congress is against reservations and that the Congress raised the issue of Muslim reservations when Dr BR Ambedkar suggested giving reservations to Backward Classes.

He recalled that former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had opposed the Mandal Commission report as he wanted a caste-free nation and opposed caste-based reserva-



tions. However, the Congress insulted former Prime Minister VP Singh when he argued that reservations would provide BCs with education and employment. The Congress is the party which opposed caste

reservations everywhere, Laxman said.

He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's blood is not Congress blood and that Revanth should learn what happened by asking Congress leaders.

Laxman said that the High Court dismissed reservations for Muslims. However, the Congress government got a stay from the Supreme Court. He said that Revanth is trying to get Muslim votes and issuing statements hurting Hindu sentiments.

Only 'Modi tax'...

Continued from page 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is collecting taxes from the people and 'handing it over' to 21 industrialists and 'recovering' it from the companies using electoral bonds. Madhu said that Modi is seeking 400 seats as part of a 'conspiracy' to scrap the Constitution and reservations. He said that Modi is not in a position to reveal what he has done for the poor and that everybody knows how the assets of Adani and Ambani have increased.

Niranjan files complaint against Shah; police name Union HM as A-3

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Moghalpura Police Station in Hyderabad filed a case against Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday. TPC Senior Vice-President Niranjan emailed a complaint to the Election Commission of India against Amit Shah alleging that Amit Shah violated election rules during his roadshow in

Hyderabad's Old City on May 1. During Amit Shah's roadshow, two children carried a banner with the BJP's lotus symbol. Both banners displayed the slogan 'Ab Ki Baar 400 Seats' and the lotus. This is against election rules, Niranjan said in his complaint. During Amit Shah's roadshow, BJP candidate Madhav Latha addressed the gathering. Then Amit Shah

signalled the minor girls to come to him and they came to him. However, the minor girls carried banners with the slogan 'Ab Ki Baar 400 seats.'

'Modi and Revanth will...'

Continued from page 1

Why did the CM invite Adani to Telangana and why did I oppose that? Please think about it. I asked the SCCL Director to go to Australia and Indonesia to set up a company. This is the difference between them and us," KCR said. He said that there are reports that the BJP will not get more than 200 LS seats. "A coalition government is coming at the Centre. If we win 14 to 15 seats we will 'save' SCCL. There is an opportunity to save our rivers. The victory of Telangana lies in the victory of BRS MPs. The time has come to teach a lesson to the Congress which cheated us by

giving us six guarantees. Only if the BRS is strong will the Congress fulfil its promises. So think wisely and vote for the BRS," KCR said. "Dalit Bandhu was banned. What sin did they commit? We sanctioned funds to 30,000 families. When we released money to them Revanth took it back. Dalits should take revenge in this election. We saved the SCCL. We helped the poor. But the corrupt Congress will not last long. A BRS government is coming. We will come back with public support. We will be able to protect the rights of Telangana only if BRS candidates win in this Parliament election," he said.

CM: When BJP...

Continued from page 1

The CM said that KCR had said in February 2022 that he would change the Constitution. Now, the BJP is saying that it will change the Constitution and end reservations if it gets 400 LS seats. However, the Congress would remain silent if they abolish reservations, the CM said.

He said that KCR is thinking that he can join hands with the BJP after the LS elections. KCR will 'sell' one or two MPs that his party wins to the BJP, Revanth said.

The CM said that KCR mortgaged the self-respect of Telangana to the Delhi Sultan to get bail for his daughter Kavitha.

Reservations main...

Continued from page 1

Addressing the Dharmapuri Jana Jata public meeting for Peddapalli Congress candidate Gaddam Vamsi on Friday, Revanth said that BJP leaders have been speaking indiscriminately.

BJP leaders are spreading lies through Modi's WhatsApp University, Revanth said and added that Modi and Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy should reveal what they did for Telangana.

He said that the BJP-led Centre buried the Bayyaram Steel Factory issue although Sonia Gandhi included it in the Division Act. The CM said that the Centre took away the Rail Coach Factory from

Kazipet to Lathoor.

"The Centre has to construct an NTPC Power Generation Project with a capacity of 4000 MW. However, only a 1,600 MW project has been constructed in the last 10 years. Sonia Gandhi gave the ITR project to the Rangareddy district, however, the BJP cancelled it. The Centre refused to give the national project tag to the Palamuru-Rangareddy Project. There is a big list like Tribal University, IIT and IIM. However, the Centre allotted the Bullet Train Project and the Sabarmati River Front Project to Gujarat and investments worth Rs 11 lakh crore were taken away. The BJP is showing a step-motherly attitude towards Telangana," the CM said.

TS focussed on...

Continued from page 1

A total of 287 reforms were to be taken up this year of which 39 are new reforms, 60 were modified while the remaining 188 have been retained.

The Chief Secretary directed the officials to expedite online system development. The online dashboard and service information should also be updated. Feedback from the users should be obtained on regular basis for further improving the service delivery mechanism. Departments should conduct meetings with the stakeholders at the district level to cre-

ate awareness, she added.

Special Chief Secretary Industries Jayesh Ranjan, Special Chief Secretary Labour Rani Kumudini, Principal Secretary EFST Vani Prasad, Principal Secretary Revenue Navin Mittal, Principal Secretary Home Jitender, Principal Secretary MAUD Danakishore, DG Fire Services Nagi Reddy, Principal Secretary Panchayat Raj Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Commissioner Transport Buddha Prakash Jyothi, MD HMWSB Sudershan Reddy, CDMA Divya, Commissioner Panchayat Raj Anitha Ramachandran and other officials attended the meeting.

Modi imposed...

Continued from page 1

He said that the KCR's BRS would cease to exist after Parliament elections and that KCR's general health and mental condition might not be good as he is speaking differently.

He said that voting for the BRS is nothing but dropping it in the Musi River and that a coalition government will take over at the Centre with Rahul Gandhi as the PM.

IT Minister Sridhar Babu said that it is ridiculous for Modi to say that a 'RR' tax is being imposed on Telangana. He said that Modi and Ambani taxes are being imposed on the nation and that all medals would go to the NDA for corruption. Sridhar Babu criticised Modi for levelling allegations against the Congress government in Telangana as it took over just four months ago.

He said that the Congress would certainly implement all the guarantees and provide a corruption-free admin in Telangana.

Radha Kishan names KCR...

Continued from page 1

Prabhakar Rao, the chief of SIB, had reportedly started a special team under Inspector Praneeth Kumar (who was later promoted as DSP in 2023) to monitor individuals belonging to opposition parties and other organisations who create trouble for KCR and the BRS.

Radha Kishan Rao reportedly used to get a lot of information from Praneeth Kumar collected through the monitor-

ing of the phones of political opponents, their associates and financiers.

Sometimes, Radha Kishan Rao reportedly used to ask them to send such information to him through the CP to avoid making it suspicious.

Tapped messages would reportedly come to the CP who used to ask Radha Kishan Rao to execute it in the normal course. This was intended only to avoid giving any scope for unnecessary issues and to

show that Radha Kishan Rao was reportedly working as per the CP's instructions and after asking the SIB Chief.

Radha Kishan confessed that they reportedly helped transport money for the BRS through its main fund organisers and any other special tasks connected to politics to help the BRS. KCR reportedly used to follow up with Praneeth Kumar and complete the expected tasks regularly.

TPCC contradicts...

Continued from page 1

In another instance, the Telangana Congress manifesto talks about setting up a regional Centre of the NITI Aayog.

However, the national manifesto released by Rahul Gandhi says, "We promise to restore the Planning Commission and define its role and responsibilities that will include formulating medium and long-term perspective plans to meet the needs of the Nav Sankalp Economic Policy."

Another instance of the TPCC contradicting INC is regarding defections.

The Congress manifesto said, "We promise to amend the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution and make defection (leaving the original party on which the MLA or MP was elected) punishable with automatic disqualification of membership in the Assembly or Parliament."

However, three MLAs (Kadiyam Srihari, Danam

Nagender and Tellam Venkat Rao) have defected to the Congress from the BRS.

KCR raised the issue of BRS social media warriors being jailed and beaten up. Salvaji Madhav Rao, Krishank Manne have been jailed. This contradicts the promise made in the Congress manifesto, "We promise to enact a law on bail that will incorporate the principle that 'bail is the rule, jail the exception' in all laws dealing with crime." Another issue raised by the BRS is the welcoming of the Adani group. The Congress in its manifesto said, "We are opposed to monopolies, oligopolies and crony capitalism."

Rahul Gandhi has been attacking Adani as a crony capitalist. However, recently Revanth welcomed the Adani group into Telangana.

The CM clarified that he is taking investments from Adani but not giving anything to him other than a level playing field.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Ekadashi: May 03 11:24 PM to May 04 08:39 PM

Dwadashi: May 04 08:39 PM to May 05 05:42 PM

Nakshatram:

Purva Bhadrapada: May 04 12:06 AM to May 04 10:07 PM

Uttara Bhadrapada: May 04 10:07 PM to May 05 07:57 PM

Rahukalam: 9:02 AM to 10:37 AM

Yamagandam: 1:48 PM to 3:23 PM

Varjyam: 06:51 AM to 08:18 AM

Gulika: 5:52 AM to 7:27 AM

Amritakalam: 02:47 PM to 04:15 PM

Ahijithi Muhurtham: 11:47 AM to 12:38 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly sunny

Temp: 42°

Humidity: 37%

Sunrise: 5:49 AM

Sunset: 6:37 PM

Updated: May 3, 2024 5:00 PM

People asked not go out from 11 am to 4 pm

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Commissioner of Panchayat Raj and Rural Employment (PR&RE) advised people not to go outside between 11.00 am and 4.00 pm, unless it is an emergency, due to the heat waves in the State. The Chief Secretary to Government, Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Department held a teleconference over heat waves with the District Panchayat Officers on Friday. The department advised people that when going outside, use an umbrella, scarves, hat or handkerchief on heads. Drink sufficient water even if you are not thirsty. Use Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), lemon water, buttermilk and coconut water.

PR&RE ordered the district panchayat officers to set up water kiosks at bus stands, roadsides and junctions to provide drinking water to passengers in every village. Those who are affected by sunstroke should be taken to the nearest primary health centre after first aid.

Young children, pregnant women, small children, old people, sick people and family members should take special precautions. Work site facilities like shade and potable water should be provided for MGNREGS labourers. Drinking water and ORS packets should be made available at grain buying centres and agricultural markets with adequate measures taken to protect people from exposure to sun.

GREEN MILES LOYALTY CLUB LAUNCHED

50 cr travelled by Metro Rail since launch

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

L&T Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (L&TMRHL) on Friday announced a milestone achievement of completing 50 crore passenger journeys since its inception. Besides celebrating the achievement it has unveiled the Green Miles Loyalty Club, a first-of-its-kind programme in Hyderabad's public transport system. The Green Miles Loyalty Club is a customer loyalty programme designed to revolutionise the way commuters experience public transportation in Hyderabad. It aims to reward regular passengers where they will earn points based on the number of trips taken in a calendar month. These points can be redeemed for exciting rewards like free trips, merchandise and



Rajasree, the 50th crore passenger, being felicitated by HMRL MD NVS Reddy and L&TMRHL MD & CEO KVB Reddy

lucky draw gifts. It also creates a sense of belonging and appreciation among Metro riders, fostering a more positive and connected commuting experience. By motivating Metro usage, the programme encourages a shift towards a more sustainable mode

of transportation, reducing traffic congestion and carbon emission. It is open to all passengers using smart cards for travel. Trips will be counted in a calendar month and passengers need to maintain the required number of trips for three consecutive months to qualify for specific reward tiers. It offers three tiers, such as Silver, Gold and Platinum. Each tier has specific trip requirements and offers a range of benefits, including free trips, exclusive merchandise and participation in lucky draw contests with exciting prizes.

NVS Reddy, MD, Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL), said, "This achievement reflects the growing trust and preference for Hyderabad Metro as a safe, reliable and convenient mode of travel.

Registration for DOST will begin on May 6

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Registrations for the first phase of degree admissions for the academic year (2024-25) through the Degree Online Services Telangana (DOST) will begin on May 6. Telangana State Council of Higher Education Chairman (TSCHE) Prof. R Limbadri and Principal Secretary to Government (Education department) Burra Venkatesham on Friday released the DOST notification and schedule for degree admissions, which will be carried out in three phases.

According to the TSCHE, the registration for the first phase admissions can be done with a fee of Rs 200 and web options can be exercised between May 15 to 20, while the seat allotment is on June 3. Around 40 helpline centres are established which will help the students to register on DOST, rectify any mismatch with Aadhaar details and rectify any wrong in uploading certificates.



Students can register on the website by using two methods that include if a student has already linked Aadhaar number with the mobile number, he/she can directly register on DOST Website with mobile OTP authentication. In case, the Aadhaar number is not seeded with mobile number, then the student will have to link his/her parent's mobile number with the student's Aadhaar at Aadhaar update centres. They can also register through DOST mobile app. The app is based on photo recognition. Once the photo of the student is scanned and accepted, DOST ID will be generated. The students can later go for the next step in admissions.

Moreover, this app is only applicable for the students who passed out from Telangana BIE and to avoid human touch, real time digital face recognition of T App Folio is continued.

Explaining about the features, senior officials of TSCHE said there are certain professions that are listed on DOST portal. The students may choose their professions or the combination of subjects he/she has to choose will be listed with a click. Similarly, two more phases will be conducted and the classes will commence from July 8.

Admissions will be done for B.A., B.Com, B.Sc., BBA, BCA, BBM, BSW & D-Pharmacy among other degree courses offered by colleges affiliated to Osmania, Kakatiya, Telangana, Palamuru, Mahatma Gandhi, Sathavahana and Mahila Vishwa Vidyalayam, JNTU and TSBTET. For further details, students can visit the website <https://dost.cgg.gov.in> and also call on 7901002200.

852 voters exercise postal ballot vote on first day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A total of 852 people exercised their right to vote through postal ballot on the first day in the district. Those who will be working as polling officers and staff on parliamentary election duty exercised their right to vote on Friday. A facilitation centre was set up at Pickett Kendriya Vidyalaya in Secunderabad parliamentary constituency to use postal ballots where 342 voters



exercised their right to vote. In all, 488 people have exercised their right to vote in Koti

in Hyderabad parliamentary constituency and 22 people have exercised their right to vote in the facilitation centre in Cantonment CEO's office in Secunderabad Cantonment. Along with them, 112 voters have exercised their right to vote in Hyderabad constituency, 385 voters in Secunderabad constituency and 65 voters in Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly by-elections through home voting on the first day.

DCA nabs fake doctor for running a clinic

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Drugs Control Administration (DCA) of Telangana raided Vayu Clinic in Secunderabad, which was operated by a fake MBBS doctor, and seized drugs worth Rs 1.60 lakh stocked for sale at the clinic on Friday.

On May 2 and 3, 2024, based on credible information, officials from the Drugs Control Administration raided Vayu Clinic located at 10-5-786/2, Sai Nagar, North Lalaguda, Tukaramgate, Secunderabad, Hyderabad district. The clinic was being operated by a quack,



Pullagurta Venkateshwar Reddy, who falsely claimed to be an MBBS doctor. He was practising medicine without proper qualifications, thereby deceiving the public. During the raid, officials

found doctor stamps bearing fake registration numbers and fake prescription books at the clinic. They also found large quantities of medicines stocked at the premises without any drug licence. Among the seized items were 44 varieties of medicines, including antibiotics, steroids, analgesics and anti-ulcer drugs. Notably, medicines intended for Indian Railways supply were also found at the clinic.

DCA officials seized the entire stock, worth Rs. 1.60 lakhs, during the operation. They also lodged a complaint at

the Tukaramgate police station regarding the fraudulent practice of claiming to be an MBBS doctor and cheating the public. A police case has been filed against the culprit on Friday at Tukaramgate police station under Section 419 and 420 (cheating) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). They detected several higher-generation 'antibiotic injections' at the clinic during the raid. B Govind Singh, Drugs Inspector, Secunderabad and G Anil, Drugs Inspector, Malakpet, carried out the raid. DCA officers lifted the samples for analysis.

Criminal case registered against film producer Bandla Ganesh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Film Nagar Police on Friday registered a case against film producer Bandla Ganesh based on a complaint from Nowhera Shaik, Heera Group Chairman, alleging that she rented a house to Bandla Ganesh in June 2021.

Nowhera Shaik claimed that Ganesh avoided paying the rent and was using the residential building for commercial purposes. In the complaint, Nowhera Shaik stated, "The tenant, Bandla Ganesh, is threatening me with the help of hired goons and highly influential political leaders and ministers to sell my property to him at the lowest possible price, despite it being rented to him."

Filmmagar Police registered

the case under Sections 341 (wrongful restraint) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code. However, on February 15 of this year, Bandla Ganesh's son Bandla Hiresha lodged a complaint against Nowhera Shaik in the same police station. According to the First Information Report (FIR) issued by the Film Nagar Police, Bandla Hiresha, alleged that Nowhera tried to sell them the house, which is involved in a case with the Enforcement Directorate. He claimed that they already paid Rs 3 crore to Nowhera Shaik in advance. In the complaint, Bandla Hiresha alleged that "Nowhera, along with 10 members, came to him and trespassed into his house, asking them to vacate the premises immediately."

Horizontal quota for women in Group III services

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) officials on Friday informed the candidates who have applied for Group-III Services regarding implementation of horizontal reservation for women to the extent of 33 1/3 per cent, without earmarking roster points for women. In view of the government orders, the revised break-up of vacancies pertaining to the posts in Group-III Services vide Notification No.29/2022, Dt: 30/12/2022 for 1,388 vacancies is available on the Commission's website <https://www.tspsc.gov.in>. The other conditions and information in the notification of Group-III Services will remain unchanged.

Three-layer security for strongrooms: CP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Emphasising security measures and traffic arrangements, along with finalising three-layer security measures to secure the strong rooms, a joint inspection was conducted by Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad, K Sreenivasa Reddy, along with DEO Hyderabad and Commissioner GHMC Ronald Rose and other officials on Friday. The inspection covered dis-

tribution, reception and counting centres (DRCs) of 08-Secunderabad PC and 71-Secunderabad Cantonment (byelection), focusing on security arrangements at DRC centres and strong rooms.

Additionally, at 3 pm, the CP and the other officials conducted a joint inspection of DRCs and Voter Facilitation Centre at All Saints High School, Gun Foundry, Abids, Hyderabad for postal ballots of 09-Hyderabad PC and reviewed the security arrangements.

2 fugitives absconding for 11 years arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Crime Investigation Department, Telangana has arrested accused Manikonda Anjaneyulu and his wife Manikonda Reeta in Bengaluru, who were absconding since 2013 and were involved in economic offences.

Additional DGP, CID, Shikha Goel said that accused Anjaneyulu was the managing director and his wife Reeta was director of M/S Adarsh Communications Pvt. Ltd. That company dealt with import of varieties of communication equipment and sale of multi-brand cellular phones and other products. Later, the two accused approached SBI Balanagar branch for financial assistance to meet their working capital and obtained a loan of Rs 27 crore. "After availing the loan the couple became

defaulters and absconded. On a complaint given by bank officials, a case was registered at Balanagar police station and subsequently transferred to CID," she mentioned.

"During the course of investigation it came to light that the accused was also involved in 4 other cases in Hyderabad and one case in Cyberabad Commissionerate in which they cheated finance companies and private investors to the tune of Rs 60 crore," she added. Under the direction of Additional DGP, CID, Shikha Goel, a special team led by the investigation officer DSP P Sreedhar, was formed recently. The team made sincere efforts to trace the accused and arrested them in Bengaluru. The accused are being produced before the XIII Additional Metropolitan Magistrate.

Forest officials trap leopard successfully

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The leopard that entered into the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Shamsabad, six days back, was finally trapped on Friday morning in one of the cages placed by the forest officials.

For the last six days, the forest officials were continuously monitoring and observing the movement of the leopard. Keeping the sensitivity and importance of human lives in the airport area, the efforts were further intensified by placing additional cages and trap cameras. Finally, the wild cat was caught successfully by the officials thereby relieving both forests and RGIA officials from sleepless nights



and tension. The beast was taken to Hyderabad Zoo under observation and health checkup for few days and will be released into the forest. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Head of Forest Force (PCCF) and Chief Wildlife Warden (CWLW) MC Pargaian appreciated the efforts of Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) Charminar, DFO Rangareddy, FDO Shamsabad, their staff and RGIA officials for their continued efforts to make the operation successful.

Zoo Park organises summer camp for children

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad, kicked off a one-day summer camp for children of IV to X standard on Friday. Dr Sunil S Hiremath, Director (FAC) & Curator, Nehru Zoological Park, inaugurated the summer camp at the bioscope hall. About nine students of different age groups, classes and schools participate in the camp.

The Director briefly explained the role of Nehru Zoological Park in conservation breeding and educating



Dr Sunil S Hiremath, along with children and other officials

the visitors. This one-day summer camp for children gives a brief idea to study the animal behaviour, their habitats and day-to-day activities.

Later, the Zoo Education Officer took them around the zoo animal enclosures, including night enclosures, Safari park, Reptile house, Birds enclosure, Nocturnal animal house, Big cats, Mega herbivores, monkeys etc. In the afternoon session, drawing and essay writing competition were conducted. They also conducted snakes

awareness show in which live demonstration of snakes, briefing the morphology, psychology and behaviour, myths on snakes and identification of venomous and non-venomous snakes and measures to be taken in case of a snake bite were discussed.

The participants expressed the experience of the camp as fun, thrilling and educative. A Nagamani, Dy Curator, NZR, B Laxman, Asst. Curator - II, NZR, HM Hanifulla, PRO, NZR, Hyd and Deepak Tharun, EO, NZR, Hyd, were also present.

2 arrested for illegally selling open plots at lower price

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad City Police apprehended two accused for illegally selling open plots at lower price on Friday and sent them to judicial remand based on the complainant Mopidevi Mahalakshmi.

The accused are A1- M/s VBJ Capstone Builders Pvt. Ltd represented by A-2 & A-3, A-2 Kandula Venkata Prasad Guptha S/o Late K.Nageshwarao (40), Managing Director of M/s VBJ Capstone Builders Pvt. Ltd., R/o Flat No.1602 D-Block, My Home Bhooga at Rayadurgam, A-3 Kandula Anuradha Guptha (39) W/o Kandula Venkata Prasad Guptha, Occ. Director of M/s VBJ Capstone Builders Pvt. Ltd. On March 16, 2024,



Mopidevi Mahalakshmi W/o Venkata Shiva Rao, r/o Lakeview Residency, Sainikpuri, Hyderabad filed a complaint.

Based on the complainant Mopidevi Mahalakshmi, the complaint stated that M/s VBJ Capstone Builders Pvt. Ltd., represented by Kandula Venkata Prasad Guptha and Kandula Anuradha Guptha made false promises and were selling the open plots through fabricated documents by making agreement of sales at lower

price compared to the market rates for open plots of venture by name Laxmi Nagar Colony Welfare Society, situated at Sy.No.170, Kapra village, Near Bhavana Rishi Co-operative Housing Society, Medchal-Malkajgiri district and collected huge amount of Rs 12,35,00,000 from the victims since 2019. During the investigation, it was discovered that there are 15 victims from whom the accused persons took the investment amounts. The police officials arrested the accused persons and sent them to judicial remand.

The investigation has been conducted by A Ram Reddy, ACP, EOW Team-VII, CCS, DD, Hyderabad and his team under the supervision of N Swetha, DCP, and K Srinivas Reddy, Commissioner of Police.

Ambedkar & reservations: A betrayal from Nehru to Rahul

"I have been wondering whether there is any other parallel in the world to the condition of Scheduled Castes in India. I cannot find any. And yet, why is no relief granted to the Scheduled Castes? Compare the concern the Government shows over safeguarding the Muslims. The Prime Minister's whole time and attention is devoted to the protection of the Muslims. I yield to none, not even to the Prime Minister, in my desire to give the Muslims of India the utmost protection wherever and whenever they stand in need of it. But what I want to know is, are the Muslims the only people who need protection?"

If I had told you that this was a statement made by a Member of Parliament (MP) when the Congress was in power and asked you to guess its author, most of you would have con-

cluded that it must be an MP from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Who else would accuse the Congress - which put the word 'Secularism' in the Preamble to our Constitution - of playing communal politics? Who else would accuse the Congress party and its Prime Minister of putting one minority community, especially the Muslims, above everyone else in the country, including the Scheduled Castes? Doesn't this sound eerily similar to what Prime Minister Modi had accused the Congress of doing only recently, especially about Reservations?

Yet, you would be wrong. The above quote is an excerpt from Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's speech on 10th October 1951, explaining why he resigned from Jawaharlal Nehru's Cabinet as India's first Law Minister. Dr BR Ambedkar, fondly called

Not only Jawaharlal, but decades later, Rajiv Gandhi, Nehru's grandson, expressed similar opposition in the Lok Sabha on reservations. This time, it was on reservations for the OBCs (Other Backward Classes) based on the Mandal Commission report. Under Indira and Rajiv, the Congress put the report in cold storage for a decade.

Babasaheb Ambedkar, is revered across India for his prime role in drafting our Constitution and incorporating affirmative action in the form of Reservations for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) into our Constitution.

Dr Ambedkar's fight for equal rights and opportunities, especially for SCs, STs and women, put him in the crosshairs of Jawaharlal Nehru and his descendants, who took over the Congress. The Congress, which became the personal fiefdom of the Nehru

dynasty, could never pardon Babasaheb for exposing Nehru. Congress saw to it that Babasaheb Ambedkar lost from the Bombay North Central constituency in the first elections to the Lok Sabha after the adoption of our Constitution, conducted in 1951-52 and again in the by-poll from Bhandra constituency in 1954. The grudge the Congress held for Babasaheb becomes evident when we realise that it took the BJP-supported VP Singh government to unveil Babasaheb's portrait in Parliament and honour him with the Bharat Ratna.



KISHORE POREDDY

What explains the Congress's antipathy towards Dr Ambedkar? Is it his success in introducing reservations? It appears so. Please look at this excerpt from Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's letter to the country's chief ministers. "I dislike any kind of reservation, more particularly in services. I react strongly against anything

which leads to inefficiency and second-rate standards. I want my country to be a first-class country in everything. The moment we encourage the second-rate, we are lost."

Not only Jawaharlal, but decades later, Rajiv Gandhi, Nehru's grandson, expressed similar opposition in the Lok Sabha on reservations. This time, it was on reservations for the OBCs (Other Backward Classes) based on the Mandal Commission report. Under Indira and Rajiv, the Congress put the report in cold storage for a decade. Finally, the BJP-supported VP Singh government implemented the report, giving 27% reservations in government jobs to OBCs despite Rajiv's efforts to stall the move. Rajiv raised multiple arguments, including that society needed more time to be ready, the report was unscientific, and only a few among the

OBCs would corner all benefits and much more.

However, Rajiv's real reason for opposing reservations for OBCs seems to be that it did not include religion-based reservations for minorities. He said: "Sir, the fact of the matter is that minorities have not got their due. The fact of the matter is that by playing games with this reservation, they have deliberately blocked the minorities from getting any benefit. The Prime Minister should answer how he is going to help the socially and educationally backward minority communities."

The Congress calls the BJP communal on the reservations issue because the BJP has consistently sided with Dr Ambedkar and fiercely rejected religion-based reservations. Narendra Modi extended the gambit of reservations by providing an additional 10% to the Economically Backward

Classes (EBC), irrespective of religion.

On the other hand, the Congress, from Nehru to Rahul, consistently maintained a dual stance. They opposed reservations and simultaneously advocated religion-based reservations to benefit minorities, especially Muslims. Yet, the Congress, through propaganda, had convinced many to believe that they were the true inheritors of Dr Ambedkar's legacy and supporters of reservations for those who faced discrimination under the Hindu caste system. With the advent of the internet and social media, their propaganda will not survive for long. It will be exposed, just like the fake, doctored video they created of Home Minister Amit Shah in an attempt to portray the BJP as against reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson.)

'BRS will splinter into four political outfits after LS polls'

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Friday predicted that Bharat Rashtra Samithi would splinter into four smaller political units after Lok Sabha elections.

Participating as chief guest in a meeting here, the Minister said that the BJP at the Centre and BRS in the State failed to develop Telangana. The meeting was held on the occasion of Congress candidate Teenmar Mallanna filing nomination papers in the by-election to Nalgonda - Warangal -



Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy speaking at a meeting in Hyderabad on Friday

Khammam's graduate constituency.

He said the Congress would come to power at the Centre

after the elections. The Congress had already implemented five guarantees promised to people ahead of the Assembly elections.

After losing power, former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao and BRS working president KT Rama Rao were spreading falsehoods.

"The BJP and the RSS will not get a single seat in the Lok Sabha elections in Telangana. He wished Teenmar Mallanna all success.

DCC President Ketawat Shankar Naik presided over the meeting.

Quack held for providing treatment to innocent people

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Based on credible information, the Commissioner's Task Force, East Zone team, along with Amberpet Police, apprehended a fake doctor who was pretending to be doctor and providing treatment to innocent people without possessing any valid degree from the competent authority thereby earning easy money illegally.

The accused was Raju Gangaram Ankalap (53), R/o Srinivasapuram Colony, Ramanthapur, Hyderabad.

According to the officials, the accused is a native of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, and he studied Diploma courses in Yoga and Naturopathy and Emergency Medical Services, at Ruby Hall Clinic Hospital, Pune, while so he acquired clinical

and medical knowledge. Later in 2019, he migrated to Hyderabad and started a clinic named Sri Sai Venkateswara Clinic" at New Patel Nagar, Amberpet, Hyderabad and displayed a board as Dr Ankalap Raju, D.N.Y.S., P.G.D.E.M.S (Mumbai) and family physician. He observed the innocence of patients of the Amberpet and to earn easy money he hatched a plan to provide allopathic treatment without possessing any valid degree or certificate from the competent authority. In the recent past, he was arrested twice by the police in a similar case. However, he did not mend his ways and again opened a clinic and provided allopathic treatment by prescribing the allopathic medicines and administering injections.

Cong candidate for LS seat Waliullah Sameer intensifies campaign

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad District Congress Committee President and Congress candidate from Hyderabad Lok Sabha constituency Mohammed Waliullah Sameer has strongly condemned the communal politics of AIMIM president and sitting MP Asaduddin Owaisi. He claimed that Owaisi's focus is on divisive politics to divert the attention of people from real issues.

After attending Friday prayers at the historic Mecca Masjid, Waliullah Sameer interacted with residents, vendors, and other community members. The response, he said, was overwhelming, with

people sharing their grievances and expressing frustration at the lack of responsiveness from authorities.

Later in the evening, Waliullah Sameer conducted a massive road show in the Charminar constituency, which started from Moosabowli Chowrasta and covered several localities. Congress senior leaders including P Vijaya Reddy, Ali Masqati, Mujeebullah Shareef and others participated in the roadshow.

Speaking to the media, Waliullah Sameer pointed out that AIMIM held the Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat since 1984, but no progress has not been achieved.

AMIT SHAH'S DOCTORED VIDEO CASE

Congress social media members get bail

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A city court on Friday granted conditional bail to five members of the social media unit of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) arrested for circulating a morphed video of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on social media.

Hyderabad Cyber Crime Police on Friday announced the arrest of Pendyala Vamshi Krishna, Manne Sathish, Pettam Naveen, Asma Tasleem and Koya Geetha.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Cyber Crimes Hyderabad, Dara Kavitha said they were circulating the morphed video of the speech delivered by Amit Shah during a public meeting.

They were produced before the Nampally Court, which granted them conditional bail.

They were asked to deposit a personal bond of Rs 10,000 each with two sureties and the court directed them to appear before the Investigation Officer every Monday and Friday till further

orders. The arrests were made in connection with the case registered on a complaint by BJP state general secretary, G Premender Reddy, in which he stated that the Telangana Congress Pradesh Congress Party in its X account posted morphed/fabricated video of HM Shah.

Cyber Crime Police, Hyderabad had registered a case under Sections 469, 505(1)(C), 171 G, 502(2) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Section 125 RP Act 1951. Police seized five mobile phones, one Ball Slide (Tab), two Acer laptops and two CPUs.

According to the police official, the five accused work in the TPCC social media unit and their job was to monitor social media posts related to political parties and upload them on their official and personal X handles.

Shah delivered a speech on April 23 during a public meeting at Medak. The police officer said Vamshi Krishna, who received a morphed video of the

Delhi Police arrests Cong member Arun Reddy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Friday arrested a Congress member for allegedly uploading and circulating a fake video of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, an official said here.

Arun Reddy handles the 'Spirit of Congress' account on X, the official said.

The Delhi Police Special Cell earlier registered an FIR

after the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), which comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), filed a complaint about the doctored video of Shah where his statements indicating a commitment to abolish quota for Muslims on religious grounds in Telangana were changed to make it seem that he was advocating scrapping of all reservations.

speech in WhatsApp, uploaded the same on the @INCNTelangana X handle and shared it in various WhatsApp groups.

The remaining four accused saw the video and further shared it to their individual X handles. When notified by X about sensitive content, they

deleted it.

Thus, they violated the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The DCP has cautioned people not to circulate any videos or photos related to political parties as this may breach the MCC related to the ongoing election for Lok Sabha.

Congress leg is not good for TG: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi Working President KT Rama Rao participated in a road show in Addagutta and Sitaphal Mandi divisions under Secunderabad Parliament in support of BRS Party Secunderabad Lok Sabha candidate T Padmarao Goud.

He said, "We have already said that it will not be good if Congress comes. Their legs are not good. Congress has come so did current, water problems etc. in the State. Are you said that K Chandrashekar



BRS working president KT Rama Rao is on campaign trail in Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency on Friday

Rao is not the CM? If we win 10-12 seats, KCR will rule the

politics of the state again".

He said, "In 2014, Bade Bhai Modi told great stories - Rs. 15 lakh in every house, farmers' income doubled, bullet trains were given. It has been five years since Kishan Reddy became MP and Union Minister but didn't get even one rupee. "All he did was distribute kurkure packets. Badebhai is a big fraud. Chote bhai Revanth Reddy's is also a big fraud."

In Khairatabad, Daman Nagender is an opportunist politician. What is the guarantee that he will not join BJP?"

Rahul, Revanth to campaign in Kadapa on May 7

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former AICC president Rahul Gandhi and Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy will conduct campaign in Andhra Pradesh on May 7. They participate in election in Kadapa, the home district of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Both Rahul Gandhi and

Revanth Reddy would participate in the election campaign on behalf of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president YS Sharmila who is contesting Kadapa Lok Sabha constituency against YSRCP candidate Avinash Reddy.

However, suspense continues whether the Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy would speak against TDP Chief N Chandrababu

Naidu or not as the YSRCP alleging that TDP and Congress have secret pact in Andhra Pradesh State. In fact, Naidu is contesting the elections in Andhra Pradesh state in alliance with the Jana Sena and BJP. APCC president Sharmila is the sister of YS Jaganmohan Reddy of Revanth Reddy and Rahul Gandhi at the Kadapa public meeting on May 7th.

Rohit Vemula: Cops backtrack on closure report

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Police has submitted a closure report to the High Court that Rohit Vemula, who had died by suicide in the University of Hyderabad (UoH) does not belong to the Scheduled Caste. However, by the end of the day, the police said they will investigate the case further. The police have mentioned in the report that they are closing the case because there is no substantial evidence to prove that Rohit Vemula belongs to the SC

community. Following the announcement of the closure report submission to the court, hundreds of students protested at the UoH.

However, the DGP office clarified, "Some doubts have been expressed by the mother and others of the deceased Rohit Vemula on the investigation conducted. It has been decided to conduct further investigation into the case. A petition will be filed in the court concerned requesting the Magistrate to permit further investigation into the

case."

The DGP said, "The investigation officer in the case was Assistant Commissioner of Police, Madhapur and the final closure report in the case was prepared last year, before November 2023 itself based on the investigation conducted."

The DGP said that the final closure report was officially filed in the jurisdictional court on March 21, 2024 by the investigation officer.

Rohit Vemula had committed suicide in January 2016. The case was registered under

Section 306 (Abetment to suicide) of IPC, and other sections of SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities (POA) Act. But the police investigation suggests that Vemula's suicide was driven by the fear of his true caste being disclosed, as he identified himself as belonging to the Scheduled Caste.

In the report, it was mentioned that Rohit was aware that he did not belong to the SC community and his mother got him an SC certificate. This could be one of the constant fears as the exposure

would put him at loss of his academic degrees that he earned over the years and be compelled to face prosecution. "Despite best efforts, no evidence could be found to establish that the action of the accused have driven him to commit suicide," the report mentioned.

The closure report absolves former UOH VC Appa Rao and then Secunderabad MP Bandaru Dattatreya, Union Minister Smriti Irani, former MLC N Ramachander Rao, other BJP and ABVP leaders.

'Special teams set up to address power supply complaints'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Deputy Chief Minister and Power Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Malu has condemned the false propaganda resorted to by BRS leaders for political mileage when there is uninterrupted power supply in the State even during peak demand hours.

The Deputy CM said 226 special teams were constituted to address complaints on power interruption in GHMC limits. An integrated command control centre was set up

in Hyderabad to supervise power supply continuously. The Command Control Centre was working continuously to resolve any issue, he asserted.

Sharing the data on power supply, Bhatti said in the last five months the Congress government supplied more power than supplied by the previous government in the same period last year. While 36,207 million units of power was supplied from December, 2022 to April end 2023, after Congress came to power, 38,155 million units of power was supplied

from December 2023 to April 30, 2024.

The Congress government has the record of supplying 15,497 MW peak demand supply, he said. With the temperatures reaching 45 degrees Celsius, power demand was naturally increasing. Sometimes due to increase in load here and there technical problems would arise and power would trip. Such instances were being addressed immediately by the electricity dept staff, he said.

Citing examples from last

year when BRS was in power, Bhatti said last year from April 24 to April 30, 1,369 power trippings on 11kv lines occurred in GHMC limits. In that one week, power supply was interrupted for 580 hours.

Now this year in the same one week period 11 kv power lines tripped 272 times and power supply was interrupted only for 89 hours, he said.

Similarly for the same period last year 301 transformers failed and this year 193 transformers failed. They were also replaced by new ones. What

more proof one would need to show that this government was providing better power supply compared to previous BRS government, Bhatti pointed out. What reply BRS leaders would give now?

He said here on Friday that people rejected the BRS leader's campaign during Assembly elections that there would be no power if Congress was elected and taught them a lesson. Yet the BRS leaders did not mend their ways even after people rejected them, Bhatti Vikramarka said.

Congress stoops so low as to attack me personally: Vishweshwar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, the BJP candidate for the Chevella Lok Sabha constituency, said that the Congress candidate in Chevella is resorting to personal attacks, lacking substantive issues to engage in meaningful debate. "He stooped to new low by verbally attacking my deceased mother and my wife, Sangita

Reddy, showcasing his disgraceful character. I am readily accessible to the people, with my residence gates always open, contrasting sharply with the locked gates and guarded security personnel at your residence. You're taking credit for the projects I secured for the constituency from the Central government, including the highway. From being a scamster, you have now resorted to deception by fielding

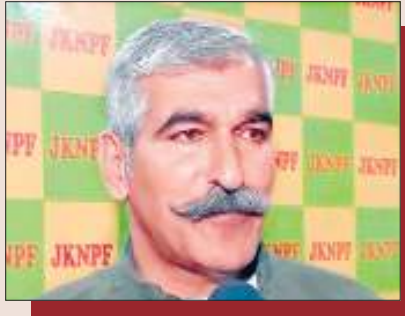
candidate in my name Konda Vishweshwar Reddy against me, aiming to confuse voters and diminish my margin. Your actions betray your fear of the overwhelming support I'm receiving," he said.

Vishweshwar Reddy was addressing a media conference at the BJP Telangana state office on Friday, said that the Congress was trying to confuse voters by fielding his namesake as a candidate.

INDIA CORNER

Jailed separatist leader Nayeem Khan's brother files nomination from Baramulla

Jailed separatist leader Nayeem Khan's brother, Munir Khan, on Friday filed his nomination papers from Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency, which is going to polls in the fifth phase on May 20. Nayeem Khan was arrested on July 24, 2017 in a terror-related case. He headed the Jammu Kashmir National Front led by Nayeem Ahmad Khan. The front was banned by the government under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Munir Khan, who is a part of the Jammu Kashmir Nationalist People's Front Party, launched two years ago, filed the nomination papers before Baramulla Deputy Commissioner Minga Sherpa, the returning officer of the constituency. Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah, People's Conference president and separatist-turned-mainstream-politician Sajad Lone, were among those who filed nominations.



Punjab man arrested for spying for Pakistan's ISI: Police

A man from Punjab's Hoshiarpur district was arrested for allegedly spying for Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and helping the agency in organising anti-India activities, police said on Friday. The man is accused of aiding anti-India activities by providing sensitive information about Indian Army deployments, and transmitting documents and photos from his mobile phone, they said. Acting on a tip-off, police apprehended Harpreet Singh near a railroad crossing on Phagwara road in Hoshiarpur on Thursday night. The man, who hails from Tarn Taran district, was currently residing in Vijay Nagar area here. According to police, Singh, who has been living in the city for the past four years, had allegedly travelled to Pakistan twice on a visitor visa where he met ISI officials. He was allegedly in contact with these ISI officials via WhatsApp, they said.



NIA chargesheets 4 CPI (Maoist) activists in case related to firing

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday chargesheeted four cadres of CPI (Maoist) in a case related to firing at the commandos of the Special Operations Group (SOG) in Thalappuzha area of Wayanad district in Kerala last year, according to an official statement. The incident occurred on November 7, 2023, when the SOG team of Kerala Police was on a combing operation in Perya, Wayanad, to track and nab armed cadres of the banned naxal outfit, the CPI (Maoist). The team came under attack as it zoomed in on the cadres present in a house, it said. In the ensuing operation, two CPI (Maoist) members, identified as Thiruvendikam alias Chandru alias Chandu and Shreemathi alias Unnimayya alias Unni, were apprehended, said the statement issued by the probe agency. Three others, including Latha alias Meera and Sundari alias Jenny, however, fled the scene of the encounter.



Cong tally to be all-time low in LS polls, says PM

PNS ■ BARDHAMAN/ KRISHNANAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday asserted that Congress' tally in the Lok Sabha polls will be an "all-time low", as the grand old party would struggle to cross even the "half-century" mark in the hustings.

He also mocked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's decision to contest from Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly seat, "sensing defeat" in Kerala's Wayanad, where he is a sitting MP.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in the Bardhaman-Durgapur and Krishnanagar Lok Sabha constituencies, Modi said that if Congress is voted to power, it would "snatch" quotas meant for the Scheduled Caste, Dalits and OBCs and give those to its "jihadi vote bank" to pursue the party's "appeasement politics". The PM slammed the opposition bloc INDIA and the



Congress for "supporting" the "vote jihad" comments made by a candidate of the Samajwadi Party (SP), an ally of the grand old party in Uttar Pradesh.

"There is no need for opinion polls or exit polls, as I had talked about their (Congress) defeat long back in Parliament. When their senior leader quit her Lok Sabha seat and entered Parliament through Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan, it was evident they sensed defeat," he said, in an apparent dig at

Sonia Gandhi.

"Now, the 'shehzada' of Congress, who went to Wayanad after losing the Amethi seat, is also contesting from Rae Bareilly. He knows he will lose Wayanad this time," Modi said, referring to Rahul Gandhi's decision to contest from Rae Bareilly.

He said Rahul Gandhi should not be afraid and "keep running away".

"I had said earlier that the 'prince', after the polling in Wayanad, would look for

another seat, due to fear of defeat in that constituency. Now, he had to run away from Amethi and choose the Rae Bareilly seat. They go around and ask people not to feel afraid. I would tell them the same thing - don't be afraid and don't run away," the prime minister said.

The Congress on Friday ended the suspense over Amethi and Rae Bareilly, announcing his candidature from the seat held by his mother Sonia Gandhi for the last two decades.

Rahul Gandhi had lost from the adjoining Amethi constituency in 2019, but won from Wayanad - a seat he is contesting this time as well.

"The Congress' tally in the Lok Sabha polls will be an all-time low. Let the Congress try as much as it wants, but the party won't be able to cross the half-century mark this time. They would struggle to get even 50 seats," Modi asserted.

Mamata lashes out at Governor for 'misconduct'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Friday lashed out at Governor C V Ananda Bose for his alleged misconduct with a woman employee of Raj Bhavan.

Speaking at a public rally in Purba Bardhaman district, Banerjee said my heart bleeds for the woman molested at Raj Bhavan and termed it a shame.

"Yesterday, a young woman who worked at Raj Bhavan came out and spoke against the Governor's harassment...Yesterday, the tears of the woman broke my heart. I have seen her video testimony. Before talking about Sandeshkhali, BJP must answer why the Governor did this to a woman working at Raj Bhavan," she said.

Banerjee also wondered why "Prime Minister Narendra Modi who came to Raj Bhawan last night didn't speak a word on the issue."

'Kejriwal's guarantees visible, Modi's guarantees 'jumla'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

AAP Lok Sabha candidate from West Delhi, Mahabal Mishra, has appreciated the work done by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal saying his "guarantees are visible on the ground" while Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantees are "jumla" (rhetoric).

Asserting that the people are angry over the arrest of AAP's national convener, Mishra said there is a wave of sympathy for him.

In an interview to PTI, he said the BJP MPs did not work for the development of their constituencies in the last 10 years, which is why the saffron party has fielded new faces this time around.

Barring Manoj Tiwari from Northeast Delhi, the BJP has not repeated any of its MPs from the remaining six seats in Delhi.

The BJP has fielded Kamaljeet Sehrawat from West Delhi, replacing its two-time MP Parvesh Verma.



"The BJP has fielded new candidates this time. They have given the first proof that the previous candidates did not work. I have been a councillor, a three-time MLA and an MP. I have also served as a member of the DDA for 12 years and have visited 16 countries as a delegate during that time.

"She (Sehrawat) has been only a councillor and, therefore, she will take time to learn. I am not talking ill about anyone. There is a difference between a councillor,

MLA and MP. At the state level, an MLA is involved in policy-making (at the assembly level) while an MP is involved in policy-making at the Lok Sabha level.

"A councillor is not part of policy making body. There is a difference in experience. The people know that Mahabal will start working right from the second day after he is elected," he said.

On March 21, Kejriwal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the excise policy linked money laundering case. Mishra noted that while arresting any top leader of a party creates problems, things got a bit different.

"The people got angry. Their feelings changed and now everyone says 'Main bhi Kejriwal' (I am also Kejriwal). Now there is not one Kejriwal but lakhs of Kejriwal. There is a wave of sympathy," he said.

The people in Delhi save a lot of money due to free electricity and free water scheme, he said.

Rahul's high-stakes 'chess move' with shift to Rae Bareilly

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi describes himself as the best chess player among Indian politicians, and his latest gambit appears to be his decision to contest from Rae Bareilly instead of his home ground Amethi.

Gandhi obviously hopes that the move will checkmate opponents but the BJP sees it as a cowardly retreat from the battleground.

"He is an experienced player of politics and chess. The party leadership takes its decisions after much discussion, and as part of a larger strategy. This single decision has befuddled the BJP, its supporters, and its sycophants," Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said in a post on the much-anticipated decision.



"The BJP's self-proclaimed Chanakya, who used to talk about 'paramparagat seat' is now not sure how to respond," he said.

The chess reference by Ramesh comes days after the Congress put out a video of Gandhi talking about his interest in the board game and its similarities with politics. In the video, when Gandhi is asked who is the best chess player

among Indian politicians, he said, "Me".

Gandhi filed his papers from Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly constituency in the afternoon, barely an hour before nominations closed for the Lok Sabha seat on Friday. He was accompanied by Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as he filed his papers around 2 pm.

Cong's hand is with enemies of India: Yogi Adityanath

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Launching a scathing attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and the INDIA bloc, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Friday said it has now become clearly evident that "Congress ka haath, desh ke dushmano ke saath".

According to an official release, the chief minister made this remark - the hand (election symbol) of the Congress is with the nation's enemies - in the wake of reports that Pakistan's former minister Chaudhry Fawad Hussain praised Rahul Gandhi and shared a video featuring the Congress leader on social media.

Before embarking on campaign in Sambhal, Badaun and Aonla Lok Sabha constituencies, the chief minister said the elections have reached their peak. So, those who are the enemies of the country will fully exert themselves to destroy the atmosphere which is in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The citizens across the nation must observe how Pakistan is endorsing Rahul Gandhi. A former minister of the Pakistani government, who shamelessly supported the Pulwama incident, is now openly backing Rahul Gandhi, expressing joy in his support," he said.

He said this shows that both the hands of Congress and the enemies of the country are together.



"If Modi ji and the BJP win, Diwali is celebrated in the country. Whereas if the Congress wins, celebrations take place in Pakistan. The people of the country should understand this difference and reject the anti-national elements," he said.

Alleging that the Congress has strayed from its path after Independence, Adityanath said, "Motivated by self-interest, it initially fostered national division and pursued appeasement policies for political gain. The adverse effect of appeasement policies was that separatism and extremism reached their peak within the country."

Besides, he also alleged, the Congress government's "corrupt practices" led to the rapid spread of Naxalism. Over the past decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts have effectively curbed terrorism, Naxalism and extremism, Adityanath said.

"Consequently, a favourable national environment has emerged, fostering development and inclusive welfare schemes.

Even those in the most marginalised situation benefit from government initiatives," he said. "Naturally, the public favours Modi ji on these fronts. We are confident that the populace will resoundingly reject the Congress and the INDI Alliance's divisive and appeasement strategies, ensuring the victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the NDA alliance under Modiji's leadership with a robust majority to form the government once again," he added.

ED attaches assets worth Rs 205 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ED Friday said it has attached assets worth over Rs 205 crore of retired IAS officer Anil Tuteja, the Raipur mayor's brother and a former excise department special secretary, besides others, in a money-laundering probe linked to an alleged liquor scam in Chhattisgarh.

The attached properties include 14 assets of Tuteja worth Rs 15.82 crore, 115 properties of Anwar Dhebar, the elder brother of Raipur Mayor and Congress leader Aijaz Dhebar, worth Rs 116.16 crore, properties of Vikash Agarwal alias Subbu worth Rs

1.54 crore and 33 properties of Arvind Singh worth Rs 12.99 crore, it said in a statement.

A property worth Rs 1.35 crore of Arunpati Tripathi, an Indian Telecom Service officer and special secretary of the excise department, nine properties worth Rs 28.13 crore of liquor businessman Trilok Singh Dhillon and jewellery worth Rs 27.96 crore of Naveen Kedia (linked to the Durg-based Chhattisgarh Distillery Limited) were attached as well.

In addition, the ED also attached movable properties worth Rs 1.2 crore of Ashesh Saurabh Kedia/Dishita Ventures Pvt Ltd and a vehicle registered in the name of



Nexgen Engitech Power Pvt Ltd.

The attached properties of Anwar Dhebar include Hotel Vennington Court in Raipur which is being run under the aegis of his firm, A Dhebar Buildcon, apart from a com-

mercial building in the name of 'Accord Business Tower', the ED said.

The total value of these assets, 18 movable and 161 immovable, is Rs 205.49 crore.

Tuteja, a 2003-batch IAS officer, was arrested in this case recently by the ED and the agency called him the "kingpin" of the liquor syndicate operating in the state of Chhattisgarh.

The agency claimed in a statement issued earlier that it has gathered evidence stating while Tuteja "was not officially a part of the excise department, yet he was actively involved with operations of this department".

The "complicit" actions of

Tuteja resulted in a "massive loss" to the state exchequer and filled the pockets of the beneficiaries of the liquor syndicate with more than Rs 2,100 crore illegal proceeds of crime. Tuteja also received a substantial share in this loot, the ED claimed.

The Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer retired last year. He was last designated as joint secretary in the industry and commerce department of Chhattisgarh.

The ED filed a fresh money laundering case in the liquor scam case after the Supreme Court recently quashed its earlier FIR that was based on an Income Tax Department complaint.

Woman conceals pregnancy, wraps newborn in bag, and throws on to street

PNS ■ KOCHI

A 23-year-old woman, suspected to be a victim of sexual assault, concealed her pregnancy, delivered a baby in the early hours of Friday in her apartment bathroom, and allegedly threw the newborn on the street in front of her flat complex situated in a posh residential area in this port city of Kerala.

Police said the woman has been taken into custody after being traced using the address on the Amazon delivery packet in which the child was wrapped and thrown.

The newborn was found dead in the abandoned parcel.



she gave birth to the child in her bathroom at around 5 - 5.30 AM today (Friday) and later threw the baby as she panicked.

It is said that the parents of the woman, with whom she was staying, were unaware of her pregnancy. They were also not aware of the delivery, as it happened inside the bathroom, which was locked by the woman, he said.

"The parents did not know about the pregnancy until the police came to the flat and questioned them," the commissioner said after the police interrogated the parents and the woman in connection with the incident.

Accused in Salman house firing incident found dead

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The post mortem report of Anuj Thapan, an accused in the April 14 firing incident outside the Bandra house of actor Salman Khan, confirmed he died of hanging as there are ligature marks on the neck and signs of asphyxia, a Mumbai police official said on Friday.

Thapan, who was held from Punjab along with his associate Sonu Bishnoi on April 26 and is accused of supplying firearms and bullets for the firing incident, was found dead in the lock-up of the Crime Branch in the commissionerate complex at Crawford Market on Wednesday.

He had allegedly hanged himself with a bed sheet in the toilet of the lock-up, as per police.

"The post mortem was conducted on Thursday evening in state-run JJ Hospital in Byculla. As per the report, there are ligature marks on the neck and signs of asphyxia, all of which confirm that he died of hanging," the police official said. The doctors who conducted the post mortem have reserved their opinions, while the deceased's viscera, tissue and other samples have been preserved for forensic and chemical analysis and organs for histopathology, he informed.

BJP slams Cong for calling Gandhi 'cunning'

PNS ■ RAJKOT

Former Gujarat Congress MLA Indranil Rajguru found himself under fire from the ruling BJP after he used the term "cunning" for Mahatma Gandhi.

In a video that went viral on social media, Rajguru, a former legislator from Rajkot who was addressing a small gathering on Dudhsagar road here on May 1, also said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was pure hearted and frank and that people would see the

next Mahatma in him.

"Write down my words if you want to. In the coming days, it will be Rahul Gandhi who will emerge as the next Mahatma Gandhi. While Gandhiji was somewhat cunning, Rahul Gandhi is totally frank and pure hearted," Rajguru said.

People have tried hard to portray Rahul Gandhi as a "pappu" (street lingo for dim witted) but the country has accepted him as its leader, he further claimed in the video. Hitting out at Rajguru,



Gujarat BJP vice president Bharat Boghara said people will not forgive the Congress for such remarks against

Mahatma Gandhi.

"Gandhiji is the father of our nation and led us to Independence. People of India and Gujarat will not forgive the Congress for such comments. This anger will be reflected in the poll results," Boghara asserted.

Asked about the issue by the media, Rajguru claimed what he said had been mentioned in history books.

"Today, the BJP is working like the British and is trying to destroy democracy. It is only Rahul Gandhi who is fighting

against the BJP just like Mahatma Gandhi took on the British," he said.

"That is why I said people will see Mahatma Gandhi in Rahul Gandhi in the coming days. I have read many history books related to Gandhiji and in one such book there was a reference about it (that Gandhiji was cunning). I have not added my own words," he said.

Rajguru also claimed he wanted to use the term 'clever', which he said was a synonym of cunning.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

School for scandal

With special focus on pro-Palestine protests, several global universities have turned into activism hubs

As more students join anti-Israel protests in countries like the US, England, France and elsewhere, it has spawned a debate regarding the role of educational institutes in shaping political ideologies and influencing global opinion, as well as the question of whether students should get involved in politics. The phenomenon of anti-Israel protests on campuses cannot be viewed in isolation; it reflects broader geopolitical undertones and social movements. However, the specific targeting of educational institutes as platforms for such protests raises important questions about the purpose of universities and their responsibility to foster constructive dialogue versus perpetuating bigotry. One aspect of this development is the clash between freedom of speech and the promotion of inclusivity and diversity. Anti-Israel protests, if not conducted respectfully and with a focus on dialogue rather than confrontation, risk alienating certain student segments. That said, it is also a fact that pro-Israel demonstrations were first witnessed in certain universities of esteem in the US. As Israel launched an offensive in Gaza, a parallel campaign started in these varieties, allegedly at Israel's behest and funding. Indeed, pro-Israel sentiment has been high in the US as well as in Europe; everyone remained tightlipped when Israel indulged in human rights violations in Gaza. Thus, the latest anti-Israel demonstrations are more of a reaction to that. Besides, even Israelites are now fed up with the ongoing war; they are rallying against Netanyahu and his policies towards West Asia in general and Palestine in particular.



As a Sanskrit saying goes: "Ya vidya sa vimuktaye"

(Education liberates). Since it is a universal truth, this liberation must manifest itself in the conduct of students. No denying the logical boundaries of any dissent and that violence has no role in such demonstrations. The students must focus on their studies, which is what they are supposed to primarily do on college campuses. But it would be rather an anti-thesis of education if they are not aware of what is happening around them and if they fail to react to correct any wrongdoings around them. It is equally true, they can't remain unaffected by the social milieu around them. Back home, let us not forget it was essentially a student movement under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan that opposed the Emergency. During the struggle for Independence, many leaders quit colleges and jumped into the freedom movement. Bhagat Singh, on the issue of students joining politics, wrote: "Was (the students of England and Germany) quitting colleges and going to war not politics? Where were the preachers then; why didn't they ask those students to study? Only the efforts of students and youth have brought independence to any country which is now free..." The words are prophetic and inspiring; one wishes his essay could be read aloud in the western universities.

PICTALK



Farmers harvest wheat at a village near the Indo-Pak border, on the outskirts of Jammu

Nothing 'gentlemanly' in Chinese diplomacy



BHOPINDER SINGH

China's recent outcry over the alleged breach of 'Gentleman's Agreement' with the Philippines reveals a profound irony, given the history of its coercion and deceit

There is a huge amount of insincerity and gall involved in the Chinese complaint that the Philippines had torn up the bilateral 'Gentleman's Agreement' between Beijing and Manila. While the term 'Gentleman's Agreement' has an implicit assumption of 'trust' as a fundamental tenet besting a relationship, which may otherwise not be legally binding — to even imagine that there has been any element of 'trust' between these two sparring countries, is to put oneself up to ridicule.

Much of the tensions in the countries around the South China Seas originates from an expansionist instinct in China that seeks to coerce, intimidate and dominate the region with creative, wholly unique and untenable concepts like the 'nine dash line' (called out by the International Court of Justice, Hague, as illegal). But it is not just the Philippines but also other regional countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Brunei etc., that are up in arms over Chinese belligerence. Recent events have seen optics like the Philippines charging China in the International Court of Justice, Hague (and winning the plea), dangerous military exercises to assert competitive territorial counterclaims, ramming and shooting with high-pressure water cannons at Filipino boats, disruption to freedom of navigation, denying access etc., hardly the backdrop to assume the word 'trust' between two constantly slug-fisting nations.

But the make-believe posturing and incredibly 'cry wolf' terms like 'Gentleman's Agreement' are an age-old Chinese norm, whenever anyone has stood up to expose its bullying and relentless expansionism. The Chinese through their conduct have unilaterally made a mockery of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Chinese have further upped the ante by dredging up sand to create artificial landmass e.g., around the restive Spratly Islands. This is enough to station a Military base replete with fighter planes and missiles and even anchor its fleet of so-called "unsinkable aircraft carriers". All



this has been done with sheer impunity and disregard towards any neighbouring countries' territorial claims, sense of security, or socio-economic concerns. Dupliciousness and attempting to checkmate (by force or lure) any emerging force that could challenge the Chinese juggernaut is met with its patent falsehoods, sneaky 'salami tactic' encroachment, or even brazen show of force. In the late 70s, the Chinese were more concerned about the Soviet Union, than with the United States of America. Beijing had counterintuitively started engaging with Washington DC to align it towards its side as it went about preparing to attack Vietnam. Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping on a trip to the United States had told US President Jimmy Carter, "The child is getting naughty, it is time he got spanked".

Soon thereafter, China attacked Vietnam in a war that is recalled in Vietnam as Chien tranh chong banh truoiung Trung Hoa (War against Chinese expansionism!) The physical/military superiority in favour of the Chinese PLA notwithstanding, most independent military historians acknowledge the bloody nose inflicted by the plucky, war-experienced and pugnacious Vietnamese forces that led to



EVEN EARLIER IN THE 1950s, THE CHINESE LAID THE TRAP FOR NEHRU'S COMPLACENCY WHEN CHINESE PREMIER ZHOU ENLAI REFUSED TO CONTEST NEHRU'S RIGHTFUL INSISTENCE ON AKSAI CHIN BY ACCEPTING THAT CHINA HAD NO CLAIM ON IT

a rupture between China and Vietnam, that still lingers subliminally.

Even earlier in the 50's, the Chinese laid the trap for Nehru's complacency when Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai refused to contest Nehru's rightful insistence on Aksai Chin by accepting that China had no claim on it. But Zhou would renege and contradict his earlier position by later claiming that Aksai Chin was already under the Chinese - they had surreptitiously built a road, while still playing naive and ingenuous, all along. Like all bilateral agreements that the Chinese are always willing to relegate to the bins, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was put to the same fate. In yet another act that would soon become a standard Chinese practice over the years, the Chinese cartographical interpretation was revised with newly usurped territories and claims.

This template of dubious expansionism led to the 1962 Indo-China War and ensured unsettled status in the region with the Chinese 'updating' their official maps with new territories and new names. That same principle has been applied to sovereign maritime issues in the South China Seas and the ongoing tussle with the Philippines has its roots in the history of China's insatiable expansionism and unbridled

ambition to assert its hegemony.

Propaganda in the highly controlled media of China has been elevated to a fine art. Filipino Defence Secretary was quick to rebut the same by clarifying that he was, "not aware of, nor is it a party to, any internal agreement with China" and that his department had, "not had any contact with any Chinese Government officials since last year". The Chinese have been deft with wordsmithing in order to lay the blame for ongoing tensions in the Philippines by first invoking an alleged 'promise', which then became a 'Gentleman's Agreement' and have most recently morphed into a 'new model' and finally 'internal understanding'.

Gen Jonathan Malaya, of the Philippines National Security Council, put it bluntly, "The propaganda masters are clearly working overtime in Beijing to sow discord and division in our country". But unfortunately for the Chinese, there are fewer takers for their position by the day and there never was, or is, anything 'Gentlemanly' about Chinese diplomacy, for decades.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KASHMIR'S PATH TO NORMALCY

Madam — Apropos the news article, "AFSPA repeal: A step towards Naya Kashmir," published on May 3, this is my response. The Union Home Minister's contemplation on AFSPA removal in J&K reflects a pivotal shift in the Government's approach towards the region. Amidst heightened security concerns and the promise of Naya Kashmir, the discourse on AFSPA underscores a nuanced balance between security imperatives and democratic values. While AFSPA has historically provided essential tools for security forces, its contentious history and instances of misuse necessitate a critical reevaluation. The Supreme Court's intervention in 2016 highlighted the need for accountability and checks on its implementation. As J&K transitions post-Article 370, the call for AFSPA's removal gains traction, signalling a maturation in the security landscape. With decreased terror incidents and improved governance, the time seems ripe for a phased withdrawal of AFSPA, bolstering confidence and fostering socio-political normalcy. Ultimately, the decision demands a holistic understanding, prioritising both security imperatives and civil liberties. A judicious approach, rooted in the aspirations of Naya Kashmir, holds the key to a peaceful and prosperous future.

Jiya Patel | Ahmedabad

PRESS FREEDOM IS VITAL

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Upholding the Fourth Estate in Digital Age," published on May 3, this is my response. Press freedom stands as an indispensable pillar of democracy, safeguarding our right to knowledge and accountability. Today, amidst the tumult of misinformation and Governmental pressures, World Press Freedom Day gains renewed significance. It's a reminder of the arduous battles journalists face worldwide, risking their safety to uncover truths and expose injustices. From the historical struggles during emergency periods to contemporary challenges amplified by digital landscapes, the essence remains

Deceptive digital dangers



Apropos the news article, "Time to curb fake videos in elections," published on May 3, this is my response. The emergence of 'deepfake' technology in political campaigns signals a disturbing trend toward digital deceit. The recent case involving Union Home Minister Amit Shah underscores the potential harm of manipulating videos to spread false narratives. Such malicious acts not only undermine the integrity of elections but also sow seeds of discord in society. The ease with

which these fake videos can be created using advanced technology raises concerns about the erosion of trust in media and public discourse. Moreover, the implications for national security, as highlighted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, cannot be overlooked.

While technological advancements have undoubtedly brought convenience, they also pose significant risks, particularly in cyberspace. Cybersecurity must evolve to address these ever-changing threats, with stringent measures implemented to combat the spread of misinformation and safeguard democratic processes. As citizens, we must remain vigilant against the proliferation of deepfake videos and advocate for robust measures to counter such deceptive practices. Only through collective efforts can we mitigate the dangers posed by digital manipulation and preserve the integrity of our democratic institutions.

Kavya Singh | Kolkata

unchanged: a free press is the bedrock of societal integrity.

However, the journey towards press freedom is far from smooth. Nations like India, with its vibrant media, often find themselves entangled in debates over freedom's extent. The quote by Advani echoes the enduring struggle against undue influence and censorship. Governments must respect press freedom, for civil society to advocate relentlessly and for media organisations to uphold ethical standards unwaveringly. On this day, we salute the bravery of journalists who persist in the face of adversity, reaffirming our commitment to preserving the cornerstone of democracy: a free and independent press.

Dhruv Gupta | Jamshedpur

NATURE'S ARTISTIC SYMPHONY

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Travel Across Enchanted Landscapes," published on May 3, this is my response. 'Paradise Regained' at Palette Art Gallery beautifully intertwines artistic mastery with a profound reverence for nature. The exhibition, curated by Uma Nair, serves as

a poignant tribute to Earth Month, showcasing the diverse interpretations of landscapes by ten exceptional artists. Each artwork is a testament to the artist's deep connection with nature, from Sanam Narayanan's fantastical realms to Umesh PK's multilayered odes. Paramjit Singh's vibrant oil paintings and Sanket Viramgami's intricate miniatures offer unique perspectives, while Jayashree Chakravarty and Sumesh Kamballur capture the essence of specific regions with captivating detail.

The exhibition not only celebrates the beauty of nature but also serves as a reminder of our responsibility to protect it. Through their art, the artists convey a message of environmental stewardship, urging viewers to appreciate and preserve the planet's beauty for future generations. 'Paradise Regained' is more than just an art display; it's a call to action to cherish and safeguard the paradise we call home.

Esahan Kapoor | Delhi

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SANTOSH ANAND

The Common University Entrance Test (CUET) is a key gateway for students aspiring to secure admission to undergraduate programmes in various Central and other Participating Universities/Institutions/Organisations across India. Balancing the assessment of core competencies and subject knowledge, CUET presents both challenges and opportunities. As students gear up for their CUET 2024 journey leveraging a crucial resource: your NCERT textbooks is a very good idea.

NCERT textbooks have long served as foundational resources for students across India. Beyond their use within classrooms, they play a vital role in preparing students for competitive exams like CUET. Leveraging NCERT textbooks can significantly enhance your CUET study strategy, providing a sturdy framework to progress from basic to advanced levels.

NCERT textbooks align seamlessly with the CUET syllabus, covering the majority of the necessary topics and concepts in a clear and acces-



NCERT textbooks

sible manner. Building a Strong Foundation NCERT textbooks follow a step-by-step approach to presenting concepts, making them ideal for laying a strong foundation. By breaking down complex subjects into manageable sections, they facilitate effective learning and foster a solid understanding of the fundamentals. As you advance in your CUET preparation, delving deeper into NCERT textbooks reveals more complex topics and advanced concepts. The detailed explanations, illustrative examples and practice questions provided in these textbooks help strengthen your understanding and problem-solving skills. Mastering the content presented in NCERT textbooks equips you to tackle higher-level questions and excel in the CUET exam confidently.

Authorised by subject matter experts and rigorously reviewed, they provide standardised material that ensures all students have access to relevant and quality content. This consistency levels the playing field for CUET aspirants nationwide. To make the most of NCERT textbooks in your CUET preparation, consider these strategies:

Subject-wise Approach: Organise your study schedule around CUET subjects, allocating specific time slots for studying NCERT textbooks related to each subject. This targeted approach allows for in-depth understanding and mastery of key concepts. **Enhance Visual Learning:** Make the most of the visuals in NCERT textbooks, such as illustrations, diagrams, tables, graphs, charts, boxed information and examples for accelerated learning. These elements assist in organising information, explaining theoretical concepts and highlighting key points, leading to improved understanding and problem-solving. **Practice and Revision:** Regularly solve exercise questions and problems provided

at the end of each chapter in NCERT textbooks. Practice is crucial for reinforcing learning and identifying areas that need further revision.

Supplementary Resources: While NCERT textbooks form the core of your study material, supplement your preparation with reference books, online resources and mock tests to broaden your knowledge and enhance problem-solving abilities. NCERT textbooks offer a wealth of resources for CUET aspirants, from fundamental concepts to advanced topics. By incorporating them into your study strategy and using them effectively, you can enhance your preparation, boost confidence and maximise your chances of success in the CUET 2024 Exam. ExamFactor stands by to support your CUET journey. Remember, dedication, a strategic approach and the solid foundation provided by NCERT textbooks can empower you to progress from basic to advanced levels in your CUET preparation.

(The author is a Head Content, ExamFactor; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN PROTECTING OUR DIGITAL WORLD

Cybersecurity is all about safeguarding trust, privacy and business interests



SHAINY SHARMA

With the proliferation of connected devices, cloud computing and various other digital platforms, the attack surface of the threats ranging from individual hackers to organised cybercriminal groups has expanded significantly. In the age, where technology pervades every facet of our lives, the importance of cybersecurity cannot be over stated and with the advent of technology, it has been deemed to have the emergence of new threats.

Cybersecurity measures, such as encryption, access controls and data loss prevention, help prevent unauthorised access, theft and misuse of confidential information. In an era of widespread digital connectivity, maintaining privacy, safeguarding personal information and communications from unauthorised surveillance, identifying theft and invasive data collection practices are crucial not only for individuals but for organisations too. The motto 'Protecting our digital world' is a responsibility we all share. Cybersecurity researchers cover a wide range of topics be it understanding the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) of cyber adversaries or focusing on developing methodologies, tools and best practices to integrate security into the software development lifecycle; are aimed at addressing current and emerging challenges in protecting digital assets and infrastructure. Cybersecurity researchers investigate software and hardware vulnerabilities to understand their root causes.

Safeguarding cybersecurity is imperative across all sectors of work be it business or education. Cybersecurity is integral to national security and defence strategies, as cyber threats pose risks to sovereignty, economic stability and public safety in shaping India's economic growth and global competitiveness, particularly in the realm of cybersecurity, the Indian Government has implemented various initiatives and policies such as Cyber Surakshit Bharat; Cyber Swachhta Kendra and many more to combat the cybersecurity challenges in India. These initiatives are aimed at generating awareness about the latest cybercrimes, detection and removal of malicious programs from devices and ultimately combat cyber threats by creating a secure cyber ecosystem.



The digital landscape is constantly evolving, with cyber threats becoming more sophisticated and pervasive. Cybersecurity measures, including threat detection, incident response and vulnerability management help identify, mitigate and contain cyber threats such as malware, phishing, ransomware and denial-of-service attacks. Effective cybersecurity will build trust and confidence among stakeholders, including customers, partners, investors and the public at large. By demonstrating a commitment to cybersecurity best practices and compliance with regulations, organisations enhance their reputation and credibility in the digital marketplace.

The need for cybersecurity has increased due to the evolving threat landscape, technological advancements, digital transformation initiatives, regulatory requirements, geopolitical tensions and societal reliance on digital technologies. Cybersecurity is not just about safeguarding the data rather it's about safeguarding trust, privacy and freedom in the digital age. It requires a comprehensive and proactive approach involving technology, policies, education, collaboration and investment to address the evolving challenges posed by cyber threats. One needs to stay vigilant, informed and proactive in keeping online space secure. Strong passwords, regular updates and staying cautious of phishing attempts are just a few steps toward cyber resilient community. Despite advancements, cybersecurity does face a lot of challenges, including the constant evolution of cyber threats, the shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals and the global nature of cybercrime.

(The write is an educator; views are personal)

Global tapestry and impact of terrorism



SUDHIR HINDWAN

In an era marked by geopolitical upheavals and regional conflicts, the spectre of terror looms large, transcending borders and threatening stability on a global scale

At a time when the world political landscape is dealing with a number of regional conflicts such as Israel-Palestine, Russia-Ukraine, skirmishes in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, trans-national terrorism has hogged the limelight world over during the last few years. Similarly at the domestic level terror organisations from across the border have unleashed a wave of terror in Kashmir to attract attention from the media to upturn the diminishing morale of the mercenaries. Seen in this recent perspective are the latest sinister designs of the terror forces in different parts of the world whether in Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Red Sea, Israel, Palestine, Scandinavian Countries, Central Asia or Russia. In the past few days, the insurgency has resulted in numerous killings of innocents and the martyrdom of several Army soldiers in different parts of Jammu and Kashmir on the domestic front in India.

International terrorism, though comparatively less in volume than the domestic variety, has crossed all limitations despite increased Government efforts to combat it. Much blood, if not ink, has flowed since terrorists struck the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the US This was followed by an upsurge in terrorist activities across the globe. Repeated terror attacks over the years sometimes after a brief lull have not only exposed the security and intelligence network but also robbed confidence of modern nations in controlling the menace.

Whether terrorism is unleashed at the local, regional, national or international level, it cannot survive for long without international support and collaboration. In a globalised world, the matrices of power turn on the highly visible, inequalitarian structure of the international economy and as such inter-relationships between socio-economic conditions in different parts of the world are becoming more and more obvious. At another level, the post-Cold War international political-economic order is still a victim of the power game that was thrust on the world by the then-big powers. Many seasoned international experts on violence and terror are of the opinion that the power network woven by the hegemonic might in the entire West Asian region has provoked the ire of the opposition forces in almost every State where they had an interest-based relationship. Thus, as societies globalise and curtains of opacity are raised through increased inter-societal interaction at the international level, people in under-developed countries are holding the big powers responsible for their inferior socio-economic positions. The Cold War Era leading to interference in crucial areas such as Afghanistan, South-East Asia, Gulf and Latin American countries has resulted in the development of peculiar trends that provided breeding grounds for terrorist activities. Talibanisation of Afghanistan would never have taken place had the powerful nations handled the situation well in the beginning.

Ajaz Ahmad highlights the shifting agricultural landscape in Poonch, noting a traditional focus on seasonal crops like maize. However, he observes a gradual change in mindset among local farmers, with growing enthusiasm for saffron production. "We have procured saffron seeds from Pampore and Kishtwar districts of Kashmir. Now, my desire is that after Pampore and Kishtwar, Poonch becomes the third largest center for saffron production in Jammu and



THE STRATEGIES OF IMPOSING ARMS AND ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON THE SO-CALLED ROGUE NATIONS DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN INEFFICIENT AND RATHER HELPED THESE NATIONS TO GAIN INTERNATIONAL SYMPATHY

and rather helped these nations to gain international sympathy. Although the hope of a permanent solution to the problem of terrorism is still far away, one hopes that the powerful nations will develop a more mature understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism that has assumed alarming proportions. The rapid international transportation and use of sophisticated weapons like AK 47 assault rifles and plastic explosives (RDX) have helped to facilitate the expansion of terrorist networks around the world. Besides, the new suicide squads of terrorists have left the entire security apparatus of the affected States in a State of shock. The recent incidents cannot be viewed in isolation.

A leading anti-terrorism expert, Mr Brian Jenkins, believes that though more articulate and multiplied effort by the police and intelligence can tell us about a possible terrorist attack, there is still confusion over whether such a mechanism is successful in dealing with terrorists driven by fundamentalism. Gradually, religion is becoming the main motivating force for terrorism across the globe. There is a growing nexus between terrorists and internationally organised crime networks. Mr. Alison Jamieson, a British analyst on organised crime and political violence, commented that the distinction between terrorism and organised crime has become very blurred recently.

An Italian organised crime expert, Professor Ernesto, says: "The terrorist's goal is an ideological one,

while organised crime's goal is financial, but the instrument is the same.

They both need money and arms". In Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tigers engage in drug trafficking to finance their struggle, in north-eastern India guerrillas kidnap tea planters and hold them to ransom to help fund their fight for independence. In Chechnya, the secessionists were heavily involved in drug distribution.

These days terrorists are more confident than ever before of their access to the vulnerable points before carrying out any of their attacks and they plan their attacks in a heroic manner for the justification and fulfilment of a cause that they think is just. Thus, they attempt, by their acts, to inspire and manipulate fear to achieve a variety of purposes. For effective administrative measures, various sources of terrorism must be found first. There is a need for a truly effective preparedness programme at the Government level.

First, we must know about the people involved in terrorist activities and their motivations. Dealing with a terrorist incident and mitigating its consequences need to be carefully thought out. Sufficient data about the terrorist-hit area could be of immense use. Intelligence should be able to provide information about terrorist targets, timing and site in advance. But the Government alone cannot do much to stop it. Individuals and groups can make a significant contribution towards improving the general security

environment. On the other hand, there is a need for sophisticated security procedures that can go all the way from airport screening to the border area.

Some kind of positive programmes which can alleviate the frustration of terrorists can prove effective. There is also a need to promote open institutions, including political institutions to absorb the ethnic, religious and political pressure and allow terrorists to vent their feelings in a proper way. This will change their mind and thus encourage them to settle their differences in a peaceful way. Since present-day terrorists are very well organised and more professional than their counterparts a decade ago, new concepts of safety and security should arise. A vigilant and assertive police and paramilitary network should replace the old one. There is an apprehension that with the availability of biological and chemical weapons, terrorists could start their campaign with a renewed vigour.

No civilised political system can progress until terrorism is wiped out, but terrorism cannot be eliminated unless there is a political solution. The need of the hour is the political will to solve problems that generate terrorism. The States affected by terrorism should open up avenues for a negotiated settlement of disputes and exhibit genuine willingness to resolve long-festering problems.

(The author, a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav award, is a professor and expert on strategic affairs; views are personal)

Saffron cultivation: Replicate Poonch's success story

The Government must extend comprehensive support to farmers, fostering significant opportunities for saffron production in similar regions

In the heart of the border district Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir, amidst the rugged terrain and lush valleys, a quiet revolution is underway - the cultivation of saffron. "For the past 5 years, we have been conducting trials of saffron and a year ago, we took the plunge into full-scale cultivation. The results? Astonishing! Our efforts were supported by School of Biotechnology at the University of Jammu, who provided us a generous grant of INR 10 lakhs. With unwavering support from Professor Jyoti and the expertise of the university's scholars, including PhD student Tahil Bhatti and SDO, Horticulture, Mohammad Fareed from Poonch, we started to explore saffron cultivation in Poonch,



BHARTI DEVI

uncovering the untapped potential of saffron production in the region," shared 35-year-old farmer Ajaz Ahmad from Bayla village, in Mandi tehsil, bordering Poonch. He has made a name for himself as a saffron farmer in the region, moving away from traditional farming over the past few years. In this research, Ajaz found that saffron production can be done in abundance in areas

like Surankote, Arai, Fatehpur, Bayla, Mandi and Mendhar of Poonch. The environment and soil here are almost similar to those in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir where saffron production takes place. Saffron holds the esteemed title of being one of the world's most prized spices. Known as "Kong" in Kashmiri, "Jafran" in Urdu and "Kesar" in Hindi, it is derived from the delicate threads of fragrant flowers. Historically, its cultivation has been confined to specific regions within the Union Territory. While some cultivation occurs in Kishtwar, the Pampore region of Kashmir reigns as its primary producer, renowned for its superior quality. Commanding a premium price, Pampore saffron fetches around 3 lakh rupees

per kilogram. It takes an astonishing quantity of flowers - approximately 160 to 180 - to yield just one gram of saffron. Moreover, a kilogram of this precious spice requires the harvest of about half a million flowers.

Ajaz Ahmad highlights the shifting agricultural landscape in Poonch, noting a traditional focus on seasonal crops like maize. However, he observes a gradual change in mindset among local farmers, with growing enthusiasm for saffron production. "We have procured saffron seeds from Pampore and Kishtwar districts of Kashmir. Now, my desire is that after Pampore and Kishtwar, Poonch becomes the third largest center for saffron production in Jammu and

Kashmir," he said. He advocates for Governmental support in the form of security measures rather than subsidies, citing the comparatively high cost of saffron seeds. Ajaz emphasises the need for crop protection from wildlife, particularly bears that frequently ravage fields, suggesting that fencing could mitigate such risks and safeguard farmers' livelihoods.

It can be easily understood that extensive efforts are required for saffron production. In India, saffron cultivation begins in June and July, while in some regions, it starts in August and September. Flowering usually begins in October. Apart from India, saffron cultivation is mainly done in Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Iran and China. 80 per cent of

the world's total saffron production is concentrated in Spain and Iran alone. For the farmers involved in its production, it is nothing less than a boon because its price in the market ranges from 3 to 3.5 lakh rupees per kilogram.

The allure of saffron extends to both men and women who actively engage in its cultivation. Shamim Akhtar, a 35-year-old farmer from Bayla, shared, "I've been cultivating saffron for several years now and the results have been rewarding. However, the construction of a road through our land resulted in crop damage. Nonetheless, my passion for saffron cultivation remains strong. Despite facing financial constraints to procure seeds, I aspire to continue with this endeavor."

Farmer Abdul Samad from the same village, however, has another concern on his mind. He is worried about agriculture being affected by changing environmental conditions. He explains that due to changing weather patterns, there has been a decrease in saffron production in Kashmir in recent years. It requires rainfall between 1000 to 1500 millimetres, which has decreased and untimely snowfall has had a negative impact on the soil, resulting in reduced saffron production.

Kashmir, which previously yielded up to 15 tons of saffron annually, has seen this output dwindle to 8 to 9 tons, a worrying trend. Despite this setback, Kashmiri saffron remains highly valued for its medicinal properties, known

to alleviate blood pressure and migraines and find use in beauty products. The central Government's attention to Kashmiri saffron is evident through initiatives like the National Saffron Mission (NSM). Aimed at bolstering saffron production and enhancing the socio-economic status of Kashmiri residents, the NSM has notably benefited saffron farmers. Additionally, various other Government schemes also promote saffron cultivation. However, for farmers to swiftly reap the benefits of these programs, they must be executed on a larger scale, given the increasing enthusiasm for saffron cultivation.

(The writer is a grassroots writer from Poonch, J&K. Charkha Features)

MONEY MATTERS

MRF net profit rises 16% to Rs 396 crore in Q4; revenue up at Rs 6,349 cr

Tyre maker MRF on Friday posted a 16 per cent increase in its consolidated net profit at Rs 396 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2024. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 341 crore for the January-March quarter of the preceding fiscal. Revenue from operations rose to Rs 6,349 crore in the last fiscal as against Rs 5,842 crore in 2022-23. For the entire financial year ended March 2024, the tyre maker said its net profit stood at Rs 2,081 crore as compared to Rs 769 crore in FY23. Revenue from operations increased to Rs 25,169 crore in FY24 as compared to Rs 23,008 crore in FY23. The company said its board has recommended a final dividend of Rs 1,941 per share of Rs 10 each. The company has already paid two interim dividends of Rs 31 per share each time for the financial year ended March 2024. The total dividend for the financial year ended March 2024 works out to Rs 2,001 per share of Rs 10 each.



JSW Infrastructure Q4 net profit jumps 9% to Rs 329 crore

JSW Infrastructure on Friday reported a 9 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 329 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2024. The company had clocked a profit of Rs 302.26 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, the company said in a BSE filing. Its consolidated total income increased to Rs 1,200.30 crore for the fourth quarter against Rs 973.20 crore in the year-ago period. The total expense also rose to Rs 782.93 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 677.77 crore a year ago. The company handled cargo volumes of 29.3 million tonne in the fourth quarter up 9 per cent year-on-year. The board of the company has recommended a dividend of Rs 0.55/share. JSW Infrastructure Ltd, a part of the JSW Group, is India's second-largest private commercial port operator.



Mia by Tanishq on expansion mode; sets up four retail stores in TN

Jewellery brand Mia by Tanishq from the diversified conglomerate Tata Group has inaugurated four new stores in Tamil Nadu under its expansion exercise, the company said on Friday. Marking the inaugural, the brand has offered discounts of up to 20 per cent on Mia's range of products till May 5. The company has inaugurated three new stores with one each in Kellys, Adyar, and Velachery in Chennai and another in Tiruppur district, a company statement here said. "Last year, we unveiled 12 new Mia by Tanishq stand-alone stores in Tamil Nadu and were delighted by the overwhelming response. We are opening four new stores between yesterday and today in Chennai (3 Tiruppur (1)," said Business Head, Shyamala Ramanan, Mia by Tanishq. "Mia understands the needs of the women of today and how they are looking at jewellery that is an extension of their personality."



Apple logs strong double-digit growth in India

CEO says incredibly exciting market

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Apple grew at a strong double-digit rate in India, hitting a new March quarter revenue record in an "incredibly exciting market", even though the tech titan's overall quarterly revenue declined 4 per cent. Apple's India showing earned praises from CEO Tim Cook who described the market here as a "major focus" and said Apple is working on the entire ecosystem from developer to the market to operations. The top honcho said he is "very pleased" with the growth numbers. "We did grow strong double-digit (in India). And so we were



very, very pleased about it. It was a new March quarter revenue record for us. As you know, as I've said before, I see it as an incredibly exciting market and it's a major focus for us," he said in India specific call-outs during the company's Q2 earnings.

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terms of the operational side or supply chain side, we are producing there; from a pragmatic point of view, you need to produce there to be competitive." The Cupertino-based iPhone maker has set revenue records in more than a dozen countries and regions. These include, among others, March quarter records in India, Latin America and the Middle East, as well as Canada, Spain, and Turkey. On Apple's India report card, Cook said the company has both operational things going on and go-to-market, alongside various initiatives. Cook further added, "In



India's mining sector grows by 7.5% in FY24

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's mining sector grew by 7.5 per cent in FY24, with production of iron ore and limestone recording high growth during the year, an official statement said on Friday. For the month of March, the index of mineral production was 1.2 per cent higher year-on-year at 156.1. Production of iron ore was at 277 million metric tonne (MMT) in 2023-24 against 258 MMT in 2022-23, registering a growth of 7.4 per cent.

Sensex tumbles 700 points amid broad-based selloff

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex plummeted over 700 points to sink below the 74,000 level and Nifty retreated from a record high on Friday as investors pared exposure to telecom, capital goods and tech stocks. Heavy selling pressure in Reliance Industries, L&T and HDFC bank counters also pulled indices down, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 732.96 points or 0.98 per cent to settle at 73,878.15 after soaring 484.07 points earlier in the day. From its intra-day high of 75,095.18, the benchmark tanked 1,627.45 points to the day's low of 73,467.73. The NSE Nifty also declined 172.35 points or 0.76 per cent to 22,475.85. The benchmark hit a record 22,794.70 in the early trade, up 146.5 points or



0.64 per cent. From the Sensex basket, Larsen & Toubro, Maruti, Reliance Industries, Nestle, Bharti Airtel, UltraTech Cement, Kotak Mahindra Bank and JSW Steel were among the major laggards. Bajaj Finance climbed nearly 1 per cent higher. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lifted restrictions on Bajaj Finance on sanctioning and disbursal of loans through eCOM and Insta EMI Card, the company said in a regulatory filing on Thursday. In November last year, the central bank directed Bajaj Finance to stop sanction and disbursal of loans under its two lending products -- eCOM and Insta EMI Card -- due to the company's non-adherence to the extant provisions of digital lending guidelines.

Strong sales propel Godrej Properties to record profit in Q4

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Godrej Properties on Friday reported its highest-ever quarterly profit as earnings jumped 14 per cent annually to Rs 471.26 crore in the March quarter, spurred by better income and strong housing sales. Its net profit stood at Rs 412.14 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to Rs 1,914.82 crore in the fourth quarter of FY24 from Rs 1,838.82 crore in the year-ago period, Godrej Properties, part of business conglomerate Godrej Group, said in a regulatory filing. During the 2023-24 fiscal, the company's net profit increased to Rs 725.27 crore from Rs 571.39 crore in the preceding year. Total income rose to Rs 4,334.22 crore in FY24 from

Rs 3,039 crore in 2022-23. In an interview with PTI, Godrej Properties Ltd Executive Chairperson Pirojsha Godrej said, "It (2023-24 fiscal) was a great year overall, whether you look at launches, sales, collection from customers, business development, deliveries of projects, cash flow and profit. We are really excited to see the kind of momentum in the business." He expected housing demand to sustain in the coming years. To tap this demand, Pirojsha said the company has lined up launches of multiple projects across Delhi-NCR, Mumbai-Metropolitan Region (MMR), Bengaluru, Pune, and Hyderabad markets. Godrej Properties would acquire land parcels for future development and also step up deliveries of projects.

Seven Adani group firms say received SEBI show cause notices

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Seven out of the 10 listed firms of Adani group have received show cause notices from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for alleged violation of related party transactions and non-compliance with listing regulations, the companies said in their regulatory filings to the stock exchanges. While group's flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd, renewable energy firm Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) and city gas distributor Adani Total Gas Ltd said SEBI sent

notices of their parent or holding company controlled by conglomerate's chairman Gautam Adani, ports company Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone, Adani Power, electricity transmission firm Adani Energy Solutions, and commodities firm Adani Wilmar said they have received SEBI notices. Making the disclosure as part of notes to their respective January-March quarter and 2023-24 financial results statements, all the firms in almost identical statements said there is no material non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations and



no material consequential effect. However, auditors of the companies, except those for Adani Green Energy, Adani Total Gas Ltd and Adani Wilmar,

issued a qualified opinion on the financial statements, implying that the outcome of the SEBI investigation may have a bearing on the financial statements in the future. The conglomerate's cement companies ACC and Ambuja Cement said they have not received any notice from SEBI on the matter and there was no open matter relating to them and any non-compliance of applicable regulations. Its media unit NDTV did not say anything about receiving SEBI notices. The SEBI notices are part of a probe that followed US short-seller

Hindenburg Research making damning allegations of corporate fraud and stock price manipulation against the Adani Group in January 2023. Though Adani vehemently denied all allegations, the report triggered a stock rout that wiped out about US\$ 150 billion of the group's market value at its lowest point. Most of the group stocks have bounced back as the ports-to-energy conglomerate plotted a comeback strategy. A show cause notice is not an indictment and seeks an explanation from entities as to why legal action should not be taken against them.

Good Capital plans to invest US\$ 25 mn in Indian AI startups this fiscal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mauritius-based venture capital firm Good Capital on Friday said it plans to invest USD 25 million, about Rs 200 crore, in Indian AI startups this fiscal. The investment will be made from the corpus of US\$ 50 million Good Capital Fund II, which is expected to be used by 2027. "The total fund is US\$ 50 million which is planned to be used by 2027. Out of which Good Capital is deploying US\$

25 million in AI startups empowering intermediaries and plans to deploy this by 2025," Arjun Malhotra, General Partner at Good Capital said. "Investing in technology products solving India-centric problems, the firm has announced plans to invest US\$ 25 million in AI startups by FY25. These investments will primarily target sectors such as cleantech, e-commerce, edtech, healthtech, SaaS, and deeptech," Good Capital said.

Adani Green Energy Q4 net profit declines 39% to Rs 310 cr due to rising expenses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) on Friday posted a 38.85 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 310 crore for the March quarter, mainly on account of increased expenses. Its net profit was Rs 507 crore in the January-March period of the preceding 2022-23, the company said in an exchange filing. During the fourth quarter of FY24, the company's total income fell to Rs 2,806 crore from Rs 2,977 crore a year ago. The company's expenses surged to Rs 2,379 crore during the period under review, as against Rs 2,053 crore in the year-ago period. In a separate statement, the

company said its operational capacity grew at 35 per cent year-on-year to 10,934 MW with greenfield addition of 2,848 MW renewable capacity, including 2,418 MW solar and 430 MW wind projects. With this, AGEL became the first company in India to cross the 10,000 MW renewable energy capacity. A G E L ' s 10,934 MW operational portfolio will power more than 5.8 million homes and avoid about 21 million tonnes of CO2 emissions annually. The sale of energy increased 47 per cent year-on-year to

21,806 million units in FY24, primarily backed by strong capacity addition, consistent solar CUF (capacity utilisation factor) and improved wind and hybrid CUF. The revenue from power supply rose 23 per cent to Rs 1,575 crore from Rs 1,941 crore earlier. Adani Green Energy Ltd Chief Executive Officer Amit Singh said, "We have deployed the first 2 GW of the 30 GW of renewable capacity under construction at Khavda in just 12 months of breaking ground. "Our highest capacity addition of 2.8 GW in FY24

demonstrates our strong execution capabilities, and we are confident of continuing the momentum." The company aims to commission at least 5 GW of hydro-pumped storage projects by 2030, and set a higher target of 50 GW RE capacity by 2030, which will contribute towards India's non-fossil fuel capacity target of 500 GW, he said. AGEL further said it has commenced construction work on its first hydro pumped storage project (PSP) of 500 MW on the Chitravathi river. The project is located at Peddakotla in Sri Sathya Sai district of Andhra Pradesh. The existing reservoir will act as the lower reservoir and the upper reservoir is to be developed.

LEPTOS ESTATES ENTERS INDIA

Making dreams of a Mediterranean holiday home come true

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Dr Reddy's launches generic anti-bacterial drug in US Leptos Estates, a six-decade, family-run, real estate and property development firm that builds and sells residential, commercial and holiday residences including premium apartments and luxury villas in Greece and Cyprus, has finally marked its entry into the Indian market. Over the past 64 years, the firm has sold 25,000 sophisticated, environment friendly and aesthetically designed properties to homeowners worldwide including in China, Russia, Africa and the Middle East. Helmed by the second-generation real estate industry stalwart Mr. Pantelis Leptos, Leptos Estates, has now turned its focus on the Indian market offering prospective Indian home buyers and investors an opportunity to invest in property in Cyprus and Greece with the added advantage of

securing Permanent Residency (PR) of both countries. Prospective Indian homeowners interested in Cyprus can get a PR with a minimum property investment of Euro 300,000 + VAT; while for Greece a PR can be acquired with a minimum property investment of Euro 250,000 with 0% VAT (valid until end of 2024). "We can't be more excited to

have Indian families explore the local culture of Greece and Cyprus from the comfort of their own homes in these beautiful destinations. The Indian market offers a huge potential for us as well as for prospective Indian home buyers and investors. We look forward to seeing the people of this country not only own some of the most stunning European properties but also

secure their permanent residency in the process!" said Mr. Pantelis M. Leptos, Co-President of Leptos Group of Companies. Cyprus has always been a popular choice among foreign investors due to the high-quality of life it offers, year-round sunshine and natural beauty. For investors, ease of doing business and investment incentives make it a lucrative destination both to live in and to do business in. A selection of Leptos Estates properties eligible for a Cyprus Permanent Residency are Venus Gardens — a unique residential resort with hilltop homes located just a short walk from the Paphos coastline and the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea; Coral Sea Villas — 63 state-of-the-art freehold-detached seafront villas situated in one of the most sought-after locations in Paphos; and Limassol Park — luxury apartments just 12 minutes from the sea and surrounded by landscaped gardens.



Dr Reddy's generic anti-bacterial drug out in US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Dr Reddy's Laboratories on Friday said it has launched a generic medication, used to treat a wide variety of bacterial infections, in the US market. The company has launched Doxycycline Capsules (40 mg) in the US market, the Hyderabad-based drug maker said in a statement. The company's product is a therapeutic generic equivalent of Oracea capsules (40 mg) approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA). Shares of the company on Friday ended 0.71% up at Rs 6,332.85 apiece on the BSE

Sebi gives nod to CARE Ratings' arm to offer ESG ratings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi has given approval to CARE Ratings Ltd's subsidiary CARE ESG Ratings to provide environmental, social, and governance (ESG) ratings. Such ratings will enable the issuers to discern steps for the betterment of their sustainability performance. Having received the registration under the Sebi (Credit Rating Agencies) Regulations on May 2, 2024, CARE ESG Ratings Ltd will commence its ESG rating activity, according to a statement issued by CareEdge Group on Friday.

"With the use of ESG ratings, a sustainable growth journey of businesses can get an independent viewpoint. A business can now assess its relative position and take action to strengthen its sustainability policies & practices. Investors and stakeholders have adopted new perspectives on ESG-based reporting, and performance, both domestically and internationally," Mehul Pandya, MD and Group CEO of CareEdge, said. Last month, Sebi gave clearance to ICRA's subsidiary Pragati Development Consulting Services Ltd and Crisil's entity Crisil ESG Ratings & Analytics to offer ESG ratings. In 2023, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) amended its regulations pertaining to credit rating agencies, whereby ERPs can be allowed to register with the regulator under the CRA (Credit Rating Agencies) norms.



Hyderabad

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Saturday
May 4, 2024

A Hyderabadi to the core makes entrepreneurial mark

SUBODHINI PUROHIT

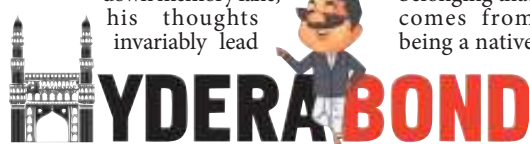
Hailing from a family deeply rooted in Hyderabad's rich tapestry of culture and heritage, Syed Aijazuddin is a visionary entrepreneur. With a career spanning over 25 years in the insurance sector, he embodies the essence of the city's enduring spirit. From the cobblestone streets of the old city to the gleaming towers ofHITEC City, he carries within him the legacy of generations past, infused with a passion for excellence and a drive for success. Hyderabad is a vibrant melting pot where food, restaurants, and IT converge to create a dynamic and unparalleled urban experience, he says. "I was born and raised in Hyderabad, where I completed my undergraduate studies. Later, I moved to Italy to pursue higher education and further my career. After completing my studies there, I returned to India in 2005. My family has been residing in Hyderabad for generations."

Home is not merely a place on a map; it's an intricate mosaic of memories, emotions, and belongings. He express-

es, "Hyderabad holds a special place in my heart, like a sanctuary on earth. Despite travelling extensively, I've never found another place that offers the same sense of love and peace as Hyderabad does. It truly stands apart in its unique charm and warmth."

In the vibrant amalgams of Hyderabad's offerings, its culinary delights stand as crowning jewels, and among them, biryani reigns supreme. He continues to share, "Even my clients, hailing from distant corners of the globe, are captivated by the allure of Hyderabad's biryani. Their conversations brim with admiration for this iconic dish, and their praise is a testament to its transcendent flavours and aromatic splendour. Eagerly, they express their desire to partake in this culinary pilgrimage, to taste the essence of Hyderabad through its most celebrated gastronomic delight."

Embarking on a journey down memory lane, his thoughts invariably lead



him back to the hallowed halls, as he says, "My school days at All Saints High School, are etched in my memory as some of the most cherished moments of my life. It was a time filled with laughter, learning, and boundless camaraderie. As a student, I eagerly participated in dramas and plays, immersing myself in the vibrant world of storytelling and performance. These experiences not only enriched my education but also forged lifelong friendships and nurtured a sense of creativity and self-expression. Looking back, I am grateful for the remarkable journey that my school in Hyderabad provided."

He said, "Being rooted in Hyderabad has been instrumental in shaping my career journey. The inherent sense of belonging that comes from being a native



of this city has instilled in me profound confidence and a network of invaluable connections. With Hyderabad as my home base, navigating through the city's bustling landscape has been seamless, laying a strong foundation for establishing my startup. Here, I've set up my headquarters, boasting a talented pool of engineers who fuel our growth and innovation. Moreover, Hyderabad's strategic location offers unparalleled logistical support and connectivity, making it an ideal hub for businesses, particularly in the IT sector.

Indeed, Hyderabad stands as a beacon for prominent IT companies, leveraging its conducive environment, robust infrastructure, and skilled workforce to thrive on both regional and international scales.

From savoury street food to upscale eateries, Hyderabad caters to every palate with its rich medleys of flavours. Simultaneously, it stands as a hub for the IT industry, with cutting-edge companies driving forward technological advancements and global innovation, he says. "It's a city that embodies the essence of diversity, where every corner boasts a new gastronomic adventure and every street is lined with the promise of innovation. Simultaneously, it stands as a hub for the IT industry, with cutting-edge companies driving forward technological advancements and global innovation."

With its vibrant streets teeming with

life, Hyderabad offers a sensory feast for all who wander its thoroughfares. From the tantalising aromas wafting from its countless eateries to the awe-inspiring sights of its historic landmarks, every corner of the city tells a story of its rich past and promising future. He recalls, "Hyderabad is a city of contrasts, where its myriad delights often overshadow any grievances. While the bustling crowds can sometimes be overwhelming, the city is undergoing significant development under the diligent eye of the government. The culinary scene remains a constant source of joy, offering delectable delights at every turn. Moreover, Hyderabad's rich history is proudly displayed through its iconic landmarks such as Charminar, Birla Mandir, and the majestic Golconda Fort, captivating visitors with their architectural splendour and historical significance."

In the bustling metropolis of Hyderabad, where the past gracefully intertwines with the present, every street corner tells a story of its own. Amidst the vibrant varieties of culture and heritage, however, lies a common challenge, he continues. "However, amidst the charm lies the challenge of navigating the city's congested roads, particularly during the morning rush hour. Yet, the government's efforts to enhance infrastructure and connectivity offer hope for smoother travel in the future. Despite this inconvenience, Hyderabad's allure remains undeniable, enchanting residents and visitors alike with its vibrant culture, rich heritage, and enduring charm."

THIS WEEK FOR OUR HYDERABOND SEGMENT, THE PIONEER CONNECTS WITH ENTREPRENEUR SYED AIJAZUDDIN, SHARING HIS LOVE FOR HYDERABAD.

ANUSHKA SEN 'CAN'T HELP, BUT FALL IN LOVE' WITH K-DRAMAS

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Anushka Sen has undeniably gained a great fan following with the waves she has created in the filmy world. The young star, who is currently gaining much traction for her recent series, *Dil Dosti Dilemma*, speaks to *The Pioneer* about being a part of the series, creating ripples in Korean cinema and more.

Anushka's meteoric ascent to fame has taken many in the film business by surprise and also created ripples in Korean cinema. She has gone viral on social media, believe it or not. With her heartwarming depiction of friendship, love, and self-discovery, actress Anushka Sen is winning over young adult audiences with her Prime Video series *Dil Dosti Dilemma*, which is now receiving a ton of attention. Her portrayal of the vivacious character Asmara in the web series, which debuted on April 25, has captivated both spectators and critics with her talent and charisma.

"There were some surprising elements that I didn't expect when I was going through the script," she says in an exclusive Zoom interview with us. "Overall, the script was way more interesting than any other script that I read. To bring nuances to the screen, you must always be present on the sets to fully immerse yourself in the mood. We also performed 'improv'. There were a ton of scenes that were performed spontaneously without consulting anyone and weren't even mentioned in the screenplay. I'm overjoyed to see that the filmmaker has included my spontaneous observations in the series."

In her series, which is set against the backdrop of a traditional neighbourhood, her character takes an unexpected turn as she finds herself submerged in a world that is different from her normal settings. She goes on to say, "I also find great significance in the ideas that we have learned about in the series. Ever since I was a little child, I have always been a 'family girl' and like travelling with my parents. The dynamics of my family are very significant to me! We need to discuss cultural identity."

Anushka Sen received a ton of positive feedback from fans as soon as the web series teaser was released. They even called her by her character's name, Asmara, which says a lot about the level of excitement Sen's "Anushkians" had for her part in the show. "The challenge came up when there was this scene where my

character had to showcase the distant relationship with her 'nani,' she says in the interview. "I wasn't able to sense it! On the other hand, People were learning how to confront injustice, according to my feedback."

With *Dil Dosti Dilemma* out, her portrayal of Asmara, which oozes charm and genuineness, is receiving immense positive feedback from critics. One of the top portals stated that her performance truly makes an impression, while another highlighted how her self-assured acting guides her and how her real-life identity lends credibility to her role. She has undoubtedly won many over with her sensitive and realistic portrayal of the character!

Going forward, Anushka Sen has been achieving the Korean dream that all girls who have loved K-pop are destined to have, as we all know. The actress was cast in a travel show, a movie, and a Korean drama. Anushka recently rejoiced to announce that she has been named the "Honourary Brand Ambassador of Korean Tourism" too. Regarding the same, we inquire, "I have been working in the Korean film industry for nearly a year and a half, I am representing my nation abroad. Is there anything more exquisite than this? Right now, the affection has only doubled. I'm playing an assassin for the first time in my Korean debut. One schedule has been completed, and the other is still waiting to go on floors. What I love about my job is that I am talking about all cinema, regardless of which country I belong to or what language I speak. Despite being Indian, I can't help but fall in love with K-dramas. I saw that several Koreans were absolutely enamoured with Shah Rukh Khan while I was in Korea. These are actually the real deals! I can't quite put into words how I feel about being called a young worldwide star by everyone. I find it really inspiring! This emphasises the value of cross-cultural communication even more."

"Every morning I receive positive responses," she stated about her extensive social media presence. "It is fantastic to have folks on my following list who have followed me since I was a young child. Even though I'm only 21 years old, I want to make the most of my platforms and numbers. In addition to providing entertainment, I'd like to raise awareness."



Rappers become well known thanks to hip-hop in regional languages!

India, a melting pot of cultures, has long been a native of diverse artistic expressions. In recent times, one genre that has notably surged to prominence in the country's music landscape is rap.

The ascent of rap music to mainstream success has been unprecedented. Renowned artists like Badshah, Raftaar, and Honey Singh have seamlessly integrated rap into Bollywood, crafting chart-topping hits that mash up urban beats with classical Indian music. This fusion has not only propelled these artists to stardom but has also provided a platform for aspiring talents to showcase their skills to a wider audience. The integration of rap into Bollywood signifies a shift in the perception of Indian music, heralding an era of experimentation and innovation.

Hip-hop music has seen impressive growth in recent years, emerging as the fourth most streamed genre in the nation on platforms like Spotify, according to reports. This surge, however, isn't uniform across the country. Instead, various regions are carving out their own distinct styles within the genre, nurturing local talent, and fostering a strong sense of community. As awareness of hip-hop grows, brands are stepping up to support artists. Initiatives such as *Mic Check* and *Rap 91* are being promoted to showcase hip-hop artists from all corners of the country. These initiatives feature a mix of established names and emerging talents, ensuring that hip-hop takes center stage in India's music scene.

From KRSNA to Brodha V, artists across the nation are infusing their music with local languages, dialects, and cultural influences. This regional diversity adds depth to the Indian rap culture, celebrating the country's rich heritage while pushing artistic boundaries. As the global hip-hop phenomenon gains traction, Indian rap artists are making their mark on the international stage. Influenced by icons like Tupac and Eminem, Indian rappers initially gravitated towards English lyrics before embracing regional languages. Their narratives resonate deeply with Indian audiences, addressing societal issues often overlooked by mainstream media.

Looking ahead, the future of Indian rap appears promising. With growing acceptance and recognition, rap has transcended age and socio-economic barriers, captivating audiences across the nation. The proliferation of rap battles, music festivals, and



online platforms underscores the burgeoning community's appetite for authentic voices and innovative sounds.

With streaming platforms bridging the gap between regional and mainstream rap, artists are poised to make a significant impact on the global hip-hop scene. As rap culture continues to evolve and redefine itself, it reaffirms the power of creative expression to transcend boundaries and foster unity.

In conclusion, the journey of rap culture epitomises the transformative power of art. From its humble beginnings to its current mainstream status, rap has emerged as a potent medium for social commentary and cultural celebration. As rap continues to thrive, it promises a future brimming with creativity, diversity, and unbridled potential. So, let the beats resonate, the verses flow, and witness the extraordinary evolution of rap culture in India.

(The author, Ankit Khanna, is the founder and CEO of AK Projects, and also the co-founder of Kalamkaar Music.)

what's brewing?

LISTINGS

Cutting edge tech

MPOWER Financing, a mission-driven fintech firm and the leading provider of no-cosigner loans to promising international students, has announced a partnership with Catalyst GEM, a firm that facilitates the educational journeys of international students and supports U.S.-based institutions. This strategic alliance aims to assist high-achieving students globally in navigating the U.S. visa application process and securing their F-1 student visas. Catalyst GEM provides cutting-edge technology and dedicated support, enabling institutions to streamline admissions and enhance student enrollment experiences. The organization also supports colleges and institutions with innovative software solutions to revolutionize the international admissions process.

ETS launches TOEFL India Championship

ETS, a global education and talent solutions organization introduced the TOEFL India Championship, a national level competition that is offering prize money to Indian study abroad aspirants. With total prize money of INR 15 lacs to be won, the TOEFL India Championship, designed specifically for Indian students, provides participants a platform to demonstrate English proficiency and academic excellence. This nationwide competition consists of two rounds: Round 1 involves a 20-minute quiz while Round 2 requires participants to take the TOEFL iBT test up to July 31, 2024, offering the opportunity to compete for total prize money of INR 11 lacs to further their study abroad ambitions. To register for the TOEFL India Championship and learn more about the competition, visit <https://www.etsindia.org/toefl-india-championship-social/>

Lay's launches Dhoni collector's packs

Cricket fever has reached a boiling point in India, with MS Dhoni at the heart of the craze. Lay's, synonymous for spreading joy, is supercharging this cricket frenzy with a special celebration of Dhoni. To honor his phenomenal achievements, both on and off the field, Lay's has launched limited-edition Dhoni collector's packs. These vibrant packs offer a golden chance for fans to own a unique piece of memorabilia and celebrate their hero with every bite.

A conscious approach

The modern natural diamond industry has committed to a sustainable environment for a better tomorrow by undertaking accountable actions which will have a direct impact. Billion year old creations of nature, real diamonds tell an incredible story of rarity, uniqueness, and a commitment to being responsible champions of Mother Earth. This Earth Day, leading diamond manufacturers and Industry partners of Natural Diamond Council Rosy Blue, Shivam Jewels, Jewelex, Dianco and Diarough bring to light the effect of their conservation efforts. While their initiatives span community development, easy access to education and healthcare as well as animal welfare, contributing to economies and the society at large, on the occasion of World Earth Day, we celebrate a few key environmental endeavours from these industry stalwarts -

Milaap enables medical fundraising

Milaap.org, India's largest crowdfunding platform, has over 9 lakh fundraisers set up and more than INR 2400 crores raised to date, Milaap continues to make a significant impact in the community, providing a lifeline to those in need of urgent medical treatment. Warangal is also catching up on the trend of seeking financial assistance using crowdfunding and is receiving support from donors worldwide. With close to 550 fundraisers from Warangal being supported and over INR 6 crores raised, Milaap is empowering people in times of need. The platform plays a critical role in bridging the gap between people who are facing insurmountable financial hurdles while going through a medical journey and those who wish to make a difference with their own donation ability.

Coty comes to India

Coty Inc. (NYSE: COTY) (PARIS: COTY) ("Coty" or the "Company"), one of the world's largest beauty companies with a portfolio of iconic brands across fragrance, colour cosmetics, and skin and body care, announced a landmark expansion in India with the launch of Kylie Cosmetics. Launched in partnership with House of Beauty (HOB) and Sephora, Kylie Cosmetics made its official debut on Sephora India's website and in stores across the country on 25 April 2024.



S Infra Heights Pvt. Ltd., the brainchild of Dr. Sravanthi Elasiri, the youth icon of Telangana 2021, officially launched its operations in the real estate sector. The company's launch ceremony took place at the Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad. The event witnessed the unveiling of the S Infra logo and the launch of the company's website, marking the beginning of a new era in Telangana's real estate landscape. Driven by her passion for corporate marketing, sales, and branding, Dr. Sravanthi Elasiri has transitioned from a successful dental career to becoming a prominent entrepreneur.



Dr. Sravanthi Elasiri



Lahari



Bindu and Aiswarya



Rashmi



Srivalli



Rajamma, Bhavana, Sakkubai and Chandrakumari



Sai and Sudhakar

PARTY

Photos by- SV Chary



AVEVA, a global leader in industrial software, has announced the opening of a state-of-the-art customer experience center in Hyderabad. The new center, one of just six such technology hubs worldwide, is among its largest, with advanced R&D labs housing more than 1200+ technologists. Customers visiting the new center can experience first-hand transformative role of connected ecosystems in leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) and digital twins for sustainable business outcomes at a time of rapid industrial transformation.



Neeta Lulla, a household name in the fashion industry, has once again left an indelible mark in the world of fashion with the launch of her new collection "NISSHK" by House of Neeta Lulla at the recent fashion show. Hitting the ramp was the ever-glamorous Rani Ko-HE-Nur also known as Sushant Divgirk, with the elegant Shanaya Kapoor turning heads as the showstopper.



The 11th Shambhavi Puraskar by Bansidhar and Ila Panda Foundation (BIPF) was awarded to Shri Ranjit Majhi for his exceptional work in implementing the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Additionally, Sasmita Mangaraj was honoured with the jury commendation certification for her outstanding work in empowering women at the grassroots level toward livelihood and self-reliance. Mrs. Chetna Sinha, founder and chairperson of Mann Deshi Bank and Mann Deshi Foundation Maharashtra graced the occasion as the chief guest along with Guest of Honour, Lt General C P Mohanty, 42nd Vice Chief of Army Staff and Member of the Armed Forces Tribunal, Delhi.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



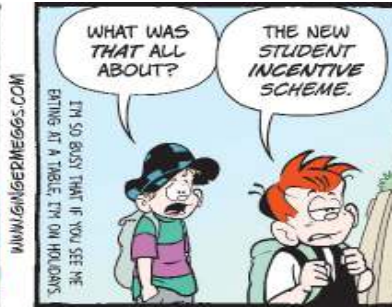
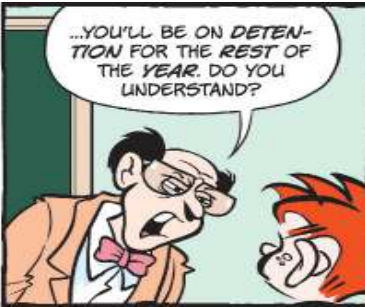
GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



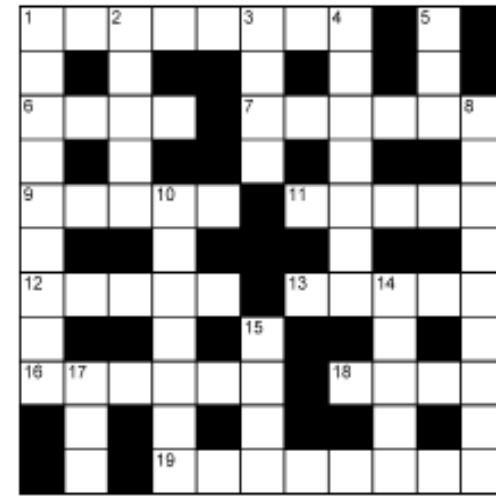
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Air-holes in your nose
- Become larger
- A spider's trap
- Topic
- A chopping tool
- An insect that flutters by
- Speaks
- Baby cats
- The body's pump
- Uncles' wives
- Took away illegally
- Hot coals left from a fire
- Meat from a cow
- Unexpectedly, without warning

DOWN

- A frightening dream
- Small seat without a back
- A feeling that makes you want to scratch

SOLUTION 733

E	O	W	L	A
C	O	M	M	E
F	E	T	A	O
G	O	T	P	A
R	A	T	L	T
T	H	E	R	M
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N	I	G	H	T
A	A	O	P	S
T	E	L	E	P
E	E	N	N	

SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Akshay Kumar wraps up shooting for *Kannappa*

Actor Vishnu Manchu is working ambitiously for his dream project, *Kannappa*. The first look of the movie, unveiled on the auspicious day of Mahashivaratri, received a thumping response. The presence of several pan-India stars makes this one of the most anticipated movies. It is known that Akshay Kumar, who is playing an important role, joined the shoot a few days ago. Meanwhile, the actor wrapped up his part of the shoot. Vishnu disclosed the news and also shared a picture with the Bollywood superstar. Sharing his experience, Vishnu wrote, "What a shoot it has been with @akshaykumar. Learnt. Laughed. And now missing the action. Looking forward for many more. #Kannappa." *Kannappa* is poised to be a cinematic

spectacle, delving into the story of a courageous warrior turned devout follower of Lord Shiva, *Kannappa*, whose unwavering faith continues to inspire across generations. Vishnu Manchu, renowned for his versatility and dedication, embodies this legendary character with fervor and reverence. Produced by Mohan Babu and directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, the movie has a stellar cast featuring Mohan Lal, Prabhas, and Sarathkumar in pivotal roles. The shoot for this pan-India project reached the final stages.



THALAPATHY69 TO GO ON FLOORS SOON

There is a lot of ongoing buzz about *Thalapathy69*. Although no official confirmation has been made yet, it has been confirmed by sources that the film is on and director H. Vinoth will be directing it. We heard on Friday that the script work is nearing completion and casting finalisation looms large on the horizon. We were further informed that an announcement about the film is slated for June, and shooting is expected to commence in August or September. The countdown to this cinematic spectacle has begun in earnest.

Under the visionary direction of H. Vinoth, whose previous works have earned critical acclaim and box office success, *Thalapathy69* promises to be a game-changer in Tamil cinema. Known for his deft storytelling and gripping narratives, H. Vinoth's collaboration with superstar Thalapathy Vijay has set expectations soaring sky-high. Adding to the anticipation is the musical genius of Anirudh Ravichander, whose soul-stirring compositions have become synonymous with blockbuster hits. With Anirudh at the helm of the music department, fans can expect nothing short of chart-topping melodies and foot-tapping beats that will elevate the cinematic experience to new heights.

While the cast remains shrouded in secrecy, the promise of an ensemble that befits the grandeur of the project has fans eagerly awaiting casting announcements. With casting updates promised in the near future, the excitement only continues to build. With shooting scheduled to commence in September or August, and a slated release in the second half of 2025, fans can expect a cinematic extravaganza from this duo.

Time set for *Gam Gam Ganesha's* 2nd single

Actor Anand Deverakonda is coming up with different films now. Especially after the massive success of the cult hit *Baby*, the actor is being extra cautious about the movies he is choosing. While a few films are in the works for him, *Gam Gam Ganesha* is the next big film that is coming from the actor. This time too, the actor's film is being directed by a debutante. Uday Shetty is making his directorial debut with this film, which is being produced by Kedar Selagamshetty and Vamsi Karumanchi under the Hy-Life Entertainment banner. *Gam Gam Ganesha* marks Anand Deverakonda's first foray into action movies. The movie is set for a grand theatrical release on the 31st of this month. Meanwhile, the makers announced on Friday that they will release the second single from *Gam Gam Ganesha* at 12:06 PM on Saturday. This song is a romantic love duet featuring Anand Deverakonda and Pragathi Srivastava. As an exciting release from Tollywood this summer, expectations are high for *Gam Gam Ganesha*.



Lakshmi Kataksham set to hit theatres on May 10

Anticipation mounts as *Lakshmi Kataksham*, a satirical gem from Mahathi Entertainment, gears up for its theatrical release on May 10. Produced by U. Srinivasula Reddy, B. Nageswara Reddy, Waheed Sheikh, and K. Purushottam Reddy, the film's dialogue poster and trailer have already struck a chord with audiences, promising a riotous blend of drama and comedy. Delving into the murky waters of electoral politics,

Lakshmi Kataksham presents a scathing commentary on the system, where voters brazenly auction their votes, leaving politicians at their mercy. This unique premise has captured the imagination of viewers, setting the stage for an unforgettable cinematic experience. Amidst the fervor of elections sweeping through the two Telugu states, *Lakshmi Kataksham* emerges as a refreshing satire, offering a humorous take on the electoral circus. With a U/A certificate in hand, the film is primed to entertain audiences of all ages. The ensemble cast, featuring Vinay, Arun, Deepti Verma, Charisma Srikar, Hari Prasad, Sai Kiran, and Amari, infuses life into the quirky narrative, while the technical brilliance of the crew elevates the film to new heights.



Ashu Reddy says, 'MY BODY IS SUPER DELUXE'

Bigg Boss fame and social media influencer Ashu Reddy is soon going to be seen in the film *Yevam*, where she will be seen in a different and bold role. *Yevam*, in which she is playing a key role, says "Na Body Super Deluxe" (my body is super deluxe). It is to be awaited and seen why she has said this. Her first look from the film was released on Friday, in which she appears stunning. Directed by Prakash Dantuluri, the film also stars Chandini Chowdary, Vashishta Simha, Jai Bharat, and

Ashur Reddy. Navdeep and Pawan Goparaju are the producers. Recently, the makers released the first look of actress Chandini Chowdary from the film, whose caption made the audience think. Now, the statement by Ashu shows that this film is going to be very different, and the writing of it is done in an interesting way. On the technical front, it has cinematography by SV Visveshwar, music by Keertana Seshu and Nilesh Mandalapu, and editing by Sujana Addusumilli.

Jitender Reddy trailer stokes high expectations

Muduganti Creations presents *Jitender Reddy*, a compelling political drama directed by the acclaimed filmmaker Virinchi Varma, renowned for his romantic comedies such as *Uyyala Jampala* and *Majnu*. Under the adept production of Muduganti Ravinder Reddy, the film ventures into uncharted territory, delving into true events from the 1980s. Rakesh Varre, recognised for his performances in *Baahubali* and *Evarikee Cheppoddu*, not only takes on the lead role but also marks his prowess as a

producer, following the success of *Pekamedalu*. Joining him are talented actors Vaishali Raj, Rhea Suman, Chhatrapati Shekhar, Subbaraju, and Ravi Prakash in pivotal roles. The unveiling of first look posters, glimpses, and teasers has already sparked immense anticipation among audiences. With the release of the trailer, expectations have soared to unprecedented heights. *Jitender Reddy* narrates the inspiring journey of a man, deeply committed to societal welfare since his formative years. From emerging as a leader in college elections to confronting the injustices perpetrated by the police and Naxalites, *Jitender Reddy's* unwavering resolve serves as the cornerstone of the narrative. Against the backdrop of 1980s college politics and the evolution into realpolitik, the film promises an enthralling saga of courage and resilience. Scheduled for release on May 10th, the trailer offers a tantalising glimpse into the gripping tale that awaits. While Virinchi Varma's directorial repertoire predominantly comprises love stories, the transition to an action-driven narrative like *Jitender Reddy* has sparked curiosity among viewers. Yet, the trailer hints at Varma's potential to infuse the story with a fresh perspective, leaving audiences intrigued.



SATYA RELEASE DATE IS HERE!

Under the banner of Sivam Media, producer Siva Mallala presents *Satya*, an emotional drama directed by the talented Vaali Mohandas. The film, set to hit screens on May 10, unfolds a poignant narrative about a son's selfless journey in a society that values giving back to every child. Starring Hamaresh and Prarthana Sandeep in leading roles, *Satya* promises to tug at the heartstrings of audiences across Telugu states. The film's first song, released by Think Music, has already garnered praise for its emotional depth and resonant melodies, setting the stage for a captivating cinematic experience. With the Censor Board awarding the movie a 'U' certificate, *Satya* is poised to enchant viewers of all ages. Expressing his enthusiasm for the upcoming release, producer Siva Mallala remarked, "We've spared no effort in bringing *Satya* to fruition swiftly. We're geared up for a grand release across Telugu states on May 10." Director Vaali Mohandas echoed Mallala's sentiments, expressing confidence in the film's potential to strike a chord with Telugu audiences and elevate his directorial career to new heights.



Ashok Galla, in a magical melody

The first single *Yeamayinde*, a magical melody from Ashok Galla's next film, with Arjun Jandiyala, and Lalithambika Productions' Devaki Nandana Vasudeva was unveiled on his birthday. Superstar Krishna's grandson and Mahesh Babu's nephew, Ashok Galla, will be seen in a mass and action-packed role in his second movie, *Devaki Nandana Vasudeva*. The film directed by Arjun Jandiyala of *Guna 369* fame is a family and action entertainer laced with spiritual elements. Creative director Prasanth Varma of *HanuMan* fame provided the story for the movie, while popular writer Sai Madhav Burra penned the dialogue. Somnineni Balakrishna, an NRI (film distributor), is producing the movie as *Production No. 1* of Lalithambika Productions. Nallapaneni Yamini presents it. After teasing with the promo for the first single, *Yeamayinde*, they unveiled the lyrical video on Friday. Bheems Ceciroleo rendered a magical melody with foot-tapping beats. The song penned by Suresh Gangula is all about the protagonist, who is deeply in love with his girl and follows her everywhere to express his feelings for her. Eshwar Dathu's singing makes this song even more special, as he spectacularly croons the lyrics. The song gets better once you listen to it multiple times. Ashok Galla looked buoyant, and his dances were cool. The love track is beautiful, and so is their chemistry in the song. The visuals captured by Rasool Ellore are so refreshing. *Yeamayinde* is an instant hit. Alongside Rasool Ellore, Prasad Murella is the lensman for the movie, which is mounted on a large scale with a grand production design. Tammiraju is the editor of the movie.



Patang is a fun-filled entertainer with a unique vibe of its own

Sports comedies are rare to come by. *Patang*, starring Pranav Kaushik, Preethi Pagadala and Vamsi Pujit in lead roles, is one such film with a bunch of lovable characters. Producers Vijay Sekhar Anne, Sampath Maka, and Suresh Kothinti, on Thursday, hosted the film's teaser launch event in Hyderabad. Cinematic Elements and Rishan Cinemas had sensational Director Buchi Babu Sana as the chief guest. Doing the honours, the *Uppena* and *RC16* director conveyed his best wishes to the team. He visibly found the teaser appealing. Director Praneeth Prattipati has handled the genre by understanding its nuances thoroughly. That's what the teaser

shows. The teaser paints *Patang* as a rollicking, youth-centric romp set in a lively urban backdrop (read 'mana' Hyderabad). "They say wars were fought for love. Can't you fly a kite for me?" begins a young lady, kicking off the playful banter. This light-hearted challenge sets the tone for a journey filled with camaraderie among men, squabbles with elders, and cute tiffs. From reveling in the joys of life to uproarious laughter and sweet romance aplenty, the teaser promises a delightful blend of heartwarming bonds and the adrenaline rush of competition. We are surely in for a feel-good flick. The film's post-production works are ongoing. Its release date is yet to be announced.





RCB, GT EYE MUST WIN TO KEEP PLAYOFF HOPES ALIVE

PTI ■ BENGALURU

From a maths perspective, Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Gujarat Titans can still reach the IPL playoffs, but they need to ward off inner gremlins on Saturday to notch a mandatory win to keep that dream flickering.

The Royal Challengers are the bottom-dwellers with six points from 10 matches, while the Titans are placed eighth with eight points from 10 matches.

However, the floundering outings of Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals (10 points each) have fuelled the hopes of these two teams of sneaking into the middle tier of the points table and from there to the knockouts.

But both RCB and GT will know that keeping their own house in order is a better option than depending on other teams to stay afloat as the IPL group stage is entering its business end.

In that context, the Faf du Plessis-led side will feel a tad more confident than their opponents after registering wins in their last two matches.

They have also found new heroes across these two games - Will Jacks powered his way to a match-winning century against GT, while Cameron Green finally lived up to his tag of all-rounder with crucial runs and wickets against Hyderabad.

RCB would hope for an encore from them at the home venue as well. At the top, Virat Kohli continues to be a run-making presence as he recently became the first batter to go past 500-run mark in this edition of the IPL, and RCB will certainly like a few more from his willow.

However, the Royal Challengers will ask for some more consistency from their bowlers. The likes of Mohammed Siraj, who has been drafted into India's T20 World Cup squad, Yash Dayal, Karn Sharma and Swapnil Singh were on the money against SRH. But against



TEAMS (FROM):

GT at Ahmedabad, they returned to their profligate ways, allowing them to whittle a 200-run total.

They will have to tidy up their act at the unforgiving M Chinnaswamy Stadium, as despite all their inconsistencies GT have the tools to punish them.

But to the Titans' dismay, those tools have malfunctioned more often than not, and it aptly mirrored in their two successive defeats against Delhi Capitals and RCB. Shubman Gill and Bhardwaj Sai Sudharsan have run an exclusive store of runs for Gujarat, amassing over 700 runs between them.

Other than them, the likes of Wriddhiman Saha, David Miller, Rahul Tewatia, Vijay Shankar and Shahrulkh Khan have not managed to even touch 200 this season, imparting a brittle look to GT's middle and lower order.

Their bowling group too has been vastly underwhelming, and none reflected it more than Rashid Khan. The star spinner has taken just eight

wickets across 10 matches while giving eight runs an over, a significantly higher economy rate than his overall 6.7 in IPL since 2017. In IPL 2023, Rashid had given away 8.24 runs an over but the Afghan took 27 wickets from 17 matches. This year, the wicket column too remained barren.

The pace bowlers offer a similar storyline. In the absence of Mohammed Shami, who is recuperating after a surgery, the Titans' most experienced duo of Umesh Yadav and Mohit Sharma have gone for plenty.

Mohit has taken 10 wickets in as many matches, the highest so far this season for GT, but leaked nearly 11 runs an over, while Yadav's economy stands at 10.5 for seven wickets.

The back-up options such as Sandeep Warrier, Noor Ahmad, R Sai Kishore and Azmatullah Omarzai too have not covered themselves with glory either, conceding way too many runs for minimal returns.

RCB: Faf du Plessis (c), Glenn Maxwell, Virat Kohli, Rajat Patidar, Anuj Rawat, Dinesh Karthik, Suyash Prabhudessai, Will Jacks, Mahipal Lomror, Karn Sharma, Manoj Bhandage, Mayank Dagar, Vijaykumar Vyshak, Akash Deep, Mohammed Siraj, Reece Topley, Himanshu Sharma, Rajan Kumar, Cameron Green, Alzarri Joseph, Yash Dayal, Tom Curran, Lockie Ferguson, Swapnil Singh, Saurav Chauhan.

GT: Shubman Gill (c), David Miller, Matthew Wade, Wriddhiman Saha, Kane Williamson, Abhinav Manohar, B. Sai Sudharsan, Darshan Nalkande, Vijay Shankar, Jayant Yadav, Rahul Tewatia, Noor Ahmad, Sai Kishore, Rashid Khan, Joshua Little, Mohit Sharma, Azmatullah Omarzai, Umesh Yadav, Shahrulkh Khan, Sushant Mishra, Kartik Tyagi, Manav Suthar, Spencer Johnson, Sandeep Warrier, BR Sharath.

My role is to carry on till 14th over so that Klaasen gets license to play freely: Nitish

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Entrusted with the task of shepherding Sunrisers Hyderabad's middle-order, young Nitish Reddy has been doing the job with aplomb at a time when he is seen by many as a future India all-rounder, thanks to his ability to bowl lively medium pace.

Opting to bat in the IPL game against table-toppers Rajasthan Royals here on Thursday, Reddy (76 not out) and Travis Head (58) produced explosive fifties, while Heinrich Klaasen made an unbeaten 19-ball 42 to power SRH to 201 for three.

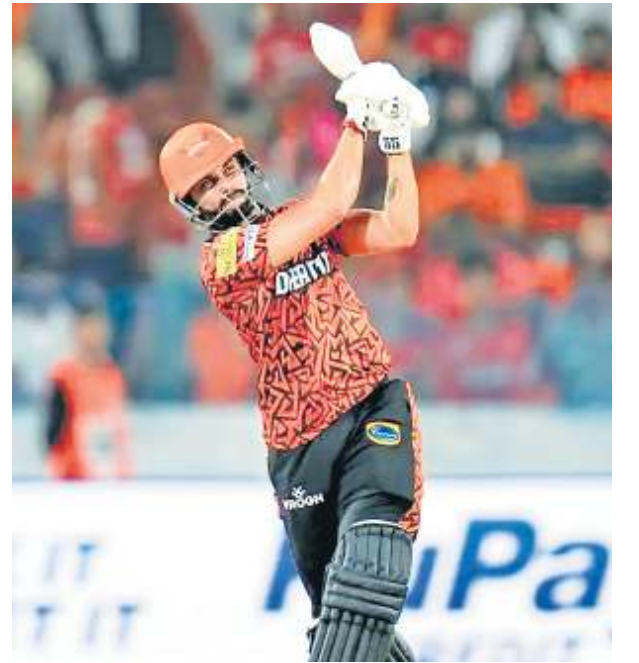
Experienced seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar then did the star turn with a sensational final over as SRH pulled off a heist, stunning RR by just one run in a last-ball thriller to keep their playoff hopes alive. Nitish, 20, stated that his role was to rebuild the innings after quick wickets.

"From the last two matches, we are losing quick wickets and I have to go. My role is to carry on till the 13th and 14th over so that Klaasen gets a license to bang. There is no point in Klaasen and Samad coming early, but not getting to score freely," said Nitish at the post-match press conference.

The all-rounder hailed Bhuvneshwar after the veteran pacer bowled a brilliant final over to help Hyderabad seal a dramatic win.

Nitish said he was hopeful that Bhuvneshwar would be able to defend 13 runs in the last over. "I was looking at who was going to bowl. When I saw Bhuvneshwar was going to bowl, I got the confidence that he was going to pull it off."

"During his prime, he had done it so many times. I did not think we were going to



win. I thought either we'd lose or tie. But that last-ball wicket, I felt so happy," Nitish said.

During his explosive knock, Nitish smashed RR's in-form Yuzvendra Chahal for two fours and two sixes in the 13th over. Nitish said that he backed himself to attack the seasoned leg-spinner.

Reddy also said the victory against RR, following losses to Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Chennai Super Kings, is important.

"Beating RR will boost our confidence, they are at the top of the points table," he concluded.

NOT IN MY BEST FORM: PARAG: Rajasthan Royals batter Riyan Parag returned to the top five in the Orange Cape race after striking his fourth fifty of the season.

The 22-year-old Parag slammed 77 off 49 balls but could not help his side chase down the target set by SRH.

Despite his breakout season with the franchise, Parag said he was not in his best form since he could not finish the game. "I got a lot of areas to improve. I am not in my best form, I would have finished the game otherwise."

"I got a lot of areas to perfect. I try to learn from my mistakes and not repeat them. Is it my best innings? No. I would say that if I get a hundred," Parag told reporters.

The Assam player said the loss was "dramatic," adding that his team made a few errors.

"It is never good to end on the losing side. We did a lot of things right. We will focus on them more rather than dwelling on our mistakes. We are at a good position in the points table. Just one bad game I guess."

"We made a few errors in two-three overs and it cost us the game. That is how T20 is, IPL is," he said.

OTHER SPORTS

Swiatek returns to Madrid Open final by beating Keys

AP ■ MADRID

Iga Swiatek cruised to a straight-sets semifinal win over Madison Keys to reach the Madrid Open final and a rematch against No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka. Top-ranked Swiatek beat No. 20 Keys 6-1, 6-3 and will next face the defending champion Sabalenka, who rallied to overcome No. 4-ranked Elena Rybakina 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (5).

The Madrid Open is the only high-profile European clay-court title that Swiatek is yet to win.

"It was a pretty clean performance and really solid game from myself," she said. "I'm happy with everything."

It will be the third final of the year for Swiatek after titles in Indian Wells and Doha.

"I'm happy that we can play a final against the top players," Swiatek said.

"It shows consistency. For sure it's going to be a challenge, whoever it's going to be, and a tough match. I will be ready. I will focus on myself"



Sabalenka, who needed three sets to defeat Swiatek in the Madrid final last year, is into her third Madrid final after ending Rybakina's 16-match clay-court winning streak.

"I was just trying to fight for every point," Sabalenka said. "I was hoping that I'll have opportunity to turn this match around, and yeah, super happy that I was able to do that."

Keys said she was disappointed but there were "a lot of really

great things to take from the tournament" in the Spanish capital.

"It's been a while since I have won four matches in a row. Lots to build on. It's obviously great momentum going into Rome next week," she said.

"It's obviously only my fourth tournament back after the shoulder injury, so to do so well here and to be able to play some tough matches and have some three-set matches and be

physically 100% still and being able to look forward to Rome and hopefully play some good tennis there is a huge positive."

MEDVEDEV INJURED: Daniil Medvedev retired from his quarterfinal match after losing the first set 6-4, sending the 31st-ranked Jiri Lehecka into a semifinal against 35th-ranked Felix Auger-Aliassime. No. 4-ranked Medvedev needed treatment on his upper right leg while leading 3-2, complaining about having trouble moving to his right. He also needed treatment at 4-3, and after Lehecka broke serve in the ninth game to win the set, Medvedev decided not to continue.

"It's never easy in a match like this," Lehecka said of Medvedev's retirement.

"If I were to choose the way how to win this match, it wouldn't be like that. So of course, it's never easy to see your opponent struggling, but at that moment, you just need to focus on yourself, trying to get the maximum level out of yourself."

Klopp says he has no problem with Salah after touchline spat

AP ■ LIVERPOOL (ENGLAND)

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp insisted Friday his spat with Mohamed Salah has been "completely resolved," saying his long history with the star forward ensured there was no lasting damage to their relationship.

Klopp and Salah were involved in a touchline confrontation during the 2-2 draw at West Ham on Saturday. When Salah was asked after the game to comment on the incident, the Egypt international was heard saying: "There's going to be a fire today if I speak."

Nearly a week later, Klopp said the matter was a "non-story."

"There's no problem," said Klopp, who was speaking ahead of Liverpool's home match with Tottenham in the Premier League on Sunday. "If



we wouldn't know each other for that long, I don't know how we would deal with it but we know each other for that long and respect each other too much that it's really no problem."

The incident happened as Salah was preparing to come on as a substitute, having been selected on the bench for the second time in three games.

After strong 2023, Indian athletes hope to make impact in World Relays

PTI ■ NASSAU (BAHAMAS)

A 15-member strong Indian Athletics contingent will look to make an impact in scenic Nassau and hope to qualify for the Paris Olympics in three events when the two-day World Athletics Relays Bahamas 24 commences here on Saturday. The Indian men's 4x400 relay team has been making waves of late, coming up with impressive performances at the 2021 Olympics in Tokyo and following it up by challenging the USA's aura of invincibility at the World Championships in Budapest last August.

The team then lived up to the billing by clinching gold at the Hangzhou Asian Games with a tremendous run of 3:01.58. On a high following those superb performances last year, India would be hoping to reset the national and Asian record of 2:59.05 seconds set by the quartet of Mohammed Anas Yahiya, Amoj Jacob, Muhammed Ajmal and Rajesh Ramesh in Budapest.

The quartet will, however, have to work really hard to achieve that feat, given that its best this season is only 3:05.71 seconds, which is nearly four seconds adrift of their gold medal-winning performance in Hangzhou. As per the World Relay format for Paris, the two top teams in each heat on Saturday will advance to the final a day later. They will also secure Paris 2024 Olympic

quotas in the process.

The Olympic lane seeding positions will be decided in the finals on Sunday and those will also be competing for medals.

All the other teams will compete in an additional round on Sunday where the top-two teams in each heat will also qualify for Paris.

India will be fielding teams in men's, women's and mixed 4x400m, with the men's quartet the best placed to qualify for Paris based on their performances last year. India has sent an eight-member men's 4x400m relay team here, including the Asian Games gold-medallist quartet of Amoj Jacob, Muhammad Anas Yahiya, Muhammad Ajmal and Rajesh Ramesh.

The squad also includes 2018 Jakarta Asian Games mixed relay gold medallist Rajiv Arokia, Noah Nirmal Tom, Yashas Palaksha and Avinash Krishna Kumar.

Amoj, Arokia Rajiv, Nirmal and Anas had also competed at the Tokyo Olympics, where they put up a commendable performance but missed out on a place in the final by a whisker on way to setting an Asian record of 3:00.25.

India has also entered a seasoned seven-member squad for the women's 4x400m relay event, led by multiple Asian Games gold-medal winner MR Poovamma. The squad also has the Hangzhou Asian Games silver medal-winning team of Vithya Ramraj, Aishwarya Mishra, Prachi and Subha Venkatesan.

AP ■ LONDON

Tottenham's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League are getting thinner by the day.

By falling 2-0 at Chelsea on Thursday, Tottenham slumped to a second loss to a London rival in the space of four days in the Premier League - after a 3-2 home defeat to Arsenal in the north London derby on Sunday.

In between those losses came confirmation that England will have just four places in next season's expanded Champions League, and not five.

That's another blow to Spurs, who are fifth and stayed seven points behind fourth-place Aston Villa with one game in hand. They still have to play Liverpool and Manchester City in their remaining four games so it is looking increasingly unlikely they will close the gap to Villa.

"We lacked belief and conviction in our game," Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said. "I don't know if it's low confidence but we're not playing with the mindset we need to play the football we

Tottenham Champions League hopes hit further by 2-0 loss at Chelsea in Premier League

want to and that's something I have to look at."

Headed goals by Trevoh Chalobah in the 24th and Nicolas Jackson in the 72nd were enough for Chelsea, which could yet salvage a place in one of the minor European competitions from what has been an underwhelming Premier League campaign for a squad assembled at a cost of more than \$1 billion. Chelsea climbed above West Ham and into eighth place, two points behind Newcastle and three behind Manchester United in sixth. It's likely that two of those three teams will be playing in either the Europa League or Europa Conference League next season.

Chelsea manager Mauricio Pochettino said it was the best feeling he had had all season about his team.

"It's the moment, after 10 months, that we start to realize how we compete," Pochettino said. "It showed we're doing things well. "We showed it's not about names. It's about being competitive." Pochettino, however, didn't sound convinced he had the



backing of Chelsea's American owners to be around next season. "It's difficult to see I am under scrutiny and judgment every week," he said, adding: "We'll see if I have time to build after

today." Tottenham has now won just one of its past 34 away league games against Chelsea, making it one of the most one-sided top-flight fixtures. The sole victory came in 2018, when Pochettino was in charge

of Spurs. Chalobah got on the end of a free kick by Conor Gallagher to loop a header over Tottenham goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario and into the net to give Chelsea the lead. It was a 15th goal this season conceded from a set piece by Spurs and that is becoming a major issue under Postecoglou. Jackson, who had a shot partially saved by Vicario and subsequently cleared off the line by Micky van de Ven in the first half, eventually got his goal when he was quickest to react after Cole Palmer's free kick rebounded out off the crossbar. Jackson did well to head the ball over two Tottenham defenders who were retreating toward their own goal line.

Tottenham is six points clear of Man United and might have to settle for a fifth-place finish, which would earn a spot in next season's Europa League.