KTR means Kalvakuntla Third Class Rama Rao. How can Nama Nageshwara Rao become Union Minister if he wins from the BRS? One can understand the connection between the BRS and the BJP. The BRS is a party built on a foundation of lies. KCR and KTR are

QUOTE OF THE DAY

the pioneer

- Velichela Rajender Rao, Congress Karimnagar MP candidate P4

true liars.

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Published From: VIJAYAWADA HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN



DON'T MISS...

Steps taken for

smooth counting...

After the successful completion of

the general election on May 13, the

NTR district administration is now

focusing on June 4, the counting day. With the cooperation of Revenue, Police, Panchayat Raj,

and other departments, the polling

concluded smoothly. The district

administration aims to conduct the

counting with the same spirit. For that, Dr S Dilli Rao, District

steps. He convened a meeting with the officials concerned at the

Integrated Control Room on the

premises of the collectorate on

'Over a fifth of

excess deaths...

More than 1.53 lakh deaths a year

around the world, with over a fifth

according to new research looking

at data over 30 years since 1990.

India was followed by China and

roughly 14 per cent and 8 per cent

deaths, respectively. The study, led

found that heatwave-linked excess

deaths accounted for about a third

of these heatwave-linked excess

by Monash University, Australia,

of all heat-related ...

Russia, with each experiencing

were associated with heatwaves

of these deaths - the greatest

share - coming from India

Collector, is taking necessary



Kajal confident about Satyabhama's universal APPEAL

JAGAN SEES A TSUNAMI OF SUPPORT FOR YSRCP, ASSERTS..

'Ab ki baar 151 paar'

Credits YSRCP govt and I-PAC team for 'impending' success

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy exuded confidence on Thursday as he declared that the YSRCP was poised to secure a victory in Andhra Pradesh once again, following the conclusion of vote counting on June 4.

Addressing members of the I-PAC team at their office in Benz Circle, Vijayawada, the CM recalled the unexpected triumph of the YSRCP, which won 151 Assembly seats in the 2019 elections, defying expectations. He asserted the party's determination to surpass that accomplishment this time, aiming for a higher count of seats, along-side securing 22 MP seats. "We are

CM takes a jab at **Prashant Kishor**

Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy took a jab at Prashant Kishor saying, "It's not about the individuals, it's about the I-PAC team!" It was a moment that had everyone chuckling, especially considering Kishor's dalliance with the

We are set to surpass our 2019 record, capturing the attention of the entire nation during the election results on June 4'



CM emphasises commitment to

furthering welfare in the next five years and continued collaboration with I-PAC

SRCP govt distinguishes itself with ubstantial DBT disbursements and

apa Ku Mana Prabuthavam gramme and political rallies, lster the party's connection with

 Support from the NRI wing and dedicated volunteers contribute significantly to YSRCP's electoral campaign

turing the attention of the entire nation during the election results on June 4," CM Jagan confidently stat-

Acknowledging the instrumental efficient administration and the team members. This interaction

set to surpass our 2019 record, cap- sustained efforts of the I-PAC team over the past 18 months, CM Jagan emphasised the invaluable contributions of the team. "The services rendered by the I-PAC team are immeasurable," he remarked, drawrole of the YSRCP government's ing enthusiastic applause from the

mirrored similar engagements fol-

lowing the 2019 elections. Highlighting the services of the I-PAC, CM Jagan affirmed the commitment of the YSRCP government to enhance the welfare of the people over the next five years.

Continued on Page 2

Thunderstorms forecast

for AP over next 4 days

The Meteorological Department on Thursday forecast thunder-

Amit Bardar Siva Sankar Lotheti

SPs and shifts one

Palnadu District Collector Siva Sankar Lotheti, 12 police officials transferred

ECI suspends two





PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has taken strong action in response to the recent outbreaks of post-election violence across Palnadu, Anantapur, and Tirupati districts. As a result, the Commission has suspended the Superintendents of Police (SPs) in Palnadu and Anantapur districts, namely Bindhu Madhav and Amit Bardar respectively. Additionally, a departmental inquiry has been initiated into these suspensions.

Furthermore, the Commission has ordered the transfer of Palnadu's

District Collector, Siva Sankar Lotheti, and Tirupati's SP, Krishna Kanth Patel. These decisions come alongside the initiation of departmental inquiries. The orders about the suspension of two SPs and the transfer of a District Collector and SP were issued today by the Election Commission.

In addition to these measures, the Election Commission has also directed the suspension of 12 subordinate police officials across the three affected districts and initiated departmental inquiries against

Continued on Page 2

ESCALATING VIOLENCE

YSRCP lodges complaint with Guv against TDP



PNS W VIJAYAWADA

A delegation from the YSRCP, led by Minister Botsa Satyanarayana, met Governor Justice S Abdul Nazeer at Raj Bhavan on Thursday. Minister Meruga Nagarjuna, MLA Perni Nani, MLC Lella Appireddy, MP Mopidevi Venkata Ramana, Kavali Manohar Naidu, and other members were present at the meet-

The primary purpose of the meeting was to present a formal complaint to Governor Abdul Nazeer concerning the recent attacks perpetrated by the TDP against YSRCP members on polling day and in the aftermath. The complaint also addressed the failures of police officials in various districts, including Palnadu, Anantapur, and others, where incidents of violence have escalated, particularly after the replacement of police officers by the Election Commission.

The YSRCP delegation expressed concern over the biased conduct of the Police Observer, Deepak Mishra, IPS (Retd.), appointed by the Election Commission to oversee the

50 petrol bombs seized

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The police on Thursday seized 50 petrol bombs, stones, sickles and two sacks of broken liquor bottles at Pinnelli village in Palnadu district where violence was reported after the May 13 elections, said a police official on Thursday. Superintendent of Police Bindu Madhav Garikapati noted that this cache of crude and country-made weapons was seized from two houses in the village.

Continued on Page 2

process of free and fair elections. The delegation alleged that Mishra had exceeded his assigned role by colluding with TDP party functionaries, compromising the integrity of the electoral process.

Odisha FPOs tap global markets...

In a significant boost to farm exports from Odisha, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in the state have marked their foray into the global markets with the first commercial shipment of fresh mangoes and vegetables. This fea was made possible through a strategic collaboration between the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), the state Directorate of Horticulture and Palladium which is the technical support unit for the 'Promotion and Stabilisation ..

-PAGE: 8

Mumbai Indians, Lucknow Super...

Out of reckoning from the IPL playoffs, Mumbai Indians and Lucknow Super Giants will look to end their campaign on a winning note when they clash at the Wankhede Stadium here on Friday. While Mumbai Indians were knocked out of the playoffs race long ago Lucknow Super Giant's chances of making the last-four are extremely bleak even if they win their last IPL game here by a huge margin. Three consecutive defeats have not only denied LSG crucial points, they have also battered their net .

Jagan set to be sworn in for 2nd term in Vizag on June 9: Botsa landscape under the CM's tenure,

Education Minister Botsa Satyanarayana reaffirmed on Thursday that Chief Minister YS sworn in for his second term in Visakhapatnam on June 9. He expressed confidence in the upcoming election outcome, emphasising the trust the public has placed in Chief Minister Reddy. Addressing the media in

Vijayawada, Botsa contrasted the credibility of Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy with that of TDP supremo Chandrababu Naidu, suggesting that while Jagan's track



Botsa criticised the TDP's election

strategy of disparaging Jagan, pointing out that it lacked substance and failed to address the State's needs.

Jagan's leadership, Minister Botsa

record resonates with voters, Naidu's noted a shift in the State's political

Highlighting the public's faith in

asserting that Jagan's governance has set a precedent unmatched by other "We urged voters to consider the

nance over the past five years," he remarked. "Our commitment to continuing essential reforms remains steadfast. We are transparent with the public about any unfulfilled promises, providing clear explanations for their status.'

Minister Botsa emphasised the electorate's demand for continued YSRCP leadership, evident in the high voter turnout during the recent

Continued on Page 2

storms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds in parts of Andhra Pradesh for four days from May 17. Parts of north coastal Andhra

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Pradesh, Yanam, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Ray are expected to receive rainfall. The Meteorological Department

forecast gusty winds up to speeds of 50 km per hour (kmph). The mid-summer showers

cooled temperatures at some places in the southern state, bringing respite from the heat. Further, it said the southwest

monsoon is very likely to advance into the South Andaman Sea, parts of the southeast Bay of Bengal and Nicobar Islands around May 19.

25 companies of Central forces to be retained in AP post counting

PNS NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday directed the Union home ministry to retain 25 companies of central forces in Andhra Pradesh even after the counting of votes on June 4 following post-poll violence in the state as it conveyed its displeasure to the state chief secretary and the police chief over the inci-

In a statement, the EC said "without mincing any words", it directs the chief secretary and the director general of police to ensure that such

to be tasked with taking pre-emptive measures to avoid such a situation in future.

The poll authority had summoned chief secretary K S Jawahar Reddy and DGP Harish Gupta to Nirvanchan Sadan here to seek a 'personal explanation" over the incidents of violence reported on Monday and Tuesday.
"The Commission decided to

direct the Ministry of Home Affairs to retain the 25 CAPF (central armed police force) companies in Andhra Pradesh for 15 days after negligence and lack of supervision

after declaration of results," the poll panel said.

It said the state government had

requested that central forces be retained for 15 days post-counting. In the meeting, the poll authority sought timely filing of chargesheet against the culprits, preferably within the model code of conduct period. The poll code period usually ends after counting is

completed. During the briefing, the CS and the DGP shared their assessment of

violence is not repeated and all SPs counting, to control any violence on the part of officials in violencehit districts.

The Commission approved various proposals of the state government. These included an investigation by a special investigation team and submit an action

taken report to the Commission in two days in each of the cases. FIRs will be updated with additional appropriate IPC sections and other relevant statutory provisions.

The leaders of the ruling YSRCP and opposition TDP have levelled allegations against each other for the incidents.

LANCET STUDY

Healthcare privatisation linked with worse outcomes

Privatisation of healthcare was found to have a positive effect on the quality of care rarely, and was associated with higher profits, according to research that reviewed previous studies of high-income countries (HICs) such as the US, Germany, Canada, and South Korea has claimed.

Researchers said the findings, published in The Lancet Public Health journal, challenged the theory that privatisation can improve the quality of healthcare through increased market competition, and by enabling a more flexible and patient-centred approach.

In their analysis, the researchers, led by those at the University of



health insurance coverage.

vately-owned, mainly came from consider their response to the con-Oxford, UK, included long-term reducing staff and lowering the tinuing consequences of the outcomes since outsourcing servic-

number of patients having limited COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare

systems, the authors found evidence suggesting a risk that governments seek short-term reductions at avoidable deaths, the authors found

seeking short-term reductions can come at the expense of long-term R. Keshri.

cheaper care," said study co-author Aaron Reeves, from the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford. Outsourcing of services is a pop

to deliver both better care and

ular form of privatisation in which a publicly-funded service maintains the decision-making powers but contracts a private organisation for fulfilling agreed services. The researchers found evidence suggesting that outsourcing tends to vorsen health outcomes

Despite looking at HICs, the study is "very much relevant" to India, a low- and middle-income country, according to a health policy and systems researcher, Vikash

Continued on Page 2

MLC Janga disqualified

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Janga Krishna Murthy, a YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MLC who defected to the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), has been disqualified. This decision was made by Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council Chairman Koyye Moshenu Raju, citing defection.

Raju Chairman issued a notification formally disqualifying Murthy, who had recently switched allegiance to the Telugu Desam Party. The Council Chairman took this action three days after the simultaneous elections for the state Assembly and Lok Sabha.

Krishna Murthy, formerly the

president of YSRCP's Backward Class (BC) wing, resigned from his primary party membership and position after being denied a ticket by the ruling party for either the Assembly or Lok Sabha elections.

He had contested from the Gurazala Assembly Constituency in the Palnadu district. Previously, he had been elected as MLA in 1999 and 2004 from the Gurazala Assembly constituen-

cy in Palnadu district under a Congress ticket, later shifting his allegiance to the YSRCP. Murthy, a two-time MLA, publicly joined the TDP during a gathering in Sattenapalli on April 6.

health outcomes. The researchers also found that

the higher profits at hospitals, converting from publicly owned to pri-

Higher levels of hospital privatisation were linked to higher rates of

in some of the studies they reviewed. As governments around the world

the expense of long-term outcomes. There is a risk, however, that

Higher levels of

hospital privatisation

were linked to higher

rates of avoidable

deaths, the authors

found in some of the

studies they reviewed.



Deep crisis engulfs VSP as Centre, State remain inert

The Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) is currently facing a profound crisis, aggravated by the apparent inaction of both central and state governments in addressing the ongoing turmoil. Initiated by expatriate workers at Adani Gangavaram Port on April 12, the strike has persisted for more than a month, significantly disrupting the plant's operations and economic via-

The port workers' strike has precipitated a complete cessation in the supply chain of vital raw materials like coal and limestone to the steel plant. Despite securing a hefty loan of Rs 600 crore to procure coking coal from Australia and the USA, the steel plant's owner finds the consignment marooned at the port's premises. Although Adani ostensibly signals readiness to expedite the coal transfer to mitigate further harm to the plant, negotiations are at an impasse as both sides exploit the strike to their advantage.

Amid the chaos, the Steel Officers Association remains indifferent to interim directives from the High Court, while labour unions vehemently accuse vested interests of orchestrating a deliberate prolongation of the crisis to thrust the steel plant into steel daily, the plant managed

The port workers' strike has precipitated a complete cessation in the supply chain of vital raw materials like coal and limestone to the steel plant. Despite securing a hefty loan of Rs 600 crore to procure coking coal from Australia and the USA, the steel plant's owner finds the consignment marooned at the port's premises. Although Adani ostensibly signals readiness to expedite the coal transfer to mitigate further harm to the plant, negotiations are at an impasse as both sides exploit the strike to their advantage.

financial ruin. Despite workers' efforts to instigate dialogue involving the district collector and police commissioner, these endeavours prove fruitless, with port management displaying a conspicuous lack of initiative. Moreover, the distraction posed by election duties has relegated the issue to the backburner for district officials, even as work pressures have abated.

The strike's repercussions reverberate through the steel plant's production line, culminating in a catastrophic downturn. Typically churning out goods worth Rs 2,500 crore a paltry Rs 1,250 crore in steel production for April. By mid-May, production plummeted further, with only 70,000 tons manufactured, valued at Rs 370 crore against an anticipated Rs 1,000 crore.

The financial tumult is palpable as the steel plant grapples with meeting its financial commitments. April's employee salaries, amounting to Rs 84 crore monthly, remain outstanding, with partial dis-bursements made the preceding month.
As of May 15, employees are

yet to receive any compensa-tion. Compounding the predicament, the Eastern ing losses and operational Region Electricity paralysis.

Distribution Company issues a stern notice demanding Rs 68.43 crore for March's electricity dues, threatening to sever the supply if unpaid within two days.

In light of the mounting crisis, labour and job unions fervently appeal for the immediate appointment of a district collector and police commissioner to broker dialogue with the striking workers and facilitate the resumption of coal and limestone supply to the beleaguered steel plant. Absent prompt intervention, the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant teeters on the brink of escalat-

Candidates demand enhanced security for EVMs at AU

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A sense of insecurity prevails among candidates contesting for the Lok Sabha and Assembly seats Visakhapatnam as Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are secured in the strong rooms at Andhra University. Concerns about potential tampering have led candidates to express significant suspicion over the safety of these machines. The candidates have raised objections to the storage of EVMs at the university and are demanding enhanced security measures, including the installation of CCTV cameras and a live web link for continuous monitoring. They argue that such measures are crucial to ensure the integrity of the electoral process.

A formal petition has been submitted to the District Collector, emphasising the need for regular reviews of the situation at the campus. The petition outlines the candidates' lack of trust in the current arrangements and stresses the necessity of a live link to allow their teams to monitor the EVMs around the clock. Despite guidelines supporting the provision of a live link, candidates claim they have been repeatedly denied access. They have appealed to the relevant authorities, but their requests have not been heeded. This issue was highlighted a few days ago when M Sribharat's agent, representing the



Visakhapatnam alliance Lok Sabha candidate, expressed similar concerns in a letter to officials.

KA Paul, president of the Praja Shanti Party and Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha candidate, has also questioned the absence of the live link, pointing to the risk of tampering. Other candidates echoed these concerns, emphasizing the need for preventive measures against any potential malpractices. Samajwadi Party candidate Jaladi Vijaya shared a recent incident illustrating the potential for discrepancies. She recounted a situation at a polling booth where a voter was initially allowed to vote only for an MLA candidate, but not for the MP candidate until she intervened. She noted a significant mismatch between the counts of pink and white slips at the booth, reinforcing her mistrust of the current EVM storage arrangements and the need for a live monitoring

Hari Ganesh, another candidate, recalled that during the 2019 elections, he was provided with a web link and password for EVM monitoring without issue. He questioned why similar transparency is not being provided now, warning of the high potential for EVM tampering if the live link is not made available. The candidates have vowed to escalate the issue to the Chief Election Commissioner of India if their demands for increased security and transparency are not met. They are united in their insistence that a live link is essential to ensure the fairness and integrity of the election process at Andhra University.



Continued from Page 1

Following his defeat as a YSRCP candidate in the same constituency in 2014, he was not fielded by the party in 2019. However, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, serving as the president of YSRCP, nominated him to the AP Legislative Council.

During the recent elec-tions, Murthy sought the party ticket from Gurazala and exerted pressure to secure it, but the YSRC ultimately renominated sitting MLA Kasu Mahesh Reddy, leading to Murthy's dissatisfaction. Additionally, Murthy's claim for the Narasaraopet MP ticket was rejected by the YSRC, opting instead for another BC leader and former minister, P Anil Kumar Yadav. Previously, Murthy had also been vying for the post of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) chairman, which was ultimately appointed to Tirupati MLÁ Bhumana Karunakara Reddy by the par

Responding to his disqualification, Krishna Murthy voiced objection, stating that his version was not solicited before the decision was issued

Amarnath confident of YSRCP's return to power

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

IT Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) Gajuwaka Assembly constituency candidate, Gudivada Amarnath expressed confidence in the party's resurgence to power. Anticipating an even more significant electoral triumph than in the previous election, Amarnath affirmed the party's expectation of a resounding victory in the ongoing elections, with Jaganmohan Reddy poised for a second term as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

Addressing the media, Amarnath attributed the notable surge in voter turnout to the widespread satisfaction with YS Jaganmohan Reddy's governance over the past five years. He cited that an overwhelming 85% of families in the state have directly benefited from the government's policies, thus garnering their firm support for the incumbent Chief Minister. The majority of votes, ranging between 80 to 85%, were cast from rural areas, underscoring the government's dedicated focus on farmers'



welfare and the upliftment of

Amarnath further expressed confidence in the alignment of electoral results with the policies and decisions of the Jaganmohan Reddy administration, emphasising the public's endorsement of the government's initiatives. He highlighted that a significant number of rural voters have fervently participated in the electoral process with the primary objective of reinstating Jagan Mohan Reddy to power.

However, Amarnath cautioned against the likelihood of no single party securing the emphasizing their instrumen-

requisite majority for victory at the national level. He underscored the pivotal role of YSRCP MPs, projected to win the highest number of seats, in coalition formation. Amarnath assured that YSRCP MPs would prioritize the completion of pending state projects and advocate for the state's interests while extending support to other parties as needed. Amarnath reiterated the indispensability of YSRCP MPs in any prospective coalition government at the center,

tal role in shaping national pol-

Amarnath commended the dedicated efforts of YSRCP workers, leaders, corporators, and other senior figures for their steadfast grassroots campaigning, which involved reaching out to people door-todoor and explaining the welfare schemes initiated by the state government. He emphasised that such achievements wouldn't have been attainable without their sincere commitment and tireless dedication to the

Jagan set to

Continued from Page 1

be sworn in...

He projected confidence

in Jagan's re-election, with

the vote counting scheduled

for June 4 preceding the

Chief Minister's anticipated

oath-taking ceremony on

highlighted the public's

expectations of social secu-

rity and reliable pension dis-

bursements under YSRCP

governance, drawing paral-

lels between Chief Minister

Reddy and his late father, Dr

YS Rajasekhar Reddy, both

of whom resonate deeply

Regarding recent unrest in the State, Minister Botsa

urged restraint, emphasising

the YSRCP's commitment to

upholding law and order without resorting to vigilante

measures. He underscored

the party's resolve to priori-

tise governance and main-

tain stability throughout the

State in the upcoming term.

with the people.

Moreover, Minister Botsa

Claims of victory by both ruling and Oppn parties in Telugu states

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

The increased poll percentage in the recently concluded elections in the both Telugu states has created hope in the ruling and opposition parties over their victory. The increased poll percentage is a positive or a negative sign will be known after the announcement of results.

However, both the ruling and opposition parties are claiming in the both Telugu states that the people have voted in their favour. Elections were held for 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana and 25 Lok Sabha and 175 Assembly seats in Andhra Pradesh. In Telangana, overall poll percentage was 3% more than 2019 Lok Sabha elections. However it was lesser compared to Assembly elections which were held in December last. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the polling was 62.77% and in the recent Lok Sabha elections it crossed 65%. But in the recent Assembly elections

the polling was 71%. Regarding Andhra Pradesh, it has created a record with highest polling percentage in the simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha and the Assembly. The total polling percentage was 81.86 %. In 2019 it was 79.77% and in 2014 it was 78.14%.

Meanwhile, the ruling parties in Telangana and in Andhra Pradesh, the Congress and the YSR

Congress respectively are claiming that the people have voted in their favour due the welfare schemes implemented by their governments. The Congress hopes that it will win majority seats due to positive votes. In the same way in Andhra Pradesh, the ruling YSR Congress is confident of retaining power. The YSR Congress says that women, aged people and weaker sections, including minorities have voted in large number in their favour.

In Telangana the opposition parties, the BJP and the BRS claim that the people have turned against the within 100 days. The people have shown their anger on the Congress government by voting against the Congress. In Andhra Pradesh, the opposition TDP alliance is also claiming that people have voted against the YSR Congress government in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The TDP leaders say that they did not expect this much anger in the peo-ple on the YSR Congress

government. According to poll experts, usually in the elections, the theory is the less voting percentage is advantageous to the ruling parties and the highest voting percentage is advantageous to the opposition. But this theory is may not be correct always. The theory is different from practice. The results in the both Telugu states may prove this.

'Ab ki baar 151

Continued from Page 1

tinue the journey of collaboration tration in the country to disburse him injured, CM Jagan persistbetween YSRCP and IPAC in the

Recalling his remarks during the 2019 swearing-in ceremony, CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy emphasised the importance of the government's positive impact on the people, driving the party's campaign for votes in the 2024 elections. True to his word, the CM swiftly implemented welfare and developmental initiatives upon assuming office, benefiting the people of Andhra Pradesh.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the YSRCP government successfully implemented welfare schemes and spearheaded development initiatives, setting a benchmark nationwide. Following two years of pandemic-induced devastation, the government's swift ple.

Krishna Paksha

May 16 06:23 AM

to May 17 08:49 AM May 17 08:49 AM

to May 18 11:23 AM

May 16 06:14 PM

May 17 09:18 PM

to May 19 12:23 AM

10:36 AM to 12:12 PM

3:25 PM to 5:01 PM

7:23 AM to 8:59 AM

05:25 AM to 07:14 AM

02:05 PM to 03:53 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:46 AM to 12:38 PM

Updated: May 16, 2024 5:00 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Thunderstorms

Temp: 31[∞] Humidity: 82%

Sunrise: 5:36 AM

Sunset: 6:32 PM

to May 17 09:18 PM

TODAY

ALMANAC

Tithi: Navami:

Nakshatram:

Purva Phalguni

Uttara Phalguni:

Rahukalam:

Varjyam:

Gulika:

Yamagandam:

Month & Paksham:

recovery surprised many.

over Rs 2.70 lakh crore through DBT without discrimination, equivalent to almost a year's state budget. Fulfilling 99% of the promises outlined in its manifesto, the CM Jagan-led government generated 2.31 lakh employment opportunities durig its tenure.

Post-pandemic, CM Jagan initiated the 'Gadapa Gadapa Ku Mana Prabuthavam' (Mass public interaction programme), urging legislative colleagues, ministers, and leaders to visit every household to address the citizens' concerns. This sustained engagement, along with extensive outreach efforts like 'Siddham' meetings and the 'Memantha Siddham Bus Yatra', bolstered the party's connection with the peo-

Continued from Page 1

"As the HICs with their

robust regulation and gover-

nance could not optimise the

private sector for equitable

healthcare, the LMICs with

not-so-strong regulation and

institutional framework are

expected to struggle," Keshri

told PTI. Keshri is the cor-

responding author on a

study that looked at actors

driving national health pol-

icy. The team analysed the

composition of key nation-

al health committees of

India, appointed between

1943 and 2020, for diversi-

ty and representation of

leadership and members.

majority of members in the

national health committees

were from government

departments or institutions.

covery surprised many. Despite facing adversity, The YSRCP government including an attack during the bus vatra ed and concluded the campaign successfully. The public response to his political meetings in crucial constituencies was overwhelmingly positive, further boosting the party's prospects.
In addition to CM Jagan's

efforts, the support of the YSRCP's NRI wing proved pivotal in conveying the government's welfare and developmental achievements to the voters. Furthermore, volunteers, despite facing challenges, continued to support the YSRCP's inclusive agenda, emerging as influential campaigners for the party.

Throughout the lead-up to the 2024 elections, the I-PAC played a crucial role in guiding the party's strategies, ensuring a cohesive and effective campaign aimed at securing victory.

tive as it prevents wider

consultations and diversity

of opinion," said Keshri.

He added that such an

imbalanced representation

can also "greatly affect"

healthcare ownership at the

implementation level, as

healthcare planners and

managers at states, districts,

and below feel that their

voice and wisdom are not

included in the national

policies. The research, pub-

lished in the journal

Dialogues in Health, also

found an increased "central-

isation" of the health poli-

cy process in India.
"Lately, there has

been overt centralisation

dominated by actors based

in Delhi. They command

disproportionate authority

in policymaking," said

We found that the of the health policy process

Healthcare privatisation ...

ECI suspends two SPs ...

Continued from Page 1

with investigating these incidents and submitting an action taken report to the Commission within two days for each case. The Commission has also mandated the updating of FIRs with additional appropriate IPC sections and relevant statutory provisions.

Recalling the severity of the situation, the Election Commission has summoned the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police (DGP) of Andhra Pradesh to New Delhi to provide a personal explanation for the failure of the administration to contain the post-election

violence. Numerous incidents of violence, including assaults, arson, threats, damage to campaign vehicles, and stone-pelting, were reported in the districts of Anantapur, Palnadu, and Tirupati during and after polling days. election results to conditionally, pre-poll incipotential violence.

dents occurred, predominantly in Annamaya, A Special Investigation Chittoor, and Palnadu districts with a few reported in Guntur, Anantapur, and Nandyal.

During a meeting at Nirvachan Sadan in New Delhi on Thursday, chaired Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Sandhu, the Commission expressed its dismay over the post-election violence in Andhra

The Chief Secretary and DGP were directed to ensure that such violence does not recur, with all SPs instructed to take preemptive measures to prevent similar situations in the future.

Furthermore, Commission has decided to request the Ministry of Home Affairs to retain 25 CRPF companies in Andhra Pradesh for 15 days following the announcement of election results to control any

50 petrol bombs...

Continued from Page 1

"Due to the prevalence of tense situation, we thought it is good to verify and searched all the houses at Pinnelli village in Machavaram mandal one by one and found broken beer bottles in one house and bottles filled with petrol and wicks in another," said Garikapati in a video statement released by the district

The SP noted that the cache of weapons was found in two houses, leading to the custody of C Peddasaida, C Nanne, Allah Bakshu, C Jany Basha and Tanda Pedda Nanni.

Police are also on the lookout for the accomplices of these people who are suspected of making arrangements for these weapons. According to Garikapati,

police received information about a person who is suspected to be involved in making petrol bombs in a house and expressed confidence that he would be apprehended. Garikapati observed that

two cases will be registered and the apprehended persons will be remanded. Lok Sabha elections were held simultaneously with the

Assembly polls in the State on May 13.

YSRCP lodges complaint...

Continued from Page 1

The party condemned the one-sided police response and inaction, which appeared to protect TDP interests and escalate violence instigated by the opposition.

İt is widely known that during the election campaign, TDP leaders openly incited their supporters to harm YSRCP leaders. Consequently, the complaint implored the governor to initiate appropriate action against TDP and all those implicated in the disturbances.

The YSRCP leaders stated that the party has taken steps to bring to the attention of constitutional authorities the highhanded actions of officials

working on behalf of the ECI. to oversee the process of free It has been confirmed by independent sources that certain police officers of the State Administration, including SP Palnadu, Bindu Madhav, IG Guntur, Sarvasreshth Tripathi, and a Senior Addl. DGP rank Officer, namely, Shankabrata Bhagchi, have been working in favour of TDP to secure a political victory for the party, contrary to the electoral choice of the State at large. The YSRCP leaders added that letters addressed to the ECI in the past two days have been submitted to the Governor.

YSRCP leaders The Police Observer, Deepak Mishra, nominated by the ECI

and fair elections, has exceeded his assigned role by overtly colluding with TDP functionaries. They pointed out that it is widely known that the said police observer, disregarding the established norms of observers maintaining distance from any political party, socialized with retired IPS Officers, particularly Vishnuvardhan Rao, in secret dinners. They further pointed out that as a result of such camaraderie developed with TDP and its sympathisers among retired and serving IPS Officers, the said police observer directly intervened with the expressed concern that the field-level officers of the State to elicit a partisan police response favouring the TDP.

This, we believe, is restric-Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any

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Steps taken to ensure smooth counting of votes in NTR dist

PNS VIJAYAWADA

After the successful completion of the general election on May 13, the NTR district administration is now focusing on June 4, the counting day. With the cooperation of Revenue, Police, Panchayat Raj, and other departments, the polling concluded smoothly. The district administration aims to conduct the counting with the same spirit.

For that, Dr S Dilli Rao, District Collector, is taking necessary steps. He convened a meeting with the officials concerned at the Integrated Control Room on the premises of the collectorate on Thursday.

He discussed the preparative steps to be taken for the smooth conduct of the counting process. The counting of votes will take place at Nimra and Nova Engineering Colleges at Jupudi of Ibrahimpatnam mandal. Electronic Voting Machines



NTR District Collector Dr Dilli Rao speaking with the officials on the preparations for counting of votes on June 4, at the collectorate in Vijayawada on Thursday

(EVMs) and Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPAT) are stored in the strong rooms in these two colleges.

The Collector said three-tier security was arranged for the strong rooms. Central and State police forces are guarding the strong rooms under the surveillance of CC cameras. Gazetted officers and police officials are monitoring the security round the clock, he added.

No vehicle or person will be

allowed on the premises of these two colleges without identity cards. He asked officials to arrange separate ways for the candidates, counting agents and EVMs in the counting centres.

Fourteen tables will be arranged for each Parliament constituency and Assembly constituency. As many as 28 counting tables will be required for each seat, he said. The counting officials will start

with the postal ballots. Following the Election Commission of India (ECI)'s directions, officials should take steps to announce the results from time to time, he explained.

NTR District Revenue Officer (DRO) V Srinivasa Collectorate AO Nagalakshmi, Election Cell Superintendent M Durga Prasad and others were pre-

Krishna ZP general body meeting tomorrow

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Krishna Zilla Parishad general body meeting will be conducted at the ZP meeting hall in Machilipatnam at 11 am on May 18. The meeting will be chaired by Chairperson Uppala Harika.

In this connection, a press release was issued by the Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer's office on Thursday. According to the press release, various Standing Committees' meetings will also be conducted on the same day.
All ZPTC members, spe-

cial invitees, and officials of Krishna, NTR and Eluru districts must attend the meeting without fail.

Some of the Eluru district officials, including the Collector, had not attended the previous ZP general body meeting, which irked people's representatives including MLAs.

So, this time, the ZP authorities requested the officials to attend the meeting.

1.51L adults get BCG vax on first day of special drive

PNS VIJAYAWADA

On the inaugural day of a special drive, more than 1.15 lakh adults received the BCG vaccine as per the latest reports.

Aimed at achieving complete eradication of Tuberculosis (TB) cases in Andhra Pradesh by 2025 and curtailing the disease's prevalence, the BCG vaccination initiative for adults aged 18 and above commenced statewide on Thursday. The programme is a collaborative effort of the District Tuberculosis Prevention and District Immunisation Officers under the aegis of the medical and health department.

In the initial phase, the BCG vaccine rollout targeted individuals falling under six distinct categories across districts including Alluri Sitaramaraju, Visakhapatnam, Vijayanagaram, Krishna, Guntur, Palnadu, Nellore, Chittoor, Nandyala, YSR Kadapa, Annamayya, and Sri Sathyasai. The implementation is slated to span three



Field-level healthcare workers such as ANM, ASHA, CHO, and TB champions will actively participate in the vaccination campaign. Nodal officers have been designated for all 12 districts following directives from the Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare.

The BCG vaccine is earmarked for individuals meeting

specific criteria, including those who completed TB drug treatment five years ago, close contacts of TB patients who underwent treatment in 2021, diabetics, smokers, and individuals aged 60 and above. Health officials emphasize the safety of the BCG vaccine for adults, advocating its uptake as a preemptive measure against TB.

YSRCP faces backlash over alleged attacks on TDP women supporters

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) is facing intense scrutiny for fostering a toxic culture in Visakhapatnam, as reports of indiscriminate attacks on women, purportedly for their alleged affiliation with the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), surface. Two women and a man fell victim to an attack, necessitating their immediate transfer to King George Hospital for urgent first aid due to severe injuries. Following this event, Kancharapalem police apprehended those responsible for the incident.

The once-respected political entity, which held significant sway in Andhra Pradesh, is now grappling with allegations of perpetrating violence against women under the guise of political allegiance. Expressing vehement condemnation, numerous voices within the political spectrum have denounced these shocking acts, calling for immediate



action to curb such appalling behaviour.

Srinivas Rao, in his 60s, has issued a stern rebuke against the perpetrators, highlighting the urgent need for law enforcement agencies to intervene decisively. "I strongly condemn the indiscriminate attack on women on the pretext of being TDP supporters without even looking at them. I appeal to the police to take strict action against the attackers," [Your Name] stated.

As the public outcry grows louder, pressure mounts on the authorities to uphold justice and ensure the safety and dignity of all citizens, regardless of

their political affiliations. The YSRCP once heralded for its promises of progress and prosperity, now finds itself at a crossroads, grappling with the repercussions of its alleged involvement in fostering a culture of violence and intimidation, voiced by another beneficiary of YCP welfare schemes. With the spotlight firmly fixed on Visakhapatnam, the onus lies on law enforcement agencies to swiftly investigate these incidents and bring the perpetrators to justice, thereby restoring faith in the democratic process and safeguarding the fundamental rights of

'VIKAS' drive to promote vasectomy

PNS PADERU

In a concerted effort to address public health concerns and enhance family planning prac-tices, the Paderu sub-divisional administration has launched the 'VIKAS' initiative (Vasectomy Initiative: Knowledge, Access, and Support). This program, spearheaded by Sub-Collector Dhatri Reddy in collaboration with the Chintapalli police department and the Medical Department, actively promotes vasectomy as a safe and effective family planning method.

The initiative achieved a significant milestone on Thursday with a specialised medical team completing 130 vasectomy procedures at GK Veedhi. VIKAS specifically targets promoting vasectomy as a superior alternative to tubectomy, particularly for women suffering from anaemia. This approach significantly reduces the risks associated with major surgeries and minimizes maternal mortality due to blood loss.

Speaking at the launch, Sub-Collector Reddy emphasized that VIKAS extends beyond immediate medical benefits. The program fosters improved over-



all community well-being by ensuring better nutrition and increased resource allocation for smaller families. This, in turn, fosters educational opportunities and promotes sustainable living practices. VIKAS strategically tackles the challenges of awareness, accessibility, and cultural hesitations surrounding vasectomy. The government actively supports the initiative by equipping all primary healthcare centres (PHCs) with the necessary facilities to perform these procedures. Additionally, financial incentives and insurance coverage are provided to encourage participation.

Sub-Collector Reddy commended the police department for their active involvement beyond their core duties. She reiterated the program's objective to make vasectomy procedures

readily available at every PHC, improving access throughout the region. To achieve this goal, VIKAS incorporates training programs to expand the pool of qualified medical professionals who can perform the surgery.

Highlighting the broader social impact, Additional SP Kishore cited the tragic cycle of maternal deaths leading to vulnerable orphans susceptible to Naxal recruitment. He highlighted that smaller family sizes can mitigate such social issues by promoting better educational opportunities and reducing inheritance disputes over land. Additional SP Kishore urged Naxals to engage with such awareness initiatives to genuinely benefit the tribal communities they claim to represent, advocating for peaceful solutions over

VPA sets new cargo handling record

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA) has once again demonstrated its efficiency and capability by surpassing previous records and establishing a new benchmark in cargo transportation. In the financial year 2024-2025, the port accomplished a remarkable milestone by successfully managing 10 million metric tonnes of

cargo within a mere 45 days, surpassing the previous record set in the fiscal year 2023-24 by two days. This achievement underscores a commendable improvement in efficiency and operational capabilities for the Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA).

Dr M. Angamuthu,

Chairman of the VPA, lauded the exemplary efforts of Traffic Manager GRV Prasada Rao and the entire staff for their dedication and hard work in achieving this remarkable feat.

He expressed confidence in the port's potential to further enhance its performance and set even higher benchmarks in cargo handling. With this significant achievement, the VPA is now aiming to handle 90 million metric tonnes of cargo in

the current financial year, further highlighting the port's commitment to excellence and its crucial role in facilitating trade and commerce in the Angamuthu

emphasised that this remarkable accomplishment not only underscores the VPA's expertise in cargo handling but also emphasizes its vital role in fostering economic growth and development in the area. As one of the leading ports in the nation, Visakhapatnam Port continues to advance its infrastructure and operational effi-ciency, consolidating its position as a key player in the maritime sector.

5 held in Hyd for attacking family over pet dog

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Madhuranagar Police arrested five persons for attacking a family in Rahmatnagar after being chased by a pet dog.

The incident occurred on

May 8 when Madhu's family was on their way to cast votes via postal ballots; and the husky accompanied them. Dhanunjay's family claimed that the dog attacked them.

An argument ensued between the two parties after which a complaint was filed. On May 14, Dhanunjay's

family spotted as Srinath, Swapna and Rajeshwari and attacked them. The victims were admitted to a hospital and are undergoing treatment.

The accused were arrested under Section 148,147, 307 read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code.

Three held for snatching phone; mobile, bike seized

PNS HYDERABAD

The Tukaram Gate Police on Thursday arrested three persons involved in phone snatching and seized a mobile phone and an Activa from them.

The accused was identified as Nakkala Vignesh (23), a delivery boy and resident of Shastri Nagar. He was previously involved in a bodily offence under the Tukaram Gate police station limits; S Krinathi Kumar(28), a driver and a resident of Shastri Nagar and Suvurna. Manikanta (17), a first year intermediate student The accused snatched a phone from pedestrian near the St. John's Church High School at 4 am.

Krishna registers 85.4% turnout

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Krishna district registered 85.40 per cent voter turnout in the general elections held on May 13. It is 5 per cent higher than the turnout in the last elections.

Pamarru and Pedana Assembly constituencies registered 89.31 per cent and 89.56 per cent turnout, respectively. All the other constituencies have registered over 85 per cent polling. All seven Assembly constituencies under the Machilipatnam Lok Sabha segment have registered an average of 85.40 per cent polling.
In the Machilipatnam

Parliamentary constituency, 13,14,732 votes were cast out of a total of 15,39,460 votes. Of these, 12,93,603 electors polled their votes through Electronic

Voting Machines (84.45 pc). Additionally, 19,414 employees 1,725 senior citizens and differently-abled people cast their votes through postal bal-

every individual

The highest polling percentage was registered in the erstwhile Krishna district. of 1,67,564. The polling percentage is 89.56. In the 2019 elections, Pedana Assembly constituency registered an 88.57 per

Smallest constituency Pedana records highest polling percentage of

in Pedana, the smallest segment 1,50,063 voters, including postal ballot users, cast their votes out cent turnout.

Similarly, the Pamarru (SC) constituency registered 89.31 per cent polling, 1.20 per cent higher than last elections. This

1,64,886 voters cast their votes out of a total of 1,84,632. Machilipatnam constituency recorded an 83.92 per cent poll

turnout, one per cent higher than the previous polls. In this segment, 1,65,046 votes were polled as against a total of 1,96,680. Avanigadda Assembly segment registered 87.81 per cent polling and 1,86,439 voters cast their votes out of a total of 2,12,331. The prestigious Gannavaram

constituency registered 85.84 per cent polling this time. This segment comprises nine villages of NTR district, and these villages play a pivotal role in the poll outcome. Out of a total of

2,79,054 voters, 2,39,545 were polled. In the 2019 elections, the polling percentage was registered at 84.88.

Meanwhile, the Gudivada Assembly segment registered 84.09 per cent polling, an increase of 1.58 per cent. Around 1,71,763 voters cast their votes, out of a total of Meanwhile, Penamaluru registered an 80.36 per cent turnout. This segment consists of a majority of urban voters, and the lowest polling percentage was registered there.

In the Penamaluru segment, 2,37,000 votes were polled out of a total of 2,94,928, including 3,220 postal votes and 367 votes from home. Compared to the previous year's polling percentage of 79.14, this year 1.22 per cent more votes were polled.



Durga Temple Executive Officer KS Rama Rao supervising the hundi counting at Mallikharjuna Maha Mandapam in

Durga temple hundi nets Rs. 2.09 cr

Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri in Vijayawada has earned a sum of Rs. 2,09,49,116 in 16 days. The average income received per day is Rs.13,09,319.

The temple authorities conducted the hundi counting on the premises of the Mallikarjuna Maha Mandapam on Thursday. Executive Officer KS Rama Rao supervised the hundi counting.

Besides money, the devotees have offered 434 grams of

gold and 4.145 kg of silver jew-ellery, 171 USA Dollars, 50 Malaysian Ringgits, 5 England Pounds, 115 Australia Dollars, 10 Canada Dollars, 110 UAE Dirhams, 1 Kuwait Dinar, 66 Saudi Riyals, and 3.5 Bahrain Dinars. Rs.45,010 was received through e-hundi.

MEASURES BEING TAKEN TO PREVENT DENGUE

PNS VIJAYAWADA

MT Krishna Babu, Special Chief Secretary, Department of Medicine and Health, has ordered measures to prevent the spread of dengue across the State. On the occasion of National Dengue Day on May 16, he unveiled a poster on dengue disease at APIIC conference hall.

Commissioner of Health and Welfare Family Venkateshwar, Director of Public Health and Family Welfare Dr Padmavathy, Additional Director of Disease Control Programme Dr

Subramanyeswari, National Health Mission State Programme Manager Dr Dumpala Venkata Ravi Kiran, and NVBDCB staff participated in the programme. Krishna Babu said that the

blood samples of suspected dengue patients should be collected from all government hospitals as well as Aarogyasri network hospitals, and tested at 54 dengue diagnosis centres across the State to take appropriate treatment and preventive measures. Commissioner Dr Venkateshwar said that people should be fully aware of mosquito-borne diseases

GVMC faces backlash over sewerage charges amid rising taxes PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation's (GVMC) recent activation of a decade-old resolution to collect sewerage charges from residences with underground drainage connections (UGD) has sparked controversy. This move coincides with a period of rising property taxes, garbage levies, and other essential service costs, leading to financial strain for many residents. Approved by the GVMC council in 2011, the sewerage charges are calculated as one-third of the water supply bill. While intended to bolster municipal revenue streams, the implementation has drawn criticism due to its timing. Residents already grappling with escalating costs express concerns about the additional financial burden, particularly considering recent hikes in public transportation fares and electricity tariffs mandated by the state government.

The GVMC water supply department has expanded its UGD network, anticipating a surge in connections from 85 thou-



sand to 1.2 lakh, encompassing areas like Pendurthi and Gajuwaka. The resolution, originally proposed in 2011 under Mayor Pulusu Janardana Rao's tenure, mandates the collection of one-third of water supply charges as sewerage fees. However, reluctance from council members and officials stalled its execution, fearing public back-

The state government's directive to enforce the long-dormant resolution has triggered outrage, especially considering recent hikes in RTC fares, electricity tariffs, and property taxes. Residents, already incensed by the government's fiscal policies, have voiced dissent, with some refusing to pay the newly imposed garbage tax.

Adding to the discontent, demand notices for sewerage charges alongside property tax bills have caught residents off guard. Many are seeking clarification from GVMC revenue department officials regarding the sudden imposition of sewerage fees. The financial implications are significant, with officials estimating an annual burden of Rs. 40 crores on city residents due to the new sewerage charges. With one-third of water charges earmarked for sewerage, the GVMC anticipates an annual revenue potential of Rs. 120 crores, excluding industrial bulk connections. Residents now face the prospect of shouldering an additional financial burden amidst an already challenging economic

CPI condemns 'illegal arrest' of party leaders

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Communist Party of India (CPI) State secretary K Ramakrishna has condemned the arrest of CPI and AITUC leaders in Anantapur district. Tadipatri DSP VSK Chaitanya even beat up a differently-abled person, namely Kiran, and he was severely injured. While his party leaders were en route to meet Kiran, the police arrested them illegally, he alleged.
Following the arrests of the

CPI leaders, Ramakrishna issued a press release here on Thursday. A tense atmosphere prevailed for the past three days in the Tadipatri constituency, he said. The police failed to control the incidents of violence in Tadipatri, he alleged. He said that DSP Chaitanya tried to create panic among the TDP cadres. He beat up party workers.



Complete arrangements on war footing for counting

PNS BHIMAVARAM

District Collector Sumit Kumar has directed the officials to complete the arrangements for the counting of votes on a war footing.

In a statement here on Thursday, he said that the counting of votes would be taken up on the campus of Vishnu College regarding Achanta, Palakolllu, Narasapuram and Tanuku Assembly constituencies. The counting of votes regarding counting of votes regarding Bhimavaram, Undi and Tadepalligudem will be taken up on the campus of SRKR Engineering College on June 4.

A strong three-tier security has been provided at the strong rooms with Central and State police forces, the Collector said, adding that the Central Armed Forces (ITBP), the Armed Reserve Forces and the



local civil police are providing security to the strong rooms. Contesting candidates and their agents will be allowed only up to a fixed limit, the Collector said, stating that people without identity cards, unauthorized persons and other people's vehicles will not be allowed

that the Central Armed Forces , the Armed Reserve Forces and the local Collector Sumit Kumar told the officials that barricades should be erected in a planned their duties. way from the strong rooms to the polling centres and the ways for the candidates and

civil police are providing security to the strong rooms. strict action would be taken against them if they neglected

A strong three-tier

security has been provided at the

strong rooms with Central and State

police forces, the

. Collector said, adding

The Collector made it clear that the polling on the May 13 elections was peaceful and successful and in the same spirit that accounting should be held successfully and

Police constable shoots himself dead

PNS NANDYALA



A police constable attached to the One Town police station in Srisailam allegedly com-

mitted suicide by shooting himself with his service gun in the police station on Thursday. DSP Śrinivasa Rao said

that the deceased constable Siva Shankar was working at the One Town police station in Srisailam town. He belonged to the 2000 batch. Siva Shankar shot himself

dead in the restroom. As the

bullet pierced through his head, he died instanta-CI Prasad Rao registered a case and shifted the body to the GGH for a post-mortem examination. The reasons for

his suicide were not known

Biodiversity Day, a district-level environmental competition would be held at PR Government Degree College on May 19. He requested that this programme organized by the Andhra Pradesh State trainee Collector HS Bhavana, Biodiversity Council should be

Collector underlines need

to protect biodiversity

made a big success. Essay, painting and drawing competitions are being conducted on the subject of the benefits of biodiversity for the students studying class 4 to

May 19th from 8 AM to 10 AM. For other details, phone number 6281158344 can be contacted.

Andhra Pradesh National Green core regional coordinator K Srinivasa Rao district coordinator KVK Maheshwar Rao and MSN Charities aided high school headmaster MS Subramanyam were among those who were present.



Security at EVM strongroom inspected

PNS KAKINADA

Joint Collector S Ram Sundar Reddy inspected the security at the strong room where the EVMs of the Pithapuram Assembly constituency were preserved on the JNTUK campus here on Thursday.

The Joint Collector, accompanied by election officials, inspected the security arrangements at the strong room. He inquired with the police officials about the security arrangements. The police officials explained to him the security provided to a strong room where the EVMs of Pithapuram constituency were present.

Talking to the media on the occasion, Joint Collector Ram Sundar Reddy said that the



constituency was held peacefully. The EVMs of Pithapuram Constituency were preserved in the Ambedkar Central Library on the campus JNTUK.

Elaborate security was provided to the strongroom and the safety and security are being monitored constantly

Fearing defeat, YSRCP cadre resorting to attacks: Somireddy

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) senior leader and former minister Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy has alleged that the frustrated YSRCP leaders instigated attacks on the TDP leaders.

agents to move the EVMs. He

instructed the authorities to

work with planning to avoid

any problems and warned that

Addressing the media in the party state office in Mangalagiri on Thursday, Somireddy Chandramoha Reddy regretted that the Election Commission of India reprimanded the Chief Secretary and DGP of Andhra Pradesh regarding post-election violence which had never happened in the state. He described it as shameful to the

He lashed out that even



after the election concluded with the fear of defeat. He stated that the elections were held between ego and self-respect in

The TDP leader said that Agriculture Minister Kakani Govordhan Reddy warned of driving away the TDP leaders from the state after 20 days and Somireddy displayed Kakani's speech on mobile phone before the media.

Somireddy recalled that two sisters and the mother of Jagan Mohan Reddy revolted against him. The influence of Jagan Mohan Reddy has waned in the Kadapa constituency and his speeches reflected this.

Stating that the voters in the election went to the polling stations voluntarily to cast their vote, the former minister exuded confidence that the TDP-JSP-BJP alliance would win 135 seats and form the govern-

Main accused in attack on Pulivarthi Nani arrested

The police arrested the main accused in the attack on the Telugu Desam party Chandragiri Assembly constitutes are policies and the pulice of the policy of t stituency candidate Pulivarthi Venkata Mani Prasad, known as Nani, on Thursday.

District Collector J Nivas

underlined the need to protect

The Collector, flanked by

released the wall posters for the

district-level Environmental

Competition here on

Speaking on the occasion,

the Collector said that on the

biodiversity.

Thursday.

Pulivarthi Nani was attacked when he went to examine the security of the EVM strong room on the Padmavathi women's university campus. He suffered injuries in the attack and was

admitted to a hospital. The main accused Bhanuprakash Reddy who is the husband of a ZPTC member was arrested by the police.



The police also arrested Nadavaluru Ganapathi Reddy in connection with the attack on Nani. The police produced them before the court today and the court sent them to 14 days judicial remand following which they were sent to the Kadapa Central Prison.

Walk-in interview for dentists on May 28

PNS VIJAYAWADA

J Narendradev, in-charge Principal, Government Dental College and Hospital, Vijayawada said in a statement that a walk-in interview will be conducted on May 28 for filling up the Senior Resident Vacancy in Pedodontics Department at Government Dental College and Hospital, Vijayawada. Those who have passed

MDS are eligible for senior resident vacancy and have to serve for one year. Interested candidates can

visit the website http://gdchvja.in/ for complete details, he Narendradev said that the

walk-in interview will be conducted from 10 am to 4

X chromosome gene TEX13B vital for male fertility: Study

PNS HYDERABAD

With the rise in infertility among men across the world, Dr. K Thangaraj in collaboration with his colleagues Dr. P. Chandra Shekar and Dr. Swasti Raychaudhuri at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad identified the gene TEX13B which is essential for sperm cell development and male fertility in a multi-institutional study. The study has been published in the journal Human Reproduction.

Approximately, one in every seven couples are infertile worldwide. The male factors account for 50 per cent of the total infertility due to abnormal semen parameters, such as complete absence of sperm in semen ejaculate, low sperm count, abnormal motility of sperm, abnormal sperm shape and size. One of the important factors behind the above causes is the genetic factor.

Using next generation sequencing, we compared all gene coding regions (exons) between infertile and fertile males. We found two causative mutations in the TEX13B gene, of which one was exclusively found in infertile men and



other one is found much more frequently in infertile men compared to fertile control men," said Dr Umesh Kumar, the first author who was a PhD student of CCMB and presently a postdoctoral researcher at University of Michigan, USA.

The researchers have developed a cell culture model of mouse sperm-producing cells by knocking out the Tex13b gene using CRISPR-Cas9 technology. They found that the loss of the Tex13b gene reduces respiratory ability of the cells. They also found that Tex13b controls energy metabolism in the sperm-producing cells. Together, they argue that this affects the formation of new sperm cells.

"The findings of this study would be useful for screening infertile males with spermatogenic failure and counselling them before the implementation of assisted reproduction technique(s)," said Dr Vinay Kumar Nandicoori, Director, CCMB. "This study reminds us how

genetic trait transmissions can

be more complex, and more

nuanced than what we superficially think. "The TEX13B is present on the X chromosome, which all males receive only from their mothers, and not from their fathers! It means that the mother who carries the faulty

TEX13B is fertile (as she carries

two X chromosomes). But, when she transmits the X chromosome with the faulty TEX13B, her son becomes infertile. This is not what we generally expect to be an underlying cause of male infertility," explained Dr K Thangaraj.

'Dhwajarohanam' marks commencement of annual fete

PNS TIRUPATI

The annual Brahmotsavam Tirupati Govindarajaswamy began on Thursday with the hoisting of Garuda
Dhwajapatham between
8.15 am to 8.40 am in the
Mithuna lagnam', amidst chanting of mantras by Vedic scholars, and musical instruments followed by Asthanam.

Earlier, Govindarajaswamy, Garuda Dhwajapatam, Chakratthalwar and Parivara deities roamed all along the four Mada streets on the golden Tiruchi.

In the morning, Snapana Tirumanjanam was per-formed to the Utsava

Both the senior and junior pontiffs of Tirumala temple, FACAO Balaji, CE Nageswara Rao, SE 2 Jagadeeshwar Reddy, Agama Advisor Sri Seetaramacharyulu, DyEO Shanti, Kankanabhattar Narayana Dikshitulu, Superintendent Mohan Rao, others, devotees participated.

decked up for celestial wedding

'Padmavathi Parinayotsava Mandapam'

Teppakolam spruced up for the first time

PNS TIRUPATI

Sri Padmavati Parinayotsava Mandapam spruced up for the first time with Teppakolam set up to host the three-day celestial wedding ceremony of Sri Srinivasa Padmavathi Parinayotsavam, which will begin with splendour at Narayanagiri Gardens in Tirumala on Friday.

Every year, TTD observes this divine wedding ceremony for three days in a grand manner by making splendid arrangements, especially for the Mandapam where the celestial marriage of Sridevi Bhudevi Sameta Sri Malayappa Swamy is usually celebrated. So far, the garden wing of TTD has set up decorations like, Turmeric-Kunkuma Mandapam, Glass Mandapam, Colour Stone Mandapam, Ashtalakshmi Mandapam, Dasavatara Mandapam to impress the devotees.

For the first time, TTD has erected Teppakolam Mandapam also known as Teppakulam, meaning temple tank in the famous ancient





temples of Tamil Nadu and 15 varieties of 50,000 cut flow-Kerala States. Besides, the ers, and two tons of tradition-Mandapam is decorated with al flowers like Lilium, roses, chrysanthemum etc. The dioramas of Chinni Krishna with butterballs, elephants, horses, musical instruments etc.

According to TTD Garden Deputy Director Srinivasulu, Venkateswara Charitable Trust from Pune has come forward and contributed to the decoration as in previous years. About 50 gardeners from TTD and 150 decors from Bengaluru have worked day and night for the last few days, to spruce up the splen-

KCR functioning under Modi's close supervision, says Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS is now at the feet of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure its survival, the Congress's in-charge in Sircilla, KK Mahender Reddy said. BRS leaders have themselves asked voters to vote for the BJP in the LS polls, he added.

He said that KCR helped the BJP so that his daughter MLC Kavitha could get bail and added that he has evidence regarding this. KCR is now functioning under Modi's close supervision, Mahender said. Speaking to the media at



the Gandhi Bhavan on Thursday along with Congress candidate in Karimnagar, Velichala Rajender Rao, he said that one can understand the Fevicol bond between KCR and Modi from the comments of Modi who said the KCR had requested him to make KTR the CM.

Rajender said the BRS had joined hands with the BJP much before LS elections. KTR said that Nama

Nageshwara Rao will become Union Minister if he wins in Khammam. How can Nama Nageshwara Rao become Union Minister? One can understand the connection between the BRS and the BJP. KCR and KTR are liars. BRS is a party standing on a foundation of lies. Mahender and I worked hard during the

Telangana movement," he said. Rajender said that he is ready for any sacrifice if the BRS manages to come second in LS polls in TG. He asked KTR to tell whether he will resign his MLA post if the BRS is pushed to the third slot in LS polls.

Terming KTR as Kalvakuntla Third Class Rama Rao, he said that KTR is a non-local leader in Sircilla and that KTR is the reason for the deaths of many hand-loom weavers. He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy released arrears owed to handloom weavers immediately after taking over.

'Pedda Sesha Vahana Seva' held

PNS TIRUPATI

On the first evening of the ongoing annual Brahmotsavam at Sri Govindaraja Swamy Temple in Tirupati, 'Pedda Sesha Vahana Seva' held on Thursday evening. Sri Bhu sameta Sri

Govindaraja took out a celestial ride on the seven hooded Pedda Sesha Vahanam to bless His devotees.

Both the seers of Tirumala, FACAO Balaji, DyEO Shanti and others were pre-



14th century temple to be rebuilt in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

14th century Shiva temple that was dismantled during the construction of the A Jayakwadi dam 52 years ago is set to be rebuilt here, an official of the Maharashtra archaeology department said on Thursday. For the first time in the state such a restoration is going to be attempted, he claimed. Two ancient temples located at Shevta and Savkheda villages in Paithan tehsil of the district (then known as

Aurangabad) were dismantled in 1972 as the area was about to go under water after the dam was completed. The stones were brought here and preserved, the official said. "A temple that stood in Shevta will be put together on a hillock near Soneri Mahal (a historical palace which now houses an office of the archaeology department) here. The stones have already been numbered, and we will rebuild the temple on that basis," he



Doctor suspended after wrong surgery performed on child at Kerala hospital

doctor has been suspended after the wrong surgery was performed on a four-yearold girl at the Government Medical College Hospital here on Thursday. The child had Abeen scheduled for surgery to remove a sixth finger on her hand at the Maternal and Child Care Centre of the Medical College Hospital, instead of which an operation was performed on her tongue mistakenly. The girl's family alleged that the error came to light

when they discovered cotton stuffed in the child's mouth post-surgery, prompting them to investigate further. Upon closer inspection, they found that the surgery had been performed on her tongue, not on her hand as intended. As the issue created an uproar in Kerala, the state govt initiated action, suspending Associate Professor Dr Bejohn Johnson, pending an inquiry.Health Minister Veena George announced the suspension of the doctor

give Modi ji a third term. But,

can you tell me who will be the

INDIA bloc's PM candidate?

They are not coming to power

at any cost... but in case... will

Mamata Banerjee become the

PM or MK Śtalin or Lalu

Prasad? They have decided to

rotate the PM's chair among

themselves if they form the

such a prime minister could be

able to protect the country

from a pandemic or a terror-

home minister said the state

needs "vikas raj and not jungle

He said RJD has joined hands with the Congress which

opposed the Mandal

Commission's recommenda-

tions and delayed the report of

the Kakasaheb Kalelkar

Commission of 1955 which

was set up to investigate the

conditions of socially and edu-

cationally backward classes.

About Bihar, the union

The BIP leader wondered if

government," he said.

ist attack



Delhi court discards U-turn of 12-yr-old, convicts man for raping her

n an unusual verdict, a Delhi court has convicted a man for raping a 12-year-old girl nearly 10 years ago despite the survivor turning hostile, saying "conclusive evidence" like DNA and FSL results nailed the accused. Usually, the testimony of a rape survivor is considered the key evidence in sexual assault cases and the accused gets the benefit of doubt and walks free, if the victim gives him a clean chit. Additional Sessions Judge Amit

Sahrawat who was hearing the case against the man accused of raping the minor in October 2014, held, "In a nutshell it can be said that although victim turned hostile to the fact that accused established physical relations with her, but the truth has been brought on record by the DNA and forensic science laboratory (FSL) result which is a conclusive piece of evidence." In its order passed on Monday, the court said the victim in her statements to the doctor. police and magistrate said the accused established physical relations with her.



Pok belongs to India, we will take it back at any cost: Shah

PNS ■ SITAMARHI/MADHUBANI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday asserted Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) belongs to India and the country will take it back "at any cost".

Addressing back-to-back election rallies in Bihar's Sitamarhi and Madhubani Lok Sabha constituencies in favour of NDA nominees, the former BJP president also claimed that the Congress-led INDIA bloc was planning to rotate the PM's chair among its constituents if voted to power.

When Article 370 was scrapped, Rahul Gandhi had said that it would lead to bloodshed. Five years have elapsed and not a pebble has been hurled. But Congress ally Farooq Abdullah tries scaremongering by saying that we cannot take back PoK as Pakistan has atom bombs," Shah said at Sitamarhi.

Sitamarhi district, bordering



Nepal, is considered the birthplace of Goddess Sita.

"I wish to declare from the birthplace of Goddess Sita that Bharat and its 140 crore people fear no one. Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is ours and it will remain so. We will take it back," he said.

The NDA government will also ensure full security along

the India-Nepal border in its third term, he added.

Hitting out at the INDIA alliance for not announcing its PM candidate, Shah said the country needs a strong prime minister and not "one in every

"They (INDIA bloc) don't have a face for the PM's post.

'Tax money for free ration but BJP trying to take credit'

PNS LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati hit out at "BJP and company" on Thursday, saying they want to take credit for providing free rations to the country's poor.

"Far from freeing the people of the country from ris-ing inflation, poverty, unemployment and backwardness, people of BJP and company are bent on extracting electoral gains for giving the poor a little bit of ration. This is not right as this is not kindness," she wrote in Hindi on the social media platform

'X'.
"The free ration to the poor is not a favour by the BJP or the government, it comes from the tax money paid by the people. Therefore, it is inappropriate to make fun of the poor by asking them for votes in return..., the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister added in

AAP IN EXCISE POLICY CASE: ED TO SC

Will soon file prosecution complaint against Kejriwal

PNS NEW DELHI

In potential trouble for Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Enforcement Directorate on Thursday told the Supreme Court it will soon file a prosecution complaint against him and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the ED, told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta that the agency proposed to file a prosecution complaint (charge sheet) against Kejriwal and the AAP. "We will do it shortly. It is in the pipeline," he told the court.

The ED made the statement when the court was hearing Kejriwal's challenge to his arrest in the money laundering case arising from the alleged Delhi excise scam.

Raju claimed the probe agency has enough evidence to

show that Kejriwal demanded Rs 100 crore bribe which was used by AAP in the Goa assembly poll campaign.

"We have direct evidence that Kejriwal stayed in a sevenstar hotel, whose bills were partly paid by an accused in the case," Raju submitted, adding Kejriwal played a key role in the formulation of the now scrapped Delhi excise policy. He alleged that Kejriwal, as the national convenor of the AAP, was vicariously responsible for the being the chief minister, does not hold any departmental portfolio.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who also appeared for the ED, questioned the maintainability of the petition, saying that barring the first two occasions when Keiriwal opposed the remand orders, he virtually "consented" to judicial custody.

He submitted the court cannot hold a mini-trial at the remand stage and examine material and other evidence available with the investigating officer.

"The court can only see whether there is any material for arrest and not what material is there. In this case, the materials were seen by the trial court and the high court. The high court had summoned the case files and perused the material. Mini-trial, which this court is called upon to do, is

400 properties of terrorists attached by NIA since 2019

PNS NEW DELHI

Over 400 properties, including multiple bank accounts and cash worth crores, have been attached by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) most of them belonging to terrorists, Naxals, separatists and their supporters, officials said on Thursday.

Of the 403 confiscated and attached properties, 206 have been attached by the Ranchi branch of the federal probe agency which is the highest,

The properties include multiple bank accounts and a significant amount of cash belonging to Naxals and their aides among others, spread across mainly in Bihar and Jharkhand, the officials said.

A total of 100 other properties belonging to terrorists



and their supporters were attached, forfeited or confiscated by the Jammu branch of

The Chandigarh branch of the anti-terror probe agency has attached 33 properties belonging to separatists and their supporters, the officials said, adding that in addition to these "two properties

the NIA, they said.

belonging to banned Khalistani leader Gurpatwant Singh Pannun have been confiscated".

These properties were attached or confiscated during 2019 and May 16, 2024 by mantling the network and infrastructure of terror and Naxal outfits, they said.

The properties belonging to the workers and supporters of banned outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) have also been attached or confiscated by the NIA, the officials

As many as 22 properties have been attached by the New Delhi branch of the NIA, 27 (including eight confiscated ones) by the Kochi branch, five by Mumbai, four by Hyderabad, three by Chennai and one by Lucknow branch, they added.

Shah's statement on bail to Kejriwal objectionable: Kapil

Says it questions intention of SC judges

PNS NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Thursday hit out at Home Minister Amit Shah over his reported "special treatment" remarks on the interim bail to Kejriwal, saying it was an "objectionable statement" that questioned the intention of the Supreme Court judges.

Sibal's remarks came after Shah, while referring to the interim bail granted by the Supreme Court to Kejriwal, reportedly said many in the country believed he was given special treatment.

The Supreme Court on

PNS ■ GURUGRAM

Thursday

committed the crime in a fit of

rage when he returned home

from school in dirtied clothes

and two of his books were

missing, police said on

to judicial custody, they said.

The accused, Poonam Devi,

Thursday steered clear of the political talk about it having made an exception for Keiriwal in granting him interim bail for campaigning in the Lok Sabha polls but said "critical analysis of the judgement is welcome".

ence in the national capital, Sibal said, "Shah has made an objectionable statement and questioned the intention of the Supreme Court judges."

Shah has stated very cleverly that many people are saying the Supreme Court's decision to grant interim bail to Kejriwal in the excise policy case is akin to him getting special treatment, he added



"He (Shah) has said 'people are saying'. If people are saying and you don't believe in it, then why say it? If people say and you believe it, then only you

have made the statement," said Sibal, who is also a senior advocate. Sibal said it is important to

spell out the laws in light of the statement

or she can file a nomination and get elected. If there is a charge sheet against anyone, a person can campaign and also file a nomination, like Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh is doing," the Rajya Sabha MP

"One who just has allegations against him cannot campaign, what kind of a statement is this?" Sibal said, hitting out

at Shah. He probably does not have knowledge of the law, otherwise he would not have made

the statement, Sibal said.

Slamming Shah, Sibal said. "If someone is convicted but "He (Shah) says 'if we win 400 we will take back PoK What if you don't get that many seats, won't you take back PoK? We want you to take it back. Firstly, you should take back those 4,000 kilometres that China has taken away...

Asked about the alleged assault on AAP MP Swati Maliwal at Kejriwal's residence, Sibal said, "Why is he (Shah) worried about this (Maliwal

BHU STUDY ON 926 INDIVIDUALS

'Over 30% of Covaxin takers reported adverse events'

PNS NFW DFI HI

Nearly one-third of 926 individuals who received Bharat Biotech's anti-Covid vaccine Covaxin reported 'adverse events of special interest,' or AESI, according to a one-year follow up study conducted by a team of researchers

Serious AESI, which included stroke and Guillain-Barre syndrome, were reported in one per cent of individuals, the study conducted by researchers from the Banaras Hindu University (BHU), which looked at long-term safety of the BBV152 (Covaxin) vaccine in adolescents and adults, claimed.

Guillain-Barre syndrome is an autoimmune disorder which causes weakness in nerves in arms and legs.

The study, conducted from January 2022 to August 2023, stated that nearly 50 per cent of the sample size complained of infections during the follow-up period, predominated by viral upper respiratory tract infections.

However, Bharat Biotech in a statement in response to the study, said, "several studies have been executed on the safety of Covaxin, and published in peer-reviewed journals, demonstrating an excellent safety track record". The study involved 635 adolescents and 291 adults,

who received the BBV152 vaccine.

Published in the journal Springer Nature recently, the study comes against the backdrop of UK pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca admitting its Covid vaccine can cause rare sideeffects of blood clotting and lowering of platelet count in a UK court.

"Close to one-third of the individuals developed AESIs. New-onset skin and subcutaneous disorders, general disorders, and nervous system disorders were the three most common disorders observed in adolescents after receiving the vaccine," the study said.

The participants were interviewed telephonically about long-term adverse events of special interest after

one year of vaccination. New-onset skin and subcutaneous disorders (10.5 per cent), general disorders (10.2 per cent), and nervous system disorders (4.7 per cent) were the common AESIs in adolescents.

General disorders (8.9), musculoskeletal disorders (5.8 per cent), and nervous system disorders (5.5 per cent) were the common AESIs in adults. Menstrual abnormalities were noticed

in 4.6 per cent of female participants. Ocular abnormalities and hypothyroidism were observed in 2.7 per cent and 0.6 per cent of participants.



Woman strangles son over dirtied clothes.

GURUGRAM POLICE

was arrested on Tuesday and "During the police interrowas produced in court on gation, Devi revealed that on Monday, when her 8-year-old Thursday. The court sent her The police had earlier susson Karthik returned from pected that the woman killed school, his clothes were her son after he came to know smeared with wall putty and he of her alleged illicit relationship had also lost two books. In a fit of rage, she first removed his clothes and made him stand outside their house," Assistant Commissioner of Police Varun Dahiya said. "When he insisted on going

to some shop, she strangled him with her 'chunni'," ACP Dahiya said. The matter came to light on

Monday when the police received a call from a private hospital regarding the death of a child, police said.

The victim's father, Arvind Kumar, who works as a labourer, spotted injury marks on the neck of his and claimed that he was murdered. Following this, he filed a complaint at the Sector 18 police station, police

Country faced identity crisis during Cong rule: Adityanath

KAUSHAMBI (UP)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday claimed that the country faced an identity crisis while every citizen's security was under threat during the previous Congress-led government at the Centre.

"Earlier, whenever a terrorist incident took place in the country and the world, its links were invariably established with Azamgarh, defaming the district for no fault of its own," he said, adding that those who defamed Azamgarh stand completely exposed today.

The chief minister was addressing a rally in the Lalgani Lok Sabha constituency in Azamgarh in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to seek votes for BJP's Azamgarh candidate Dinesh Lal Yadav Nirahua and Lalganj nominee Neelam Sonkar.

Continuing his attack on the opposition, Adityanath said, The country faced an identity crisis while every individual's security was under threat in the previous Congress governments. Development activities had come to a grinding halt because the Congress-led government was mired in cor-

'Over a fifth of excess deaths linked to heatwaves'

PNS NEW DELHI

More than 1.53 lakh deaths a year were associated with heatwaves around the world, with over a fifth of these deaths - the greatest share - coming from India, according to new research looking at data over 30 years since 1990.

India was followed by China and Russia, with each experi-encing roughly 14 per cent and 8 per cent of these heatwavelinked excess deaths, respec-

The study, led by Monash

University, Australia, found that heatwave-linked excess deaths accounted for about a third of all heat-related deaths and 1 per cent of total deaths globally.

Researchers also found that of the overall 1.53 lakh excess deaths occurring every summer, close to half came from Asia and more than 30 per cent from Europe.

Further, the largest estimated death rates (deaths per population) were seen in regions with dry climates and lowermiddle incomes. The findings



published in PLoS Medicine.

"During the warm seasons from 1990 to 2019, heatwaverelated excess deaths accounted for 153,078 deaths per year,

million residents or 1 per cent of global deaths," the authors wrote.

For the study, the researchers used data from the UK-based Multi-Country Multi-City (MCC) Collaborative Research Network that included daily deaths and temperatures from 750 locations across 43 coun-

Comparing the decade up to 2019 with that up to 1999, the duration of heat waves each year was found to have extended from 13.4 to 13.7 days on

a total of 236 deaths per ten average around the world, with average ambient temperature warming by 0.35 degrees Celsius every decade.

The researchers said that while previous studies have quantified excess deaths due to heatwaves locally, they have not compared these estimates across the globe over a pro-

longed duration. "Heatwaves are associated with substantial mortality burden that varies spatiotemporally (with space and time) over the globe in the past 30 years," the authors wrote.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Unifying Paradise

Pointing to people's anger and civil unrest in PoK, Amit Shah says it will be reclaimed as part of India

s peace and tranquility envelop the sylvan slopes of Kashmir Valley in perfect harmony but civil unrest recoils with its squirming populace across the LoC in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK), India's Home Minister Amit Shah has iterated that the region "belongs to India and we will reclaim it". Nothing new there, but the comment has reignited discussions on the disputed region and its intricate history, fraught as it is with serious ramifications. Following Partition, the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir, like other such States, had the option to accede to either India or Pakistan. Maharaja Hari Singh, then ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, initially sought to remain independent but, amid invasion by tribal militias supported by Pakistan, opted to accede to India in October 1947. It led to the first India-Pakistan War, which saw a United Nations-brokered ceasefire and establishment of the LoC, which divided the region into the Indian J&K and PoK. While India gained control over most of



the territory, Pakistan retained approximately its onethird, which it named Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan. Therefore, from an Indian perspective, PoK is an integral part of J&K and its inclusion in India's territorial claims is based on historical, legal and moral grounds. However, the timing and practicality of the Home Minister's claim are debatable: Bringing up such critical matters in public sphere, especially during elections and when they involve a neighbouring nuclear power, is not the best

For its part, Pakistan considers PoK as a "liberated territory" pending a plebiscite promised by the UN.

In this given situation, the status quo maintained for over seven decades keeps the two countries from going to war. The larger question is, do we want to go to war with Pakistan and can we afford it when we have so much to sort out domestically? Should not the Home Minister be more cautious in raking up such contentious issues during elections? It is true that despite Pakistan's hollow assertions, PoK has witnessed internal dissent and unrest over the years. The region has been marred by allegations of human rights abuses, lack of democratic freedoms and marginalisation of local voices by the Pakistani establishment. Civil society movements, such as the Gilgit-Baltistan Movement, have been advocating for the recognition of their rights and the restoration of genuine autonomy. If Amit Shah's recent declaration reaffirming India's claim over PoK is not a standalone Statement but reflects a broader strategic shift in India's approach, it must be well articulated and a clear roadmap must be laid to approach the matter diplomatically or otherwise. If that is not the case, then it would pass off as another poll rhetoric or 'jumla'. Indeed, diplomatic endeavours are most effectively conducted behind closed doors rather than at pub-



Devotees at the Kedarnath temple during the 'Char Dham Yatra,' in Rudraprayag

The rising significance of skills in learning

The new educational landscape must integrate skill-based learning into formal education systems, fostering a holistic approach to learning and livelihood

ach generation does make its contribution to the vocabulary of the language it uses. The vocabulary represents its understanding of the current emotions and fancied expressions of sentiments, which are at times as old as the human race. This may be of joy, glee, or sheer

At times serious sentiments are involved and led by a prominent person of the time; they acquire fancied importance. Many will recall the time when the Department of Education in the Government of India was declared the 'Department of HRD' during the time of the Prime Ministership of Rajiv Gandhi and overnight many departments of personnel of corporate enterprises declared themselves to be the departments of human resource development. Nothing in the content had changed nor had even the approach, but still the fashion had got its new draping.

Each time somebody important in a current scenario projects a concept, there are a lot of people who follow the trail. Nothing wrong with that, The important thing is to understand how human nature moves and what the significance of words is in the larger context of those particular times. It is best to do an analysis without making a value judgement. Having said that, one can come to the present times and notice how the emphasis of the present dispensation in the national arena on 'skill' has brought the word skill to the center of the focus in learning.

There are attempts to offer degrees for certain types of skill formation. Some decades ago, skill was not such a happy word. No vice canceller of a university would have talked of a degree in 'skills'. Education was supposed to be a 'grand concept', which indeed it is. The confusion with skill was, albeit, reducing its significance of education. To enter that debate may not be helpful at this stage. The fact of the matter is that times have now changed and skills have acquired the level of an elevated pursuit. As mentioned earlier, there are attempts to offer



degrees in skill formation. Perhaps this is a recognition of the emphasis on doable learning. Anything which can be performed in action is now getting more valued.

By itself, it may or may not be a good thing, but it does show a tendency to reducing action largely to an operational front. The neglect, therefore, of concepts and ideas is proportional. By itself, the subject matter may be debated, but that remains, as the expression goes, 'another matter'. This is inevitable and leads to some reflections. Skill by itself is important and perhaps far more important than the value attached to it in everyday par-

leys. Skill is the foundation of all relationships. If one is attracted towards anyone else, it is only on the basis of that person's skills. That skill may be in singing, cooking, speaking or dancing and the list can be endless. The truth is, nobody was drawn to anybody else, if that other person had no skills. Even a parent is drawn to a child, only at some action of the child, even if it was just a smile. That is how important a skill is. Without a smile, the child would draw no attention. Any adult sees a child seeks to establish some communication with that child and that child's response is the core of the attention it gets from anyone

LIKE ANY OTHER DEGREE, A DEGREE IN SKILLS CAN LEAD TO EARNINGS AND A LIVELIHOOD. THIS IS NEW TO THE LANDSCAPE. THERE IS MORE TO EARN

AND MORE WAYS TO EARN WITH IT THAN BEFORE. THIS HAS WIDENED AND DEEPENED THE NATURE OF LEARNING, WHICH BY POPULAR PARLEYS HAS BEEN ADDRESSED AS

'EDUCATION'

around him. Later, that kind of interaction becomes the root of learning communication and more.

This seminal position of skill in human relationships has not often been noticed, either with analytical fervor or poetic exuberance. If that had been done, there would have been greater recognition that nothing, not even emotional bonding, takes place without some skill being the foundation of it. Be that as it may, it is an additional dimension of playfulness, friendship and relationships and from there it goes on to

earning and livelihood. What is happening today is the induction of this skill formation into a standardised format like education leading to a degree. Today even skill in laying bricks in construction can get the status of a degree. A degree is indeed nothing but the benchmarking of standards. Similarly, there is even a proposition on degree in act-

ing and more.
In other words, like any other degree, a degree in skills can lead to earnings and a livelinere is more to earn and more ways to earn with it than before. This has widened and deepened the nature of learning, which by popular parleys has been addressed as 'education'. The industry, if one might say so,

of education has its own components, which are widely understood but not equally commonly categorised in our operational terms. Such being the case, a time may have come to categorise different types of learning and different types of skills. It is this component of education which needs greater thought and analysis than has been done so far for 'education' leading to a degree.

It may, therefore, be a fit proposition to submit that to understand 'skills' as a part of learning, one needs to begin the overhaul of the learning process with an overhaul of the learning process of degree in 'education' itself. Operationally this could

mean, to begin with, the review of the curriculum of the B.Ed. and M.Ed degree. It is generally agreed that conceptual reflection to be converted into operational reality requires a fulcrum point of intervention. In the text above, the philosophical reflection on skill has been sought to be combined with hood. This is new on the land- the world of action and research. This could be a point to be seriously taken on board for further discussion

> (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

Modi filing nomination boosts BJP morale



Varanasi electrified as Narendra Modi filed papers, underscoring UP's centrality and Modi-Yogi alliance's lasting impact on national politics

raranasi recently witnessed a surge of excitement as Prime Minister Modi filed his nomination papers for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. This event not only underscored the significance of Uttar Pradesh in shaping national politics but also highlighted the enduring influence of the Modi-Yogi partnership in the State's political landscape. The ancient city of Varanasi

buzzed with excitement as Prime Minister Narendra Modi submitted his nomination papers for the Lok Sabha polls once again last Tuesday. Accompanied by his trusted ally, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and a host of supporters, Modi's presence electrified the streets during a massive roadshow prior to filing his papers. The atmosphere in the holy city exuded confidence among leaders and workers of the saffron party, indicating a strong belief in their impending triumph in the Lok Sabha polls. The significance of Uttar Pradesh (UP) in determining the fate of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), led by the BJP, cannot be overStated, especially as they



strive for a third consecutive term in power. With 80 Lok Sabha seats at stake, UP holds considerable sway over Indian politics, both present and future. The adage that the road to Delhi's throne runs through UP rings true, emphasising the pivotal role the State plays in shaping the country's political landscape. Consequently, political parties are sparing no effort in vying for victory in UP in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha

Despite political manoeuvres, analysts predict a familiar outcome in UP this time around, with the BJP poised to replicate its 2019 electoral success. The formidable duo of Modi and Yogi is expected to deliver another commanding performance, cementing their status as unbeatable political forces. The Modi-Yogi partnership has become synonymous with victory, casting a shadow of doubt

The BJP's ambitious goal of securing all 80 Lok Sabha seats in UP is buoyed by the confidence placed in this dynamic duo. Modi has lauded Yogi's development initiatives on numerous occasions, underscoring their collective vision for UP's progress. This sentiment was echoed during Modi's recent rally in Amroha, where he expressed optimism about surpassing previous electoral records under Yogi's leadership, thereby making history in UP.

The 2014 Lok Sabha elections marked a turning point in UP's political landscape, ending the BJP's electoral drought in the State. Securing a staggering 71 out of 80 seats, the BJP emerged victorious without any significant opposition alliance.

The subsequent 2019 elections saw the BJP leverage the Modi wave and Yogi's governance to further consolidate its position, despite facing a united opposition front. Yogi's proactive stance on law and order issues resonated with voters, contributing to the BJP's resounding victory. Yogi's tenure as Chief Minister

over the opposition's has been characterised by a crackdown on criminal elements, instilling a sense of security among the populace. Under his leadership, UP has witnessed a significant decline in crime rates, marking a departure from the lawlessness of the past. Central Government support for development initiatives has further bolstered UP's economy, with the Gross State Domestic Product witnessing substantial growth. As the 2024 elections unfold,

the BJP finds itself in a favourable position in UP, owing to the combined successes of the Modi Government at the centre and Yogi's governance model. The tangible improvements in governance and economic indicators serve as testaments to their administration's efficacy, instilling confidence among voters. While the outcome of the elections remains uncertain, one thing is clear: the Modi-Yogi alliance continues to enjoy unwavering support from the people of

> (The writer is a senior journalist and author of two books; his views are personal)

AAP'S CANDID ADMISSION

Madam — This relates to the news story "AAP admits to assault," which was published on May 15. While the action of the CM's PS Bibhav Kumar is condemnable, to say the least, the very admission of the act by the AAP's leader Sanjay Singh is a rare instance of admission of guilt. It is reassuring to note that the party has promised to take strict action against its own. Contrast this with how a well-entrenched party (the BJP), which hopes for a "chaar so paar" score in the LS polls, stood by Brij Bhushan Saran Singh, despite a barrage of sexual allegations against him, only to give the LS sabha ticket to his son, as some kind of saving grace.

Though AAP has not yet acted on its promise, the admission of wrongdoing has, by itself, lessons for all other parties that choose to look the other way when such incidents involve their party folk. For now, at least, it is the AAP and not the BJP, which is walking the talk on "Beti bachao".

Avinash Godboley | Dewas

DIGNIFIED CAMPAIGNING Madam — Apropos the editorial "Bitter ballot battle," published on May 15. the ongoing Lok Sabha elections may go down as the most bitterly fought yet, in the history of independent India. Senior citizens like this writer cannot help but recall a time when politicians were dignified in fighting opponents during election campaigning. For instance, during the 1969, assembly elections in Tamil Nadu, when the Congress stalwart Kamaraj thundered that he would win from Virudhunagar constituency 'lying down', Rajaji retorted, "His lying down is a certainty, but winning is difficult"! Rajaji's Swatantra party and the DMK fought that election in alliance, resulting in the Congress defeat and the DMK forming Government.

Differences cropped up between Rajaji and Anna. Said a disillusioned Rajaji in a press meet — "The honeymoon between the Swatantra party and the DMK is over"! When Annadurai heard this, he quipped

Ageing gracefully

EDITO



propos the news article "Embracing the joys and wisdom of age," published on 16 May, this is my response. Reflecting on the passage of time and the shifting perspectives it brings, one can't help but marvel at the journey of life. The writer's experience in the mountains, juxtaposed with encounters that touch upon age,

paints a poignant picture of acceptance and ily life has begun"! Again, in 1976, Loknayak J P Narayan, who was arrested during the emergency, campaigned relentlessly for the Janata Party. But soon thereafter, one of the first persons to call on the vanquished Mrs Gandhi was JP. After the meeting, when press reporters sought a Statement from him, JP said "I wish Mrs. Indira Gandhi, a brighter future than her bright past!" We have had leaders like Rajaji, Kamaraj and JP, who fought their political opponents with might, but without ever hating them, indulging in person-

see their likes again? V Jayaraman | Chennai

NEPAL'S CURRENCY NOTE ISSUE

Madam — India-Nepal relationship has had its highs and lows. Being a demographically close neighbour, the tiny Himalayan country has always been wary about India's might. Though India has been quick to respond to the devastating earthquakes that rock Nepal with frightening frequencies, Kathmandu was sore with the insen-— "Yes, the honeymoon is over and fam-sitive reporting of ground realities by some

al vilification or mudslinging. Will we ever

growth. The narrative resonates with the universal theme of ageing, gracefully navigating the transition from youth to seniority. Initially resistant to notions of age, the writer's attitude evolves, finding solace and even pride in the title of 'old'. The seismic impact of the pandemic serves as a sobering reminder of life's fragility, prompting a deeper appreciation for each pass-

Amidst reflections on personal experiences, there's a poignant call to action - a reminder of the responsibilities that accompany ageing. It's a testament to the profound impact one can have on others, echoing Frank Lloyd Wright's sentiment that life's beauty amplifies with age. In a world often fixated on youth, this narrative serves as a gentle reminder of the richness that comes with embracing the journey of ageing, with all its complexities and rewards

Khirabdi | Noida

television channels during a major earth-

The Madhesi agitation had further strained bilateral relations resulting in Nepal's outreach to China. Overall, New Delhi's inability to keep up the tempo of goodwill has irked Kathmandu. The recent decision of the Pushpa Kamal Dahal Government to depict the controversial India- Nepal-China tri-junction on its currency notes has raised eyebrows in Indian diplomatic circles. It is widely felt that apart from traditional issues, Kathmandu's unhappiness with New Delhi over a few crucial projects not taking off, or not being maintained after being inked, could be among the few triggers for its currency notes step. Both countries should display maturity to ensure that the negative influence of Beijing does not cast a shadow on mutual friendship. The currency note issue should be resolved soon after the elections for peace and stability in the region.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

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FIRST COLUMN

INDIA AND IRAN SIGN CHABAHAR PORT PACT

A significant step for connecting the Indian Ocean to Europe and beyond



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

India and Iran finally managed to put a long-term contract closure for one of the most stretched flagship projects in the bilateral relationship between the countries. India managed to sign a ten-year Longterm Contract for the development of Shahid Beheshti Port Terminal, Chabahar. It was no surprise that, despite being in the middle of elections, Union Minister of Ports Shipping and Waterways Sarabananda Sonowal visited Chabahar port to witness the signing of this crucial bilat-

Chabahar is a deep water port, located nearest to India, which is crucial for India's access to central Asia and vice versa for the States in the region into the Indian Ocean. The Chabahar project first came up as a crucial bilateral platform for Iran and India in 2003 when PM Vajpayee and Iranian counterpart Hassan Roubani, unveiled a transformational strategic cooperation blueprint between the two nations. Iran and India while getting closer on the bilateral, were focussed on securing Afghanistan and making it an important transit destination further into Central Asia. The Delhi Declaration of 2003, signed between Iran and India reiterates "The recent trilateral agreement between the Governments of India, Iran and Afghanistan to develop the Chahbahar route through Melak, Zaranj and Delaram would facilitate regional trade and transit, including to Afghanistan and Central Asia, contributing thus to enhanced regional eco-



However, post the Vajpayee Government, India's focus on the crucial infrastructure project shifted, partially impacted by domestic politics and a new world order. It wasn't until Prime Minister Modi became the prime minister that this integrated multi-modal Chabahar project found prominence. Hectic backroom negotiations, including the visit of the Afghani President to India in 2015, followed by PM Modi's visit to Iran in 2016, the signing of the trilateral agreement provided the much-needed impetus to the project. It also involved close coordination with the US (which wasn't too keen on India's enthusiasm, with Chabahar), but the independent access to Afghanistan served as the crucial lynchpin to unblock the nesitancy

In 2017 India, Iran and Afghanistan held the second ministerial-level trilateral meeting to get an update on the establishment of a transport and transit corridor in Chabahar. The Statement released after the trilateral Stated "Reiterating the importance of Chabahar as a hub for regional economic connectivity and their commitment to work towards this objective, the Ministers commended the joint efforts of the three countries in the recent successful transit of wheat from India to Afghanistan

It was nearly seven years later that India got complete access to the Chabahar port for handling the crucial operations. It is important to be reminded that China has made significant progress in Central Asia by aggressively pursuing its Belt and Road initiative. Iranian President led a high-level economic delegation to China in February this year, while reiterating that China continues to be its largest trading partner. India's relations with Central Asian countries and further into Russia have been stable for decades. China has been a new entrant in the region which has first managed to acquire critical infrastructure projects in India's immediate neighbourhoods like Pakistan, Sri Lanka etc and is now in weath-

Iran has traditionally been a key influencer in the West Asian and Central Asian regions, however, the ongoing war in Gaza has revived old fault lines in the region. The US which withdrew from Afghanistan used to be a key decision-maker in the region and is keen to.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

RBI fortifies the nation's economy with gold



SHIVAJI SARKAR

Taking a cue from prudent household savers, the Reserve Bank of India has significantly increased its gold reserves to 817 metric tonnes to hedge the ecconomy



n a strategic move reminiscent of Indian households safeguarding their wealth, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is fortifying the nation's economic resilience by actively acquiring gold reserves. This bold initiative mirrors the prudence of household savers, as the central bank positions itself to shield itself against potential economic turmoil and bolster the country's financial stability. The RBI now has accumulated gold

reserves of 817 tonnes.

This surge can be attributed to a combination of factors including escalating tensions in West Asia, Israel's assault on Palestine, the Russia -Ukraine war and persistent inflation, all of which have heightened the appeal of gold.

Central banks worldwide are actively accumulating gold to diversify reserves and reduce dependency on the US dollar. China, in particular, has been on a gold-buying spree for the 17th consecutive month, aiming to hedge against currency depreciation and geopolitical risks. The world is unofficially going back to the gold standards it abandoned in 1971. India is also hit by a continuous six-day fall in the stock market. It wipes out a significant investment. The loss is estimated at Rs 7 lakh crore.

The household savers, of course, got their savings dipped as unemployment and rising prices hit them. The RBI in a clarificatory note on May 9, mentions that "they are putting their savings into real eState and the central bank is not worried of the phenomenon".

The bank itself has stepped up gold purchases to "help diversify its foreign exchange reserves base amid US dollar volatility". The US inflation rate in February hit 3.2 per cent year over year. Since the Federal Reserve began raising rates in 2022, it has raised rates from 5.25 per cent to 5.5 per cent in July 2023. It's



THE WORLD GOLD COUNCIL GOLD PURCHASES TOUCHED JANUARY-MARCH. THE 16 TONNES

19 METRIC TONNES DURING THIS DWARFS THE WHOLE

holding further raises given the US

The price of gold has surged over 10 per cent since the start of the year, cementing its status as a preferred hedge against inflation and a sanctuary amid political and economic uncertainty. This significant uptick is largely due to considerable purchases by central banks and a rising demand for safe-haven assets.

Gold prices, in India, have been experiencing a significant surge in 2024, with a remarkable rally that has propelled them to an unprecedented all-time high of over Rs SAYS THAT RBI 73,000 per 10 gm two days before Akshay Tritiya, when customary gold purchases reach a peak. This surge represents an impressive increase of approximately 21.1 per cent within just one year. On the day of Akshaya Tritiya on May 10, it has slightly dipped to Rs 72,788. Over six months, domestic gold prices surged from Rs 54000 per 10 grams to a record high of Rs

One can realise that nothing can appreciate faster than gold and can't question the RBI's sagacity. OF GOLD IT

One dollar is at Rs 83.88. Rupee is expected to rise to Rs 82.50 in six months, a gain of about 1.1 per cent and in a year it could rise to Rs 82 - a gain of 1.7 per cent. It means the RBI dollar reserves would lose about 2 per cent value in a year. So, the RBI has decided to buy more gold than dollars. Its investment would be less at even Rs 73000 for 10 gm and gains over 20 per cent. That's an intelligent economy.

The RBÍ has increased gold pur-

gold value contributing to a \$3 billion rise in forex reserves to \$648.5 billion. RBI acquiring more gold in early 2024, aiming for diversification and inflation hedg-

The World Gold Council (WGC) says that RBI gold purchases touched 19 tonnes during January-March. This dwarfs the 16 tonnes of gold it bought in the whole of 2023.

In terms of countries with the highest gold reserves, the USA leads with 8,133 tonnes, followed by Germany, Italy, France and the Russian Federation with 3,366.49, 2,451.84, 2,436.01 and 2,271.16 lio to gold reserve, RBI says, can tonnes of gold, respectively, according to WGC.

The surge in central banks' gold acquisitions stemmed from the aftermath of the US imposition of sanctions on Russia. These sanctions, triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, included freezing Russian reserve dollars and imposing restrictions on crucial commodity trades such as crude oil. The global repercussions of these measures were profound, exposing vulnerabilities within Western financial institutions.

The option of investments in the stocks has become riskier.

In February, China divested an additional \$22.7 billion in U.S. Treasury securities, as per the latest Federal Reserve data, reducing its total holdings to \$775 billion. Despite this decrease, China retains its position as the secondlargest foreign holder of U.S. debt. China is reducing its dependence on the dollar, as per US Federal

According to ICICIdirect study,

The RBI wants to diversify its foreign exchange reserves and reduce dependence on the US dollar. Gold offers stability and isn't directly tied to the performance of any one currency. It can be especially valuable during times of economic uncertainty or fluctuations in the dollar's value.

Gold is considered as a hedge against inflation. When the value of currencies weakens due to inflation, gold tends to hold its value or even increase. It protects the purchasing power of India's foreign reserves.

The diversification of the portfoinspire confidence in the Indian economy from foreign investors. It signals a strong financial position and stability, potentially attracting more foreign invest-

While less common today, gold can still be used for international transactions. Holding a gold reserve allows India to settle debts with other countries if needed, or if those countries aren't willing to accept rupee.

The next few years can be times of turmoil and gold can be a stabilising factor in the international economy. It is particularly so as the IT sector, industry, markets are in a destabilised condition and would take time to calm. At such volatile times gold is likely to be more in demand than paper currencies. The RBI has resorted to the right move and lead the India economy, which has been striving to become one of the major world

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

Reflections of an oncologist navigating imperfections in cancer care

Doctors aren't infallible gods but compassionate humans dedicated to easing human suffering, even in the face of formidable medical challenges

A san Oncologist, my days are filled with facing the most dreaded and life-threatening cancers head-on, armed with an arsenal of anti-cancer treatments that range from mild to equally dreadful. But amidst the battle against this relentless disease, I've come to understand that medical science is far from perfect.

Every time I sit down with a patient and their family to discuss treatment options, I treatment, but I also dedicate ample time to explaining its imperfections and the assosometimes be massive, share of failures and I recogimpacting not only the nise that my clinical judg-



PRASHANT MEHTA

patient's life but also their quality of life.

These discussions are rarely brief; on average, I find myself engaging with 2 to 8 embark on a delicate balancing act. Yes, I outline the that everyone understands potential benefits of the the complexities involved. And in these conversations, I make it a point to acknowledge that success is not guarciated risks - risks that can anteed. I've had my fair

ments aren't infallible. In the realm of oncology, the weight of responsibility is immense. The human toll of the disease, coupled with the emotional turmoil experienced by families, weighs heavily on me every single day. There are moments when the sheer gravity of it all threatens to overwhelm me, but I gather my strength, reminding myself of the dignity, composure and compassion required to navigate through these turbulent

Recently, I stumbled upon an opinion piece penned by Mr. CY Gopinath, recounting the journey of a patient grappling with suspected pancreatic cancer. The patient felt as though his oncologist was pushing a share of diagnostic and ther-

cancer diagnosis onto him. Such situations are not uncommon, especially when dealing with cancers that are notoriously difficult to biopsy. Misdiagnoses and the fear of missing a fatal diagnosis loom large in the minds of oncologists.

The widening trust gap between patients and healthcare providers is a cause for concern. Patients and their families may perceive our actions and recommendations in various ways, sometimes attributing them to ulterior motives. But the reality is often far more nuanced than it appears. Having worked extensively

apeutic errors. These errors stem from the inherent imperfections of medicine and the challenges of naviin both private and Government healthcare setgating a complex healthcare

landscape. In the modern era, doctors tings, I've witnessed my fair are acutely aware of the trust



deficit that exists between us and our patients. The notion of a 'God complex' is a myth; instead, we recognise our limitations and strive to bridge the gap through open communication and trans-

aren't panaceas, alternative treatments aren't always the answer either. It's imperative to base our decisions on evidence-backed practices rather than succumbing to anecdotal allure.

In the realm of healthcare, there's no one-size-fits-all solution. Each patient's journey is unique, shaped by their individual preferences and circumstances. As doctors, we must personalise our approach, empowering patients to be active participants in their healing process.

t's crucial to foster an environment where patients feel empowered to question, learn and seek second opinions. After all, informed decision-making is the cor-

While drugs and surgeries nerstone of effective healthcare delivery. In conclusion, amidst the cacophony of controversy and misinformation, the voice of expertise must prevail. Medicine is a science guided by evidence, not conjecture. Despite the challenges and uncertainties that lie ahead, I remain steadfast in my commitment to serve, echoing the words of my mentor: "Someone has to do this work and you've been chosen. Do it well." -The writer is a s Senior

Consultant and Program Director (Lymphoid Neoplasms and Cellular therapy) Department of Medical Oncology Amrita Institute of Medical sciences, Faridabad. Views are personal.

Rupee settles 4 paise lower at 83.50 against US dollar

he rupee stayed range-bound and settled 4 paise lower at 83.50 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, weighed down by unabated foreign fund outflows amid investors' weak appetite for riskier assets. However, a firm trend in domestic equities supported the local unit and restricted its losses, forex traders said. The rupee remains under pressure due to ongoing elections and foreign fund outflows, and the

same shall subside once the results are out, they added. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit traded in a narrow range. It opened at 83.45 and touched an intraday high of 83.44 and a low of 83.50. The domestic unit finally settled for the day at 83.50 (provisional), down 4 paise from its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee had settled at 83.46 against the US dollar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 104.40, higher by 0.06 per cent.

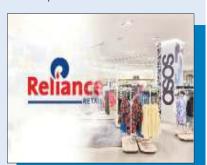


Reliance Retail to sell UK's

ASOS apparels in India

Reliance Retail on Thursday said it has entered into a partnership to sell British
online retailer ASOS' products in India. "Under a long-term licensing agreement,
Reliance Retail will be the exclusive retail partner for ASOS across all online and
offline channels in India." the firm said in a statement ASOS' products ester to young offline channels in India," the firm said in a statement. ASOS' products cater to young adults. "Reliance Retail will introduce ASOS' curated portfolio of fashion-led own brand

labels to the Indian market through a multi-channel presence for ASOS and a diverse array of retail formats, including exclusive brand stores, multi-brand store expressions, and digital commerce platforms," the statement said. The agreement is ASOS' first country-wide exclusive retail partnership. The deal with ASOS is the latest in a string of partnerships Reliance Retail has signed with international brands including Amercian jewellery seller Tiffany & Co and French luxury brand Balenciaga



JK Paper Q4 net profit slips 2.44 % to Rs 276.6 cr

Exports may rise 12-15% to cross

K Paper Ltd on Thursday reported a 2.44 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 276.6 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2024, impacted by higher raw material cost and lower realisation across categories. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 283.52 crore a year ago, JK Paper said in a regulatory filing. Its consolidated revenue from operations in the quarter under review stood at Rs 1.804.87 crore against Rs 1.806.99 crore in the year-ago period, it

added. The total expenses in the fourth quarter were higher at Rs 1,457.63 crore compared to Rs 1,379.42 crore in the same period of the preceding fiscal. The board of directors has recommended a final dividend of Rs 5 per share for the year ended March 2024. This is in addition to the interim dividend of Rs 3.5 per equity share declared and paid during the said financial year, the filing said. For the fiscal ended March 2024, its consolidated net profit was Rs 1,133.2 crore compared to Rs 1,208.22 crore in the



'Can't direct CBI to file FIR'

Special Court to MMTC on coal import scam

PNS NEW DELHI

A special court has dismissed a plea by the Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation of India (MMTC) seeking the registration of an FIR by the CBI in connection with alleged corruption in the import of coal from an Australian company at inflated rates in 2009, officials said Thursday.

The PSU had sought directions to the CBI to register an FIR in matter which is now being investigated by the central probe agency by registering a preliminary enquiry.

A preliminary enquiry is the first step by the agency to ascertain if there is prima facie enough material in the allegations to warrant a full-fledged investigation through an FIR or a regular case, they said.

The plea was dismissed by the special court which said it does not have power to direct the CBI to register an FIR and investigate the case.

Citing orders of the Supreme Court and high courts, the special court said the powers to issue directions to the CBI to register an FIR lie with the Supreme Court and high



The public sector undertaking had approached the special court with a plea it had submitted two complaints with the CBI -- September 2, 2022 dated November 23, 2022 -seeking the registration of the FIR in the matter as the complaints were disclosing the commission of the cognisable offences, but no action was taken by CBI.

The central probe agency had registered a preliminary enquiry last year.

The case pertains to a longterm agreement signed between MMTC and Anglo American Metallurgical Coal Pty. Ltd on March 7, 2007 for the purchase of freshly-mined and washed Citing orders of the Supreme Court and high courts, the special court said the powers to issue directions to the CB to register an FIR lie with the Supreme Court and high courts only.

It is alleged MMTC officials proposed and sanctioned USD 300 per metric tonne rate for the fifth delivery period between July 01, 2008 to July 30, 2009 despite being fully aware that the price of cooking coal had drastically fallen in the wake of Lehman Brothers collapse, and

purchasing coal at USD 300 PMT would cause a huge loss, they said. The complaint said that on November 20, 2008, the prices of coal were low and the Sale Purchase Committee of Directors should have satisfied itself for agreeing to a price of coal at USD 300 PMT as opposed to price which was USD 96.40 PMT for the previous delivery period."It is alleged that the facts of the case constituted a clear case of conspiracy i.e. official of the complainant with the official of the Anglo Coal in order to gain pecuniary advantage to Anglo Coal by abusing their positions and to defraud the exchequer of this country," the MMTC told the



Biocon net profit falls 57% to Rs 136 cr: revenue at Rs 3,966 crore

PNS NEW DELHI

Biotech firm Biocon on Thursday reported a 57 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to Rs 136 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2024 on account of higher expenses. The company posted a net profit of Rs 313 crore in the January-March quarter of the last fiscal.Total revenue rose marginally to Rs 3,966 crore in the fourth quarter compared with Rs 3,929 crore in the year-ago period, Biocon said in a statement.

The company said its total expenses rose to Rs 3,635 crore in the fourth quarter from Rs 3,389 crore in the same period of FY23.

For the year ended on March 31, 2024, the company said its consolidated net profit rose to Rs 1,022 crore as against Rs 463 crore a year

the session progressed. Subsequently, it witnessed

sharp fluctuations on both

sides before settling near the

day's peak," said Ajit Mishra
– SVP, Research, Religare



PNS NEW DELHI

The country's merchandise exports are expected to increase about USD 60-70 billion to USD 500 billion by the end of FY25 on account of gradual improvement in glob-al demand, apex exporters' body FIEO said on Thursday.

In 2023-24, exports dipped over 3 per cent to USD 437.1 billion.Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President Ashwini Kumar also said the country's services exports are also likely to reach USD 390-400 billion this fiscal.

"We are looking for merchandise exports between USD 500-510 billion in 2024-25. In the services, we expect exports to be around USD 390-400 billion for the current fiscal," Kumar told reporters here.

He said traditional markets like the US and Europe will help boost India's exports.

Sectors such as electronics, electricals, engineering, and pharma will play a key role in boosting shipments.

However, the new President said they are concerned as labour-intensive sectors like knitted and woven garments, footwear, gem and jewellery are doing good.

In the footwear sector, while

global imports grew at a CAGR and abnormal increase in sea of 5 per cent, India's exports as well as air freight," he added. contracted.

"The focus on skilling is still lacking as per piece production in many segments is much less as compared to Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Cambodia," he said.

He suggested that the government address certain issues such as credit flow, interest subsidy and set up e-commerce hubs in the country to provide a cushion to the exporting community.

The share of export credit in the net bank credit is extremely low and not commensurate with the share of India's exports in the GDP, which is over 20 per cent, he said.

The demand for the credit has gone up with rising inflation, high commodity prices

With the longer voyage time, on account of diversion of cargo through The Cape of Good Hope, coupled with slow offtake from the shelves, the buyers are also taking longer time to remit export proceeds necessitating higher credit for a longer period.

"This requires additional flow at most competitive rates," he said, adding, "We are proposing to create an Export Development Fund to assist exporters, in undertaking export promotional activities"

For this, a budgetary support equivalent to 1 per cent of preceding year's export in Indian rupée can be made available every year through the budget grant to the depart-

Sensex jumps 676 pts, Nifty closes above 22,400

Equity benchmark indices ven by strong global trends Sensex and Nifty shot up that pointed to lower-thannearly 1 per cent on expected US consumer inflain HDFC Bank and Infosys and a rally in the US and Asian markets.

In a highly volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 676.69 points or 0.93 per cent to settle at 73,663.72. During the day, it hit a high of 73,749.47 and a low of 72,529.97.

The NSE Nifty surged 203.30 points or 0.92 per cent to 22,403.85.

"The domestic market experienced a late surge, drileast two interest rate cuts in 2024," Geojit Financial Services Head of Research Vinod Nair said.

Among the Sensex components, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, Titan, Infosys, JSW Steel, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC Bank, Larsen Toubro and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the major gainers. Maruti, State Bank of India,



Power Grid, Tata Motors and IndusInd Bank were the lag-

volatility during trading hours but managed to gain nearly

continuation of its recovery trend. Positive global cues "The market exhibited led to a gap-up opening in the Nifty; however, the initial gains diminished quickly as

Broking Ltd. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 1.07 per cent and smallcap index rallied 0.85 per cent.

Among the indices, capital goods jumped 2.05 per cent, followed by industrials (1.99 per cent), teck (1.66 per cent), realty (1.59 per cent), IT (1.55 per cent), telecommunication (0.99 per cent) and healthcare (0.70 per cent).

Share of non-fossil fuel to grow to 50% in domestic energy generation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government aims to sil fuel to 50 per cent in the country's total installed electricity generation capacity by 2030, MNRE Secretary Bhupinder Singh Bhalla has

The share of non-fossil fuelbased capacity in India's installed energy generation capacity is around 42 per cent at present, the official said in a address at the World Hydrogen Summit 2024 in



Rotterdam, Netherlands, on May 15, 2024, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy said in a statement.

'Approximately 43 per cent of India's current installed electricity capacity is from non-fossil-fuel sources, with projections indicating a rise to

50 per cent by 2030," he said. As per official figures, there was a 10.79 per cent rise in (renewable energy sources) addition at 190.57 gigawatt (GW) in 2023-24 over 172.01 GW in 2022-23. On the progress being made towards The National Green Hydrogen Mission, Bhalla said, "The government has made substantial progress in this regard, having awarded tenders for incentives to support green hydrogen production of a total of 412,000 tonnes per annum.

Silver surges Rs 1,800 to hit alltime high; gold jumps Rs 650

Silver soared by Rs 1,800 to hit a fresh record high of Rs 88,000 per kg on Thursday, while gold prices jumped Rs 650 to Rs 74,050 per 10 grams in line with strong global

According to HDFC Securities, rising for the second straight session, silver prices surged Rs 1,800 to hit its lifein Delhi. It had closed at Rs 86,900 per kg in the previous ses-

> the precious metal price jumped from Rs 650 to Rs 74,050 per 10 grams. In the previous session, it had closed at Rs

Meanwhile,

73,400 per 10 grams. "Bullion rose on Thursday as yesterday's lower US inflation figures raised the prospect of September. In April, the underlying US inflation rate fell for the first time in six months.

"Following the data release, the US dollar index slipped to a fifth-week low, and US Treasury yields declined, which is also positive for the precious metal," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst, Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,386 per ounce, up by USD 21 from the previ-

Vedanta plans to raise up to Rs 8,500 cr via issuance of securities

PNS NEW DELHI

one per cent, indicating a

Mining billionaire Anil Agarwal-led Vedanta Ltd on Thursday said its board has approved raising up to Rs 8,500 crore through issuance of securities. The company will look at raising funds via instruments like American depository receipts, global depository receipts and foreign currency convertible bonds.

Copper International VCI

Company Ltd (VCI) to set up However, this is subject to a continuous cast copper rod regulatory approvals. The plant in Saudi Arabia with a board also gave its go-ahead capacity of 125 kilo tonnes per for investment in Vedanta



annum. Vedanta Copper International VCI Company 4,089 crore.

Ltd was incorporated last year to explore growth opportunities in new geographies. "... VCI is in the process of establishing a state-of-the-art copper rod manufacturing facility... which will enable the company to explore more growth opportunities in new geographies. Post the investment, VCI shall become a direct wholly owned subsidiary of the company," Vedanta said. The board has also given its goahead to the first interim dividend of Rs 11 per share for 2024-25, amounting to Rs

Muted loan growth a 'concern', aim for a 10-12% jump: LICHF

PNS MUMBAI

LIC Housing Finance (LICHF's) chief executive T Adhikari on Thursday said a muted loan growth of 4 per cent is a matter of concern for the lender and it will aim to accelerate it to 10-12 per cent in this financial year.

The home finance company will also look at upping its play in the affordable housing segnew fiscal, he said, adding that its share of the overall book will double in three

years. "The muted loan growth of 4 per cent is a matter of concern, but I am confident of double-digit growth in FY25," Adhikari told reporters a day after the company announced its March quarter results showing a nearly 8 per cent dip in prof-

When prodded further, he said the loan book will grow in lower-double digits, between 10-12 per cent, and added that the overall quan-

tum of disbursements should touch Rs 75,000 crore in FY25 from the Rs 50,000 crore in

In the fiscal year gone by, he said an organizational restructuring exercise kept the overall activity depressed in the first half of the fiscal, while activity started off from the third quarter and normal-

ized in the fourth quarter which showed a 15 per cent growth on-year. On the

plans, he said the company has implemented a plan of opening up offices in tier-III centres,

affordable

housing

putting the people and systems, and added that they plan to disburse Rs 6,000 crore of such loans in FY25. When asked whether asset

quality is a challenge in such loans, Adhikari said the company's experience suggests that a larger quantum of nonperforming assets come from the high-ticket loans while the low-ticket ones have better repayment record.

Odisha FPOs tap global markets with export of mangoes these FPOs realised 20-30

PNS NEW DELHI

In a significant boost to farm exports from Odisha, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in the state have marked their foray into the global markets with the first commercial shipment of fresh mangoes and vegeta-

This feat was made possible through a strategic collaboration between the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), the state Directorate of Horticulture

technical support unit for the 'Promotion and Stabilisation Farmer Producer Organisations (PSFPO)' pro-

ject.On May 15, as much as 0.75 tonne of fresh vegetables were exported to Dubai from the Biju Patnaik International Airport, Bhubaneshwar. This included 0.5 MT supplied by the Madanamohana Farmers Producer Cooperative Society Ltd, an FPO from Dhenkanal district, a statement said.

Besides, 1.22 tonne of pre-Amrapali and Dussehri variety mangoes shipped to Italy over the last



from the same FPO were

couple of days, it said. Farmers associated with markets as compared to domestic sales, it added. Lauding the efforts, Sitakanata Mandal, APEDA's

Regional Head, said, "We wanted to facilitate exports of fresh produce this season. Our partnership with Palladium made this possible as they identified and connected the FPOs with exporters.""The work done by Palladium in linking Odisha's FPOs with global markets is praiseworthy," Mandal added.

per cent higher prices for Director of Palladium, said their produce in the export with over 800 FPOs, Odisha has immense potential to export fresh farm produce worldwide.

The market linkages created with export supply chains will boost farmer incomes and create sustainable business opportunities for the state's FPOs, he stated.

"We aim to provide more such global markets con-nected to FPOs in remote areas and help them adopt efficient quality control systems to scale up their operations," Behera said.

what's brewing?

'Harsh comments have made our families extremely sad'

SHIKHA DUGGAL

arlier this month, Abdu Rozik amazed everyone when he announced on Instagram that he would marry in July 2024. He later stated that ladylove's name is Amira and that they first met at an eatery in Dubai, where they fell in love.

But now, Abdu Rozik has shared an official statement in response to people who mocked him for getting engaged. The Bigg Boss 15 star resorted to Instagram and posted a video in which he urged haters to be "kind." Abdu also wrote a lengthy post criticising "nasty" comments. He claimed that they are criticising his desire to marry solely because he is little!

The Pioneer wasted no time in calling the Tajikistani singer, who told us exclusively, "I have always wanted to marry a woman I love, and this is like a dream come true. For both me and Amira, this is a very unique occasion because we didn't expect things to happen so quickly." All preparations have begun. Abdu is quite excited since he has been seeking a beautiful ring. He gave a little sneak peek at his social media since he couldn't contain his excitement. Their families are involved in helping them prepare for this wonderful occasion. Because Amira is an Emirati, he

wants the wedding to be held in accordance with Arab traditions. They intend to add the traditional Tajikistan dance! "All celebrities suffer the same pressure (privacy issues), but we will find a way to make the event more enjoyable for every-one, perhaps by going LIVE." He goes on to tell us, "I am

very excited, but I am also very nervous. It is the most important decision I have ever made, and I hope everything works out for us. I want to make it extremely special for Amira. However, the many harsh com-

ments on social media have made both myself and Amira, as well as our families, very sad."

They are simply looking forward to being with all of their loved ones and proving that being different does not limit his life. More

Blake Lively and Justin Baldoni's It Ends With Us will release on August 9

Baldoni. Following the massive intrigue of its first look, get ready to immerse yourself in this romantic drama with the first trailer of the film.

Set for a theatrical release in India on 9th August 2024, It Ends With Us, the first Colleen Hoover novel adapted for the big screen, tells the compelling story of Lily Bloom (Blake Lively), a woman who overcomes a traumatic childhood to embark on a new life in Boston and chase a lifelong dream of opening her own business. A chance meeting with charming neurosurgeon Ryle Kincaid (Justin Baldoni) sparks an intense connection, but as the

olleen Hoover's bestselling novel, It Ends With Us, is getting a bigscreen adaptation featuring the dynamic pair - Blake Lively and Justin two fall deeply in love, Lily begins to see sides of Ryle that remind her of her parents' relationship. When Lily's first love, Atlas Corrigan (Brandon Sklenar), suddenly reenters her life, her relationship with Ryle is upended, and Lily realises she must learn to rely on her own strength to make an impossible choice

Directed by Justin Baldoni, the film stars Blake Lively, Justin Baldoni, Jenny Slate, Hasan Minhaj, Amy Morton and Brandon Sklenar.

Sony Pictures Entertainment India will exclusively release It Ends With Us in Indian cinemas on 9th August 2024.





Daredevil: Born Again completes shooting, coming to Disney+ in March 2025

aredevil: Born Again is coming to Disney+ in March 2025! Despite several production delays in 2023, filming is complete, and Charlie Cox personally revealed that production has recently concluded. Smooth sailing is predicted in post-production, and guess what? Plus, there's a nice new logo!

Daredevil: Born Again began filming in New York City in February 2023, but was halted due to the WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes the same year. During that time, Marvel Studios quickly implemented the necessary improvements. After evaluating the film, Kevin Feige made decisions, bidding farewell to head writers Chris Ord and Matt Corman, as well as the remaining directors, and destroying all previously recorded footage, resulting in a full overhaul. But do not be afraid! Born Again resumed in January 2024 with a new cast, including Dario Scardapane as showrunner and Justin Benson and Aaron Moorhead as directors.

As part of the overhaul, previous Netflix and Marvel series such as Daredevil, Jessica Jones, The Punisher, Luke Cage, Iron Fist, and The Defenders have been officially integrated into the Marvel Cinematic Universe's sacred timeline, with Born Again picking up directly from the events of Daredevil.

The official season of 'pyaar ka second round' begins with *Ishq* Vishk Rebound

Ever heard of ghosting, bread-crumbing, benching, and caspering? No? Well, if not, get ready to dive into the world of modern love with a twist of the second round in this pyaar with *Ishq Vishk Rebound*. Their recent poster announcement introducing the charming cast— Rohit Saraf, Pashmina Roshan, Jibraan Khan, and Naila Grrewal, created quite a stir among the audiences, eager to see more glimpses of their chemistry in the

Holding the fans no longer, the makers today dropped an intriguing teaser, transporting everyone back to their college days with mushy romances, true friendships, betrayal, and guaranteed entertainment! So, the question is: will you hold on, or move on? Because this is not your regular love story.

Tips Films presents Ishq Vishk Rebound, produced by Ramesh Taurani and Jaya Taurani, directed by Nipun Avinash Dharmadhikari, in theaters



The *Scam*

series strikes again with Scam 2010 - The Subrata Roy Saga

A pplause Entertainment, the creative force behind the globally lauded Scam series, proudly announces the third chapter of their ground- With approx. 25,000 crore rupees still lying unclaimed breaking franchise. Building upon the success of Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story and Scam 2003: The Telgi Story, the newest installment will delve into the depths of one of India's most storied financial scandals, Scam 2010 - The Subrata Roy Saga. Based on the book – Sahara: The Untold Story by Tamal Bandyopadhyay, the series will be produced by Applause Entertainment in association with Studio Next and helmed by Hansal Mehta.

Scam 2010 is the dust-to-diamonds story of mav-

erick businessman Subrata Roy. In the early 2000s, the glamourous Roy was caught in a whirlwind of

with government authorities, the repercussions of the scam continue to reverberate even today.

From the gripping portrayal of Harshad Mehta's meteoric rise and fall in the stock market to the vivid depiction of Abdul Karim Telgi's counterfeit empire, the *Scam* franchise sheds light on the infamous tales of financial frauds in India. Scam 2010 - The Subrata Roy Saga will be exclusively available on Sony LIV.

Hansal Mehta, showrunner and director, "Scam is not just a franchise for me. It is a chronicle of our times. I'm thrilled to collaborate again with Applause and Sony LIV to bring this larger-than-life story alive."

ARCHIE





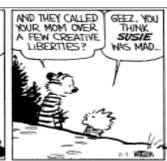




CALVIN AND HOBBES BOY, YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN THE SPARKS FLY WHEN I GAVE MY HALF OF THE







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Pockets full

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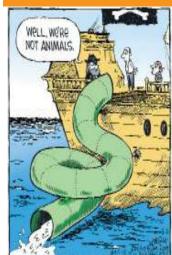
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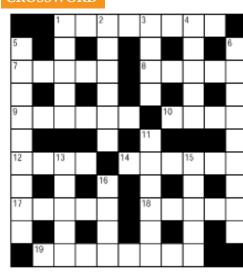
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CROSSWORD



- ACROSS Large stone buildings built in ancient Egypt as tombs
- Steel pins knocked into wood 8 Call in on
- 10 A song sung by one person
- 12 Have a lie down
- 14 Thin cord for tying parcels 17 Fabric
- 18 Defrosts

 Indicate direction with your finger

2 Moscow is in this country

DOWN

- 19 So smooth it is difficult to
- get hold of



3 Shift

5 Wrong

13 Ruin

16 Large boat

6 Most powerful

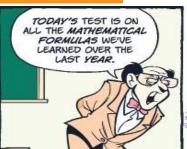
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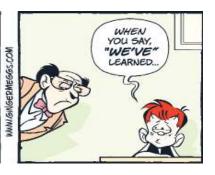
4 A type of dance club

GINGER MEGGS





BUSHMILLER



Vilayawaaa

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Friday May 17, 2024

'As a solo traveller, lencountered diving instructors. Shared interests drew us

eve-teasing in Kerala' to grad a big join in kerala' to grad a big

Hyderabadi content creator Aastha Maheshwari, who is also a passionate explorer, takes *The Pioneer* through her travel diaries this week exclusively for our **Travelogue** segment.



SUBODHINI PUROHIT

astha Maheshwari, a passionate explorer and content creator from Hyderabad, travels into the depths of both international and national landscapes, not only as an experienced traveller but also as an avid scuba diver, deciphering the mysteries of the undersea world.

"In the rhythm of life, travelling is like a relaxing tune; each voyage provides the me with fresh experiences and is composed of emotions," she says. "It unleashes my creativity and frees my soul. I've been known to hike 20 kilometers just to see the perfect sunset—it's just who I am."

Exploring off-beat places and adventure activities brings out the adventurous and brave side in humans, and amidst the hustle of life, one finds simplicity and allure in the surroundings, offering unforgettable moments. She continues to share, "I recently went on solo journeys to Thailand and Vizag. In Thailand, I explored the breathtaking beauty of Koh Tao, indulging in memorable diving experiences. Given that it was my second visit to Thailand, I aimed to delve deeper into Bangkok's rich culture. In Vizag, my primary goal was to immerse myself in the coastal charm, spending a couple of tranquil days in the quaint town of Bheemli."

The limits of any part of existence blur when one meets the right tribe and people with comparable interests. For example, she remembers one instance when, "In my opinion, as long as one maintains warmth and openness, obstacles such as language, ethnicity, and nationality lose their meaning. During my travels, I spoke with numerous Germans who had relocated to an island. They were not only content creators, but also

diving instructors. Shared interests drew us together, transcending societal divides. Through these ties, one can easily learn about the history and culture of others by joining a tribe with comparable interests."

A place and its beauty cannot be explored in a few days, and engaging with locals takes time. "I repeat places numerous times since properly exploring them requires more than just one visit.

in a few days, and engaging with locals takes time. "I repeat places numerous times since properly exploring them requires more than just one visit. During lockdown, I spent six months in Goa, immersed in its essence. I spent 35 days in Ladakh and two months in Manali, immersing myself in the local lifestyle. In a little town, I met old women who supported themselves by knitting. Four to five days barely scratch the surface of these places—I like to take my time and enjoy every minute, embracing leisurely travel," she explained.

Culinary is the gateway to many cultures, and India has abundantly experimented with flavours and tastes from all over the world, including Aastha's favourite Portuguese dessert, 'Seeradura', which she tried in Goa!

Then, obstacles while travelling are also unavoidable, and as a solitary woman traveller, concerns about safety arise, and women travellers frequently bring out the contrasting reality of locations. For women solo travelers, safety is always a companion. She describes, "As a solitary traveller, I encountered eve-teasing in Kerala, which served as a vivid reminder of the safety risks associated with travelling in India. Despite Kerala's reputation for safety, I did not feel safe there. In contrast, in Kargil, which is known for its less calm climate, I felt comfortable. This event demonstrated the need for alertness and attentiveness in solo travel, underscoring the crucial need to remain aware of one's surroundings."

The quick pace of life and modern-day jobs frequently result in burnout and neglect of travel. This developing environment of modern times necessitates holiday preparation, and as remote work becomes more common, the importance of experiencing new places increases, she explains. "As a content producer and freelancer, I can work from anywhere, blurring the line between the workplace and vacation. I honestly don't recall my last proper trip. Even throughout my two-month stay in Varkala, where I learned to surf, my laptop remained by my side while business continued. This is how I try to balance work and life. However, there are days when I simply don't feel like writing or creating content."

The trip to Vizag and Ladakh, two diverse yet enchanting destinations, opened her eyes to the remarkable compassion and friendliness of strangers, as she recalls, "Ladakh truly captivated the spirit; I was anxious to return



despite its commercialisation and the extended onset of altitude sickness. Spending only five to six days there felt insufficient; its attraction necessitated a longer visit. The friend-liness of the folks I met was unexpected and uplifting. While trudging towards a monastery with my luggage, a monk offered me a ride in his mini-truck, demonstrating true hospitality. In Vizag, a cab driver went above and beyond to ensure my safety by avoiding drunken areas and dropping me out in a safe location." Her trip as a solo traveller is a dance between planned preparations and unplanned adventures. "As a lone traveller, spontaneity guides me, but I prefer to have arrangements in place, particularly for overseas journeys in terms of hotels, expenses, and currency conversion. However, I dislike fixed itineraries and prefer to depart from them whenever possible. During my recent trip to Thailand, there were days when all I wanted was a calm afternoon snooze, which is completely fine. Skipping some tourist attractions is also acceptable; what truly matters is

living in the current moment and enjoying it to the fullest."
Additionally, "For women solo travellers, menstruation can add an added degree of complication to their adventures, but it doesn't have to be a barrier, because travel forces individuals to stretch their boundaries and embrace the new and challenging surroundings. Travelling empowers me in ways I never expected. I had no idea how capable I was until I went on solo adventures. I distinctly recall an 18-hour bus ride to Rishikesh while menstruating in sub-zero temperatures in December. I didn't think I'd be able to pass that test of resilience, but I did. Travel challenges you to your boundaries, providing you with stories to tell and unforgettable experiences and lessons to treasure and learn from."

'I have told directors & production houses to allow me chance to play anything out-of-the-box'



TEJAL SINHA

ove is the greatest gift that one generation can leave to another. While the love and learning that we get from parents is incomparable, so is it with grandparents too. Grandparents can be an incredibly valuable resource. Simply being close to them reassures one a lot about change and continuity—what has come before and what will come

In an era when youth, particularly those living in cities, are becoming increasingly disconnected from their roots, *Dil Dosti Dilemma*, streaming on Prime Video, tells a story about coming of age and making amends with grandparents. But does it prove to be an important lesson for youngsters to learn? Well, certainly not!

Because our guest for the day, Shishir Sharma, a much-celebrated actor not only in television but also in movies with his small yet remarkable stints like Fanaa, Dangal, Chichhore, Uri: The Surgical Strike, Gaslight, and many more, who palsy the character of Asmara's Nana (maternal grandfather), feels that it is a very important lesson to learn for all of us and just not the youngsters.

"I think the older generations have also learned from these youngsters to listen to them and see their POV as well," begins the *Raazi* star. "It's not just about hopping on our POV all the time. It's not imposing our rigidity on them. We need to be more flexible in our thoughts, and her mother taking that stand was so important. It was impulsive but also very right in terms of values that she has to learn; just not being on a readily available road is not going to give you everything in life. Coming to your grandparents' house, staying in their house, learning in their house, and the value system in their

house, which Tanvi Ji teaches and tells her, I didn't have any such interaction with her in the show, but she learns that, she understands that, and she doesn't mind going into that world with her friends with that value system and forgetting those values that she was imbibing previously. She comes to a different road altogether."

As he further went on to discuss much in detail on the theme, he also enunciated us through one of the scenes where Asmara apologises to her Nanni, Akhtar Begum, and that's the value system that she learns.

And for such a value system to be imbibed, he also highlights that there needs to be two-way communication. "There has to be a dialogue from both sides, and none can keep quiet. You cannot keep quiet and be like you tell us what to do. You need to tell us what you think you should be doing."

To tell us what you think you should be doing."
The *Tanu Weds Manu Returns* actor knew that to make his character feel realistic, he had to certainly play it as real as possible."I didn't want to make it look like a grandpa, which is fictitious, and people would think that this guy is just putting it on," says the *Kurbaan* actor. "I wanted to be as real as possible as a grandfather, not someone who is always giving advice but also playful at times. For example, there was a scene where I said *Tumne kabhi sooraj dekha hai* (Have you ever seen the sun?), which means playfulness. It was a situation that could have gotten out of hand."

As senior actors, there's always a notion that the scenes on the sets will be quite strict and serious. But that wasn't the case here. He revealed that he and Tanvi Azmi were all fun off-camera. "We wanted the sets to be as vibrant as possible. The director also enjoyed the banter. When you are on the sets, you want to be with everyone."

While there's quite a talk on the age factor and typecast, the *Disco Raja* actor highlights, "You don't

has made his own mark in the entertainment industry with his persona on and off-screen, gets candid with *The Pioneer*, discussing the central theme of his just released project *Dil Dosti Dilemma*, playing grandpa on-screen, the age factor in the industry, and more.

get roles because you are so and so. The same thing has happened with me because of my persona. People didn't think that I'd be able to play a lighthearted or jovial person on set. This particular show proves it. I have told directors and production houses to give me a chance. I am an actor, and if I can take a gun and shoot someone on-screen, then I can also make people laugh, so why don't you just give me a chance? I wouldn't say I am typecast just because I played two army officers, one from the Indian army and one from the Pakistani army. That doesn't mean I am typecast. They are two different perspectives, individuals, and thoughts."

On a concluding note, he further goes on to say, "People should understand that we are actors and we need to be given that chance. Just because one looks like that and because there's a kind of persona, that doesn't matter. One should be given the opportunity to play something different for them to understand. People need to understand we are capable and can do things out of the box."



Weakness and fatigue in hot weather? Don't confuse irregular heartbeat with a heat stroke!

eakness and fatigue are very nonspecific symptoms, they can occur for various reasons, including thyroid disease, anemia, post-viral syndrome, vitamin D, and vitamin B12 deficiency. But these can be considered a warning sign of heat exhaustion or heat stroke

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are two important events that may happen in summer because of a failure of control over the cooling sweating mechanism. Due to this mechanism, our body is unable to cool down.

our body is unable to cool down.

Individuals aged 50 and above are at a higher risk of developing problems in the summer when exposed to temperatures of 38.7 degrees Celsius and humidity levels exceeding 70 percent. An irregular heartbeat is something related to the rhythm disturbances of the heart and is quite different

from a heat stroke.

Palpitations are just a manifestation of heat stroke; they can happen as part of the presentation of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, but common symptoms include disorientation, confusion, excessive sweating, fatigue, dizziness, palpitations, cold, moist skin, headaches, muscle spasms, and swelling in the legs.

Difference between an irregular heartbeat and a heat stroke:

An irregular heartbeat, also known as cardiac arrhythmia, is a condition in which the heart beats abnormally quickly, or slowly. Numerous factors, including stress, anxiety, coffee intake, underlying heart problems, cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, and hereditary disorders, are common causes of an irregular heartbeat.

Even though an arrhythmia usually is asymptomatic, during a diagnosis, symptoms including chest pains, fluttering in the chest, giddiness, skipping beats, shortness of breath, and excessive perspiration may be taken into consideration. There is a difference between an irregular heartbeat and a heat stroke, but it is important to note that an irregular heartbeat can also happen during hot weather

ing hot weather.

According to a study conducted in 2020 by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, since

1950, the average annual temperature in India has increased significantly by 0.15 degrees Celsius every decade. Between 1951 and 2015, there has also been a rise in the number of warm days and nights, at roughly seven and three days each decade,

respectively.

The most serious of all heat-related conditions is heat stroke, which manifests as impaired brain function (stroke) as a result of excessive body heat.

Cardiac patients are more predisposed to heat stroke and exhaustion. For example, patients with hypertension who are dependent on blood pressure-control medications should be more careful. Such patients can experience arrhythmia or palpitations due to the depletion of electrolytes and water caused by interference with cooling mechanisms during hot weather. Therefore, it is important to be cautious about common summer issues such as heat stroke or exhaustion if you experience these symptoms

Precaution and prevention of heat stroke and exhaustion require:

- Drinking plenty of hydrating fluids
- Avoiding sun exposure, especially during the hottest part of the day,
- Having a healthy diet
- Applying sunscreen
- Avoiding strenuous activities in the peak
- Easing into outdoor activities gradually
- Wearing a breathable hat that shields your
- head from the sun but allows heat to escape.

 Rehydration is the key strategy for man-

(The author, Dr. Brajesh Kumar Mishra, is an Interventional Cardiologist and Cardiac Electrophysiologist, at Manipal

Hospital in Gurugram.)

Mumbai Indians, Lucknow Super Giants look to end dismal IPL campaigns with win

ut of reckoning from the IPL playoffs, Mumbai Indians and Lucknow Super Giants will look to end their campaign on a winning note when they clash at the Wankhede Stadium here on Friday.

While Mumbai Indians were knocked out of the playoffs race long ago, Lucknow Super Giant's chances of making the last-four are extremely bleak last-four are extremely bleak even if they win their last IPL game here by a huge margin. Three consecutive defeats have not only denied LSG crucial points, they have also battered their net run rate.

A 98-run loss to KKR was followed by a 10-wicket

defeat to Delhi Capitals all but

ending their chances of

getting into the playoffs after making the final-four in the previous edition.

The seventh-placed LSG's NRR of -0.787 will not improve significantly for them to get back into contention, as Royal Challengers Bengaluru, at No. 6, are much better placed with a NRR of 0.387. Five-time IPL champions Mumbai Indians were the first team to be knocked out of the race for the playoffs this year as they endured a horror first season under new skipper Hardik Pandya.

With only four wins from 13 matches so far, Mumbai Indians can at best finish with 10 points if they win on Friday, something that can followed by a 10-wicket possibly help them avoid a hammering by Sunrisers last-place finish.

Hyderabad with a 19-run For Mumbai Indians, a prepossibly help them avoid a

season change of leadership, with Pandya replacing Rohit



angry reactions from fans, which seem to have marred their campaign to a large extent.

As a team, MI failed to get behind their captain. While their batting failed collectively, Jasprit Bumrah's individual brilliance with the ball (20 wickets in 13 matches), could not inspire the other bowlers

to come together.
The focus of the match would be on the likes of T20 World be on the likes of T20 World Cup-bound players such as Pandya, Rohit Sharma, Bumrah and Suryakumar Yadav given that they would be pivotal to India's hopes of bringing back the elusive

Rohit is enduring a horror run with the bat with his best being 19 in the last six outings for MI, while Pandya too has not been able to inspire

confidence in his all-round

Suryakumar, though, has regained confidence with a strong showing in the IPL following three fifties and a century. For LSG, the lack of firepower

and failure to capitalise on key moments has led to their plight even though skipper KL Rahul has had a successful run with the bat, scoring three half-centuries in his 465 runs this season at an average of 136.36.

His strike rate, however, remained a topic of debate throughout even as the other batters failed to pull their weight.

While Nicholas Pooran (424 runs at 168.92) provided the late impetus, the collective failure of LSG's bowlers has also remained an area of



Once I am done, I will be gone; you will not see me for a while: Kohli

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Well aware that he "can't keep going forever", Indian batting superstar Virat Kohli wants to give everything he has to his cricket career because he once he is done, he says he would be "gone" and won't be seen "for a while." Kohli's appetite for runs and centuries has already got him a record eighth ton in the IPL this season and he continues to

mind-boggling 661 runs from 13 games for Royal Challengers Bengaluru. In a video posted by RCB on social media, the 35-year-old said the desire to live a regret-

lead the scoring charts with a

free life keeps him going.
"So, it's just about not leaving any undone business behind and not having any regrets later, which I'm very sure of I won't. Once I'm done, I'll be gone; you won't see me for a while.

"So, I want to give it everything I have till the time I play and that's the only thing that keeps me going," said Kohli when asked what keeps him hungry. Kohli was picked by RCB soon after he led India to title triumph in the 2008 Under-19 World Cup and he has continued to be with the franchise ever since.

"I think, as sportsmen, we do have an end date to our careers, so I'm just working backwards, I don't want to finish my career thinking what if I had done this on that particular day because I can't keep going on and on forever," he added.

The former India captain is part of the Indian squad for the T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies beginning next month.

India Former Harbhajan Singh had recently opined that RCB should think about giving back the team's captaincy to Kohli, saying he has an ideal combination of intent, commitment and aggression to take the side forward from the next season. South African Faf du Plessis is currently leading RCB.

Happy to get some reward after a challenging tournament: Nathan Ellis

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Punjab Kings pacer Nathan Ellis was relieved to see his team register a much-needed win, against second-placed Rajasthan Royals, after what has been a very difficult IPL season for them.

season for them.
Already out of playoffs contention, PBKS are currently placed in the ninth place with 10 points after five wins and eight losses in 13 matches, while RR, who have stuttered after an excellent start, maintain their second position despite a run of four defeats in recent times. recent times.

'The wicket was a little bit slower than expected, but I still think it was a pretty good wicket. Really happy for the guys to get some reward as it has been a bit of a challenging tournament for us," Ellis said at post-match press conference here

Wednesday. Batting first, RR were restricted to 144 for nine in the stipulated 20 overs and then, PBKS chased down the target of 145 for the loss of five wickets, with seven balls to

spare.
"We were playing for pride today and trying to put in the best performance we can. Collectively, it was one of our better performances, adapted to conditions, bowled in partnerships. It was probably a complete performance," Ellis



said of the win. Skipper Sam Curran's unbeaten 63 off 41 balls anchored the PBKS innings, and he received support from Jitesh Sharma, who made 22 off 20 balls, as the duo combined for a 63-run partnership for the fifth wicket to earn the team's fifth win of the season.

Playing his first game in this edition of the IPL, Ellis bowled tidily to finish with miserly figures of 1/24 from his full quota of four overs. He also took the all-important wicket of Sanju Samson.

"Coming to the ground, we didn't know what we wanted to do -- bat or bowl. Later, I think we also decided on batting first. Losing the toss wasn't the desired outcome. But I was happy. We bowled first, which gave us the chance to set the tone for the day," Ellis said. On how the surface played at

the ACA Stadium in Guwahati, Ellis said: "The wicket was a little bit slower than expected, but it was still a pretty good wicket. In the powerplay, was where the game could have been won or lost and we both lost wickets there.

"I think batting-wise, the powerplay was the best time to score and we both probably didn't have the greatest power players. And then from there the ball got a little bit softer

Hussey hopes Dhoni will carry on for two more years

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Chennai Super Kings batting coach Michael Hussey is hoping that charismatic Mahendra Singh Dhoni would continue with the team for a couple of years more, saying the former skipper was still batting well. The 42-year-old Dhoni surprised everyone by stepping aside as captain of the team just a day before the start of the 2024 season Ruturai Gaikwad was handed the reins of the side.

"We are hoping he does keep going. He is still batting so well. He does prepare well - he gets into the camp very early and hits a lot of balls. He has been in good touch all season really," Hussey said on ESPN's Around the Wicket show.

"I guess we just got to try to manage him from the body side of things. He had a knee surgery after the last season. So, he has been managing that

from the initial stage of the tournament. "I hope he keeps going for another couple of years. But we will just have to wait and see. He is the only one who will make that call. And, he likes to sort of build the drama a little bit as well. So, I wouldn't expect a decision anytime soon."

Dhoni, who led the side to record five IPL titles, has been batting quite down the order this season, sometimes at number eight, and faces only a handful of deliveries.

Hussey said that Dhoni's workload is being managed appropriately, given that he had undergone knee surgery. "That [knee surgery] is why we have had to manage him a little bit, and he only comes in at the back end. But, there has been no one better in being able to come in and hit the ball so cleanly from ball one than MS. He has been phenomenal," he added. The Australian was Dhoni wanted to



as Gaikwad was handed the captaincy. "MS sort of announced that he was

to stick around in the transition phase not going to be attending the pretournament captains' meeting. And we're like, 'Oh, no. What's going on?'.

Sharath, Manika to lead India

He said Ruturaj was going to be captain from then on.

'So, it was a little bit of a shock to start with, but it has been managed really well. We have sort of known for a little while that he was the right man to take over the job when MS decided to step aside.

"He wanted to still be here while the new captain took over, to try to help him along the way and sort of mentor him a little bit," said Hussey.

Under Gaikwad's leadership, CSK has fared decently. The team is placed third on the points table and is likely to make the play-offs.

"He has done a great job. He has been really calm and measured on the field. He will just get better and better. The more he does it and the more support we keep around him. The pleasing thing is, it has not affected his batting at all either," Hussey was effusive in his praise for Gaikwad.

OTHER SPORTS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



AFI signs multi year deal with sports wear brand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Thursday announced that it has signed a multi-year deal with the sports wear brand Puma, which will now provide apparel, footwear and accessories to around 400 Indian athletes during domestic and international

tournaments. Being the official kit sponsor, Puma's accessories will be used by top Indian athletes

Neeraj Chopra, long jumper Murali Sreeshankar and steeplechaser Parul Chaudhary.

"As an athlete training for 12 years, I know the importance of high-quality gear for highlevel practice. With AFI teaming up with global sports brand, Indian athletes across all levels will now have access training gear of excellence, international assisting us to express our

best in our game now,"

including Olympic champion Chopra was quoted as saying in a release.

"This partnership signals the bright future of Indian sport," he added.

This is the first time Indian athletes will get access to world-class speed suits that Puma supplies globally to other athletes. The speed suits are designed to aid freedom of movement, aerodynamics and faster speed, supporting athletes to focus solely on their performance and increase efficiency," the press

release mentioned. President Sumariwalla said, association with Sumariwalla

represents a significant milestone for India's athletes. With their high-quality gear, we are not only enhancing the performance of athletes but also creating a culture of excellence within the sporting country's community. We are confident that this partnership will

propel Indian athletics to new heights on the global stage."

In the men's singles, Sharath and Harmeet will compete and it will be Manika and Sreeja in the women's event. The decision was taken based on the latest world rankings. It will be the fifth and final Olympic appearance for 41-year-old Sharath, who made his Games debut back Adille "Our in 2004. Since the selection of the squads Puma and the individuals were as per the already pronounced TTFI criteria, three players "got selected themselves" because of their consistent performances over time and world rankings.

Mukherjee.

However, there was a debate over the third player for the women's squad. After Manika and Sreeja Akula walked in on the back of their higher world rankings (top 50), Archana Kamath (103) made it to the team as the third player. The Bengaluru paddler edged out Ayhika Mukherjee

members in the women's category.



(133) on several counts, including her

ranking. As for the men, Sharath picked himself as the top-ranked Indian at No. 40, while Harmeet (No. 63) and Manay (No. 62) were separated by one slot in WR. Though both made it to the team composition, National champion Harmeet got the selectors' nod based on his international (better win-loss proportion to his participation) and national performances. Incidentally, Massimo Costantini's presence as a special invitee at the meeting also added teeth as the foreign expert's inputs proved handy in the selection of the squads.

Costantini will take charge of the Indian team for a third time as early as next week. He arrived in India earlier this week. Alternate players Sathiyan and Ayhika will travel with the team to Paris but will not stay in the official Games Village. Their services would be needed in case of an

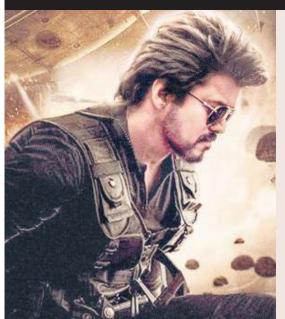
THE TEAMS:

Men: A. Sharath Kamal, Harmeet Desai, and Manay Thakkar; Alternate Player: G. Sathiyan. Women: Manika Batra, Sreeja Akula, and Archana Kamath: Alternate Player: Ayhika Mukheriee.

Vijayawada | Friday May 17, 2024

Snippets by K. Ramya Sree

HOLLYWOOD VFX MAKE FOR VIJAY'S THE GOAT



he cinematic juggernaut that is *The Greatest of All Time (The GOAT)* continues to gather momentum as it strides into the post-production phase, promising a visual spectacle like never before. Helmed by the esteemed director Venkatesh Prabhu and headlined by the charismatic Thalapathy Vijay, this ambitious project has once again sent waves of excitement rippling through Kollywood. Recently, producer Archana Kalpathi, confirmed via her Instagram Story that post-production activities have kicked off in earnest. The buzz doesn't stop there. It has been revealed by sources now that the film's VFX work has commenced, with a remarkable partnership inked with the team behind the revolutionary visuals of Avatar. This collaboration underscores the highbudget fantasy nature of the project and hints at a visual extravaganza that will push the boundaries of Indian cinema.

The decision to enlist the expertise of a Hollywood VFX team speaks volumes about the grandeur and scale of The GOAT. With a plethora of VFX frames set to adorn the screen, the film

promises to transport audiences into a world where imagination knows no bounds. Adding to the allure of this cinematic spectacle is its stellar ensemble cast, which includes Meenakshi Choudhary as Thalapathy Vijay's love interest, alongside seasoned actors such as Jayaram, Sneha, Laila, Yogibabu, VTV Ganesh, Ajmal Amir, Mic Mohan, Vaibhav, Premgi, Ajay Raj, and Aravind Akash. With such a formidable lineup, The GOAT is poised to deliver riveting performances and unforgettable characters. Under the banner of AGS Entertainment and bankrolled by Archana Kalpathi, Kalpathi S Aghoram, Kalpathi S Ganesh, and Kalpathi S Suresh, the film promises to be a cinematic extravaganza like no other. Adding to the anticipation is the musical genius of acclaimed composer Yuvan Shankar Raja, whose spellbinding soundtrack is set to elevate the film to new heights. As fans eagerly await further updates on this highly anticipated venture, all eyes are firmly fixed on The Greatest of All Time (The GOAT), poised to leave an indelible mark on the annals of Kollywood history.

Noteworthy contributions

Naveen Chandra comes in support of Varun Sandesh

elmed by director-produc-er Rajesh Jagannadham under The Fervent Indie Productions banner, Nindha delves into the enigmatic Kandrakota Mystery, setting the stage for a suspenseful narrative. The teaser launch, a highly anticipated event, saw Naveen Chandra extend his best wishes to the film's team. The teaser opens with a thought-provoking dialogue delivered by Thanikella Bharani, setting the tone for the riveting tale that unfolds. Varun Sandesh's portrayal of a character caught in the throes of turmoil adds layers of

intrigue, drawing viewers into a web of suspense and uncertainty. As the teaser progresses, glimpses of other key characters and glimpses of

intense sequences hint at a thrilling journey filled with twists and turns. Crafted with finesse, the teaser expertly conceals the storyline while leaving a lasting impact on the audience. Rajesh Jagannadham's adept



touch lends a polished finish to the teaser, amplifying anticipation for the film's theatrical release. With its tantalising glimpse into the world of Nindha, the teaser has sparked curiosity among audiences, setting the stage for an eagerly awaited cinematic spectacle. As anticipation mounts, fans eagerly await

the film's arrival in theaters, poised to embark on a thrilling journey through the realms of truth and deceit.

Lorry Chapter-1 first look is here

reekanth Reddy Asam's highly anticipated project, Lorry Chapter-1, takes center stage as its first look poster was unveiled on Thursday. With Sreekanth Reddy at the helm as writer, director, and stunt master, this film marks a significant milestone in his burgeoning career. Produced under the banner of King Maker Pictures, Lorry Chapter-1 promises to captivate audiences with its thrilling narrative.

kanth Reddy film industry began after completing a direction course at Loyola College, Chennai. Armed with a passion for storytelling, he honed his skills across various departments before gaining recognition for his innovative

YouTube videos. Now, transitioning from the digital realm to the silver screen, Sreekanth is set to make his mark with Lorry Chapter-1. The film stars Chandra Shikha and Rakhi Singh in lead roles, adding to the excitement surrounding its release.

Speaking about the project, Sreekanth Reddy Asam expressed his gratitude for the support he has received thus far. "I began my career as a YouTuber, exploring my creativity through engaging videos that garnered widespread popularity." he shared. "With Lorry Chapter-1, I aim to deliver an actionpacked entertainer that will resonate with audiences across languages. We are planning for a simultaneous release in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Bengali."





midst swirling rumors of a potential post- the insider, Allu Arjun is set to ponement, fans of Telugu cinema can breathe a sigh of relief as sources share that the highly anticipated release of Pushpa 2

remains firmly on track.

Directed by the acclaimed Sukumar and featuring the dynamic duo of Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna in lead roles, *Pushpa 2* has been generating immense buzz since its announcement. Recent speculations hinted at a possible delay in the release date, stirring apprehension among eager fans.

However, a reliable source from the film's production team has quashed these rumors, affirming that Pushpa 2 is slated for release on August 15 without any alterations. According to

wrap up shooting for the film this month. This steadfast commitment ensures that the film's releas

remains unaf-

fected by any

potential deláys. In addition to the reassuring news about the release date, the musical promotions for *Pushpa 2* have kicked off with gusto, signaling the film's impending arrival. The recent launch of a Telugu song penned by the acclaimed Chandrabose further adds to the anticipation surrounding the project. er a c Bankrolled by Mythri Movie other.

the talented Mireslow Kuba Brozek and is poised to hit screens worldwide on August 15, 2024, in multiple languages.
With its grand scale and star-stud-ded cast, the film promises to deliv-

Makers and Sukumar Writings,

Pushpa 2 boasts cinematography by

er a cinematic experience like no



he anticipation for Rai

Tarun's latest venture,

Purushothamudu,

soared to new heights as the film's teaser was

unveiled in a grand event in Hyderabad. Produced by Dr. Ramesh

Teiawat and Prakash Tejawat under

the banner of Shree Sridevi Productions, the film promises to be a family entertainer with a compelling storyline and a stellar ensemble cast.

Directed by the talented Ram Bhimana, known for his previous

works Akathayi and Hum Tum,

Purushothamudu marks the debut of

Hasini Sudhir as the leading lady opposite Raj Tarun. With industry

stalwarts like Prakash Raj, Murali Sharma, Ramya Krishna, Brahmanandam, and Mukesh

Raj Tarun's Purushothamudu teaser is here

Khanna essaying pivotal roles, the film boasts a formidable lineup that is sure to captivate audiences.

Raj Tarun, in his address, expressed his gratitude to the team for their collective effort in bringing the project to fruition. He commended producer Ramesh for sparing no expense to ensure the film's quality and shared his admiration for director Ram Bhimana's vision.

Speaking on the occasion, Raj Tarun shared, "Ramesh spent enough money for the movie and made sure that the output was superb. I have a good understanding with our direc-tor, Ram Bhimana. Our views are in alignment. Our coming together is a good omen. Even if he becomes a big director in the future, he wants to do films with me. The whole team has worked really hard. We want to release this film on June 6. We will announce the release date formally after the censorship formalities are completed." On the other hand, producer Dr. Ramesh Tejawat said, "I thought of making a film 30 years ago. When the director, Ram Bhimana, told us the story of this movie, we immediately liked it and started the production. My name was on the screen, but my brother Prakash, my wife, and my children took care of the production activities thoroughly. They did everything from talking to big artists to execution. Director Ram has given his all for this movie. Even if there was an accident, he came to the shoot and took care of everything. Our heroine showed the utmost dedication towards her debut. She had a fever of 102 degrees and yet participated in the shoot. Raj Tarun was very supportive. We believe that we have made a good movie. We hope you will be well received in the theaters. We will

Gangs of Godavari release pushed to May 31

ith the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, it has been announced that single-screen theaters in Telangana will remain shut, leading to a lot of

films getting postponed In a recent report, it has been claimed that from May 17, 2024, the single screen theaters in Telangana will be shut down for 10 days, likely. As soon as this announcement came, the makers of Vishwak Sen starrer Gangs of Godavari announced the postponement of

The film has already been postponed, and the makers have begun their promotional activities already. Initially scheduled for release on

March 8, its release was pushed to May 17. Now, it has been officially announced on Thursday that the film will now be released worldwide on May 31.

This sudden announcement on its release came as a shock to the

makers of Gangs of Godavari, just like it was to many other directors and produc-

and Anjali as the female leads, the film is directby Krishna Chaitanya. It also stars Nassar, Sai Kumar, Goparaju Ramana, and Hyper Aadi in other key roles.

Set against the backdrop of the Godavari region, the film promises to deliver an action village drama. Vishwak plays the role of a Lankala Rathna, who fights against powerful people in his area.

