*LATE CITY VOL. 7 ISSUE 182 | *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

BHUBANESWAR





RANCHI

Rana Daggubati becomes first Indian celebrity to attend WRESTLEMA

RNI No. TELENG/2018/76469

CHANDIGARH

VIJAYWADA

DEHRADUN



There is information that the BRS President's post will be given to BCs. I welcome the decision of the BRS to give its president post to a BC

> leader. This is the result of the Congress's caste survey. The BRS should reveal whether it will conduct the silver jubilee celebrations in the name of the TRS or as the BRS, as the BRS was formed only a few years ago

- Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, Bhongir MP

PUBLISHED FROM: HYDERABAD

89% card holders collect fine rice

The ration card holders, who were reluctant to receive the coarse variety of rice distributed through the fair-price shops earlier, have been lining up to the fair-price shops as the State government started distributing fine variety of rice from April 1 to the card holders. On April 1, the distribution of fine variety of rice was started, but the distribution of 70% of the rice to the card-holders has been through within 10 days. The ration shops were bursting at the seams with the card-holders flocking them all these days. According to official ...

A papal visit that could not fructify

Pope Francis was likely to visit India next year but his sojourn could not materialise after he breathed his last on Monday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Pope Francis twice -- in 2021 and 2024 -- and extended an invitation for him to visit India that the pontiff had accepted. Union minister George Kurian, who visited Vatican City last December, said the much-awaited visit was expected to take place after the celebrations of the jubilee year of Jesus Christ's birth by the Catholic Church in 2025..

Investors' wealth swells by Rs 32L cr

Investors' wealth soared by Rs 32 lakh crore in the five-day stock rally to Monday powered by foreign fund inflows and a broadbased gains in equities. On Monday, the 30-share BSE Sensex iumned 855 30 noints or 1 00 ner cent to settle above the 79,000 mark at 79,408.50. In the past five-days, the BSE barometer zoomed 5,561.35 points or 7.53 per cent. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged by Rs 32,03,295.8 crore to Rs 4,25,85,629.02 crore (USD 5 trillion) in five...

-PAGE: 8

IPL: Delhi Capitals take on LSG

Delhi Capitals (DC) will expect a more productive effort from their openers when they visit the 'City of Nawabs' to face an increasingly confident Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in an IPL match here on Tuesday. The Capitals' opening has been a bit of roulette so far this season with Faf du Plessis, Jake Fraser-McGurk Abhishek Porel and the latest entrant Karun Nair coming in at the pole position. In fact, in the last five matches they had three different opening combinations between those four batters, producing...



LUCKNOW

BHOPAL

with Vance

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held talks with US Vice President JD Vance against the backdrop of ongoing negotiations for a bilateral trade pact.

It is expected that the two leaders will discuss ways to further expand India-US global strategic ties as well as New Delhi's concerns over Washington's trade policy.

Following talks between Prime Minister Modi and US President Donald Trump in Washington DC in February, the two sides announced that they would negotiate the first tranche of the bilateral trade agreement by the fall of 2025.

After the talks, the prime minister will host a dinner for Vance, his Indian-origin wife Usha Chilukuri and the delegation of senior US government officials accompanying the vice president.

Delhi this morning on a four-day India visit after their trip to Italy

over the weekend

He is the first US vice president to visit India in 12 years after Joe

Biden visited New Delhi in 2013. Vance's first visit to India comes weeks after US President Donald Trump imposed and then paused a sweeping tariff regime against around 60 countries including India. New Delhi and Washington are

now holding negotiations to seal a bilateral trade agreement that is expected to address a variety of issues including tariff and market access. Vance and his family are also vis-

iting Jaipur and Agra.

Last month, US assistant trade representative Brendan Lynch visited India and held talks with his Indian interlocutors on firming up the bilateral trade agreement (BTA).

The US president's tariff tussle has stoked fears of a global trade war. Days after announcing the reciprocal tariffs, Trump announced a Vance and his family landed in 90-day pause on them for all coun-

tries, except China.

Pope Francis dies at 88

■ VATICAN CITY (AP)

RAIPUR

Pope Francis, history's first Latin American pontiff who charmed the world with his humble style and concern for the poor but alienated conservatives with critiques of capitalism and climate change, died Monday. He was 88.

Bells tolled in church towers across

chapel of the Domus Santa Marta, where Francis lived. "At 7:35 this morning, the Bishop of Rome. Francis, returned to the home of the Father. His entire life was dedicated to the service of the Lord and of his Church,? Ferrell said. Francis, who suffered from chronic lung disease and had part of one lung

removed as a young man, was admitted to Gemelli hospital on Feb. 14, 2025, for a respiratory crisis that

India announces 3-day state mourning

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Monday announced a three-day state mourning as a mark of respect on the passing away of Pope



SC collegium recommends transfer

of 2TG HC Judges PNS NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the transfer of seven High Court judges. The decision was taken during meetings held on April 15 and April 19, 2025.

Two sitting judges of the Telangana High Court — Justice Perugu Sree Sudha and Justice Kasoju Surendhar @ K. Surender - have been recommended for transfer to the Karnataka and Madras High Courts, respectively. From Andhra Pradesh, Justice Dr Kumbhajadala Manmadha Rao has been rec-

Karnataka High Court. Five judges currently serving in the Karnataka High Court are Continued on Page 2

ommended for transfer to the



TG as global hub for green innovation PNS HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Monday invited the Osaka Chambers of Commerce to invest in the state, presenting a sweeping vision of Telangana's growth in sec-

ment of the Future City. Addressing a gathering of business leaders during the World Expo in Osaka, the Chief Minister called for deep and future-driven Indo-

tors like circular economy, urban

infrastructure, green energy, IT,

pharmaceuticals, and the develop-

Japanese partnerships.

"KonniChiwa, Namaskaram,"
Revanth began, greeting in both
Japanese and Telugu. "We are here not just to showcase our state, but to build long-term partnerships that will empower people and design the future," he said.



Highlighting Telangana's investorfriendly ecosystem, the CM said the state offers policy stability, ease of doing business and world-class infrastructure.

"Hyderabad is home to many successful Japanese firms. We'welcome many more to manufacture in Telangana and make it their base for the Indian Continued on Page 7

NHRC report vindicates BRS stand

Party leader KT Rama Rao on Lagacharla brutality

PNS HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KT Rama Rao on Monday thanked the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for exposing what he described as the "gross violation of human rights" in the Lagacharla village of Telangana, where tribal farmers and women were allegedly subjected to police high-handedness during the Congress Government's land acquisition drive.

The NHRC report said that villagers who were arrested at night were beaten at the Parigi Police Station and threatened not to speak about the torture before the magistrate. The arrested villagers were detained at the police station, but their detention was not recorded in the general diary, the report said.

The conduct of the police officials was not in accordance with the law. CCTV cameras in the lockup and in the CI's office were found to be nonfunctional, the report said. A political vendetta angle also emerged during the inquiry. Villagers who sup-



ported a non-ruling political party were targeted and arrested, and some individuals with no connection to the incident were arrested solely because they were supporters of the opposi-

In a relief to BRS Working

President KT Rama Rao, the

Telangana High Court on Monday

quashed two criminal cases filed

against him — one over allegations

involving the Musi project fund

use at the Medigadda Barrage.

tion party, the NHRC report said. Cases were registered against minors, students and government officials, although some of them were not even present in the village during the incident, the report said. Reacting strongly to the NHRC's

findings, KTR said the report validated the BRS's consistent stand that the Revanth Reddy-led government had trampled upon constitutional and democratic norms.

"We have been saying all along that the tribal farmers of Lagacharla were treated brutally. Today, the NHRC has confirmed it," he said.

The first FIR, filed at the Utnur

police station in Adilabad district,

was based on a complaint by Congress leader Suguna, who

claimed KTR's remarks accusing

the Congress of diverting Rs 25,000

Continued on Page 2

AP sanctions land for TCS at 99 paise per acre, no nod so far for Ursa Clusters

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Government has drawn sharp public and political scrutiny over its recent land allocations, particularly the sanction of land to TCS and Ursa Clusters

formalised, the allocation to Ursa Clusters has run into a cloud of controversy

On Monday, the IT Department issued official orders granting 21.26 acres to the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) at

government approved the allocation at a throwaway lease rate of just 99 paise per acre, translating to an effective rate of 4.71 paise per square yard — a move that raised eyebrows.

TCS has promised an investment of Rs 1,370 crore and employ-

ment for 12,000 people over a fiveto-six-year horizon through the development of a large-scale IT campus

However, what has stirred greater debate is the same-day Cabinet approval granted to Ursa Clusters Private Limited in Visakhapatnam. Pvt Ltd, a relatively unknown com-While TCS's land grant was swiftly pany, for a massive 60-acre land par-

cel - 3.5 acres in IT Hill-3 SEZ Park and 56.36 acres in Kapuluppada.

Despite receiving Cabinet clearance alongside the TCS proposal, no GO has been issued for Ursa Clusters, amid widespread criti-

IT Hill-3 in Visakhapatnam. The cism over the scale of the allocation. around the company's lack of a track record, with many questioning how a firm established barely two

The crux of the criticism revolves months ago could be entrusted with such high-value public land. While the government justified TCS's allocation, **Continued on Page 2**

Ponguleti loses cool as RDO fails to respond to queries

PNS HYDERABAD

Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy became angry as the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) did not respond to the questions raised by the Minister regarding farmers.

Ponguleti attended the Rythu Awareness programme on Bhu Bharati on Monday at Chandampet in Nalgonda district. On this occasion, the farmers raised their problems with the Minister. The Minister asked RDO Ramana Reddy and the Tahasildar about the problems of farmers. However, there was no answer from the RDO. Ponguleti responded angrily and said that the RDO does not have proper knowledge about the Revenue Division. He warned Revenue officials present at the meeting to change their attitude.

He said that Tahasildar-level revenue official must accept applications from farmers from June 2 and that farmers would get solutions for Continued on Page 2

'Very clear EC is compromised'

Rahul in US; BJP calls him 'traitor'

PNS BOSTON/NEW DELHI

The Election Commission is "compromised", Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged at an event in the US as he attacked the poll panel citing turnout figures in the Maharashtra election, drawing a strong reaction from the BJP which called him a

"traitor". Gandhi noted that he had been raising the issue earlier also and alleged that "there is something

wrong with the system". However, the BJP linked his criticism to the Enforcement Directorate's action in the National Herald case, alleging he had not only "insulted" the country's institutions on foreign soil but had also indulged in corruption, and said he and his

Gandhi arrived in the US on Saturday and made the remarks at an event in Boston on Sunday.



The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha claimed that, in simple mother will be "sent to jail" for terms, more people voted in the said.

Maharashtra assembly elections than there were adults in the state.

"The Election Commission gave us a voting figure for 5:30 pm, and between 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm, 65 lakh voters voted. This is physically impossible to happen. For a voter to vote, it takes approximately three minutes, and if you do the math, it would mean that there were lines of voters till 2 am, but this did not happen," he said.

"When we asked them for the videography, they not only refused but also changed the law so that now we are not allowed to ask for the videography," Gandhi said.

"It is very clear to us that the Election Commission is compromised, and it is very clear that there is something wrong with the system. I have said this multiple times," he Continued on Page 2

Gold prices breach record Rs 97,000/10g level in futures trade

PNS NEW DELHI

HC quashes cases against KTR related to Musi Funds

diversion and another over drone crore in the name of the Musi proj-

Gold prices breached the Rs 97,000 per 10 grams level for the first time in futures trade on Monday, surging by Rs 2,111 to hit an all-time high of Rs 97,365 per 10 grams on firm local demand. Continuing the winning streak for the third straight day, the mosttraded June delivery contract of the precious metal soared by Rs 2,111

or 2.22 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 97,365 per 10 grams in the evening session on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). Later, the June contract traded at Rs 97,276 per 10 grams, up by Rs 2,022 or 2.12 per cent, with

Continued on Page 2

an open interest of 23,060 lots.

RBI permits minors above 10 years to operate bank accounts independently

PNS MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Monday permitted banks to allow minors above the age of 10 years to open and operate savings/ term deposit accounts independently.

The Reserve Bank of India has issued revised instructions on opening and operation in the deposit accounts of minors. Minors of any age may be allowed

to open and operate savings and term deposit accounts through his/ her natural or legal guardian, the RBI said in a circular addressed to commercial banks and cooperative banks.

They may also be allowed to open such accounts with their mother as guardian. "Minors above such an age limit not less than 10 years and up to such amount and such terms as may



be fixed by the banks keeping in view their risk management policy, may be allowed to open and operate savings/ term deposit accounts independently, if they so desire, and such terms shall be duly conveyed to the account

holder," the circular said. Further, on attaining the age of RBI added.

tions and specimen signature of the account holder should be obtained and kept on record. "The banks are free to offer additional banking facilities like internet banking, ATM/ debit cards, cheque book facility, etc, to the minor account holders basis their risk management policy, product suitability and customer appropriateness," the circular said. The banks will have to ensure that

accounts of minors, whether operated independently or through a guardian, are not allowed to be overdrawn and that these always remain in a credit balance.

Also, the banks shall perform customer due diligence for opening of deposit accounts of minors and undertake ongoing due diligence,



Southern leaders must prevent injustice to South India during delimitation

Aical parties have surprisingly decided to appoint leaders from South India. Leaders hailing from the south are now in the driving seats **POINT** from Karnataka. Hailing of most mainline parties. This development assumes

significance in the national political scenario. Actually, these parties chose their leaders due to different reasons. But it is a rare thing that all national political parties are now having southern leaders. Now, Marian Alexander

Baby, aka MA Baby, has been appointed as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). This development made people turn nostalgic as similar incidents had taken place in the past. The main opposition party in the Lok Sabha is moving along under the leadership of southern stalwart Mallikarjuna Kharge. The Congress eventually reached a situation that made it

rinevitable to have leaders from outside the Nehru family. With things going bad for the Congress, it had to choose a leader

from the downtrodden classes, Kharge was found fit to head the party, and he assumed charge with the blessings of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, unlike PV Narasimha Rao, who took over the reins after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Despite lacking the Nehru family's blessings, PVN managed to remain in the saddle for around six years.

Coming back to Kharge, he is trying to run the Congress, hoping for a possible comeback at the national level. After the third consecutive win of Modi, the Congress's strength has shaken, and reversals in Haryana and Maharashtra have made things worse. The Congress's inability to exploit anti-incumbenIt will be a record if the leadership of all four major national parties is from the south. They must be able to stop the possible injustice that can be done to southern states during the delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies in future

cy in both states degraded its country. The Left parties had morale. Although it is satisfactory that the party is in power in Kharge's home state of Karnataka, it will be a challenge for him to make it retain power there.

Both the CPI and the CPI (M) have had the experience of being led by southern leaders. Chandra Rajeswara Rao of the CPI and Pucchalapalli Sundaraiah (CPI-M) were General Secretaries of their parties, and they had left an Communist movement in the

southern leaders as they were popular in the Telugu-speaking areas of the composite Madras State during the first general elections in 1952. The then undivided Communist Party of India, headed by Ajoy Ghosh, did well in the Telugu regions of both Hyderabad and Madras states. The Communists scored victories in the Telangana region of Hyderabad state and the Andhra region of Madras State in the first-ever electoral battle in independent India. The popularity of the CPI in



ratnakumarmd@gmail.com

the Telugu regions paved the way for two towering leaders, C. Rajeshwara Rao and P. Sundaraiah, to take over the party's reins.

Ironically, this happened after the split in the CPI in 1964. Indications of a possible split in the party had come out, and serious ideological differences surfaced during the party congress held in

Vijayawada in 1962. Even after the split in the undivided Communist Party, the influence of Communism continued until the emergence of the TDP in 1983. Former Lok Sabha Member Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy had also served the CPI at the national level with utmost commitment. He used to interact with other Communist leaders regarding developments in AP. As the party secretary in the AP state council, he had a word with Harikishan Singh Surjit of the CPI-M over AP's bifurcation. He is believed to have cautioned against such a move and told the youth about

the Visalandhra Movement. The undivided CPI had come to power in Kerala during the second general elections in 1957. EMS Namboodripad became the Chief Minister of Kerala. That was the first time in history that Communists came to power through the ballot. EMS became the world's first democratically elected

Communist leader.

The undivided CPI's influence continued in Telugu regions even after its impressive win in 1952. Assembly elections were held in the newly formed Andhra state (carved out of composite Madras State in 1953) in 1955. Political observers predicted that Communists would come to power in those elections and Sundaraiah would become the Chief Minister. But the CPI lost to the Congress. Had CPI won the 1955 election, Sundaraiah would have become the first Communist

leader in the world to come to power through the ballot. Leaders hailing from Andhra like Bangaru Lakshman and M. Venkaiah Naidu had toiled hard to prove their calibre in the BJP. Lakshman had to step down as he was caught in the Tehelka tapes row. Venkaiah had his day in the BJP till the emergence of Narendra Modi. CPI General Secretary D.

Raja hails from Tamil Nadu, and as a Left leader, he is trying to check the BJP's influence.

Now, there is a possibility of a Tamil Nadu leader becoming the BJP's President. The name of former bureaucrat Annamalai is being considered for the party president post as he has impressed Modi with his performance. The BJP's vote share in Tamil Nadu has gone up from 3% to 11% in the 2024 general elections. As the BJP has decided its electoral tie-ups in Tamil Nadu, Annamalai might get a chance at the national level at the behest of Modi. If that happens, leaders from the south will be steering all four major national parties like the Congress, the BJP, the CPI and the CPI-M.

It will be a record if the leadership of all four major national parties is from the south. They must be able to stop the possible injustice that can be done to southern states during the delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies in future.

Govt ready for Rabi paddy procurement: Uttam

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Monday asserted that the Telangana Government is fully equipped for the Rabi 2024–25 paddy procurement season with all necessary infrastructure, including gunny bags, tarpaulin covers, callipers, dryers and procurement centres in place across the state.

He said that the government had taken proactive measures to ensure farmers faced no

'Gunny bags, weighing machines, grain callipers and tarpaulins are available in



curement centre is equipped to handle large volumes. Paddy procurement is being conducted in a transparent, accountable manner," he said, addressing the 'Telangana Rythu Mahotsavam' in Nizamabad.

Uttam said that Telangana is on track to record the highest paddy procurement in the country, with a Rabi target of 70.13 lakh metric tonnes.

LMT the total annual paddy production in 2024–25 would touch 281 LMTs, making Telangana the largest contributor in India.

He revealed that 8,329 procurement centres had been proposed, and some districts like Nizamabad, Kamareddy and Suryapet had achieved 100% operational status.

Storage capacity across Telangana stood at 64.65 LMTs, with 25 LMTs currently vacant. Additional storage was also available with rice mills and could be supplemented through Agricultural Market Committees, the State Warehousing Corporation and

Kiran hails BRS move to appoint a BC party prez

The Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said that there is information that the post of BRS president will be given to BCs. "I hail the BRS if it gives its president post to a BC leader," he said.

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Monday, Kiran said the BRS is going to appoint a BC leader as its president, and it is the 'result' of the Congress's caste

However, he said that the BRS is conducting its silver jubilee celebrations with the money it looted from the people. He asked the BRS to reveal whether it will celebrate its silver jubilee in the name of the TRS or the BRS.

changed the name TRS to BRS to loot the nation? How can KCR conduct silver jubilee celebrations after removing Telangana from his party's name? KTR must apologise to the people of Telangana for looting them. I doubt whether the TRS is alive now," he said.

Wondering at BRS leaders

chanting the name of former United AP Chief Minister, the late YS Rajashekar Reddy, and the current AP CM N. Chandrababu Naidu, he asked BRS to explain why the people should make KCR Chief Minister again.

He said that BRS Working President KT Rama Rao has been distorting history by comparing KCR to Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.

Sanjay asks govt to take action against blackmail journos

PNS HYDERABAD

The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, urged the TG government to take strong action against people who, without any journalism experience, are operating YouTube channels and making baseless personal attacks, maligning families and engaging in blackmail.

He expressed concern that such activities are bringing a bad name to bonafide journalists. He also appealed to journalist associations and press clubs to be firm on this issue.

At the same time, he emphasised that it is everyone's responsibility to encourage YouTube channels that raise public issues and work



for the betterment of society. He mentioned that he would soon write a letter to the Chief Minister regarding this

He expressed distress that ournalists in the state are facing severe problems and said the state government has the responsibility to support journalists who are barely surviving on meagre salaries.

He asserted that the BJP will come to power in the state this time. Once the BJP comes to power, he promised that houses will be constructed for all journalists, and they will be provided with health cards and insurance. He added that steps will be taken to ensure journalists can live with digni-

ty in society.

During his visit to Vemulawada on Monday, the Union Minister visited the local press club (IJU). He had previously sanctioned Rs 10 lakh from his MPLADS funds for the construction of the press club building. He reviewed the new press club building being constructed with these funds, along with

Govt will deposit Bharosa funds soon

Min Tummala assures farmers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister Agriculture Tummala Nageshwara Rao ernment will deposit pending Rythu Bharosa funds in their bank accounts soon.

He said that farmers should

forgive the delay in depositing Rythu Bharosa funds and that the government has implemented a farm loan waiver scheme, even though the government is facing a financial

Addressing the meeting after inaugurating the Rythu Mahotsavam programme in Nizamabad district on Monday, along with Ministers N. Uttam Kumar Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao, Tummala said that farmers should use the Rythu Mahotsavam to learn how to earn huge profits with less investment.

He thanked the Centre for farmers' welfare.



setting up the Turmeric Board in Nizamabad district and appealed to the Centre to bring the Turmeric Board to full use to help turmeric farmers. He also appealed to the Centre to set up turmeric-based industries and to produce turmeric

Tummala said that the government should make arrangements to ensure that farmers, who were affected by natural calamities, can get compensation. He said the Telangana Government is a farmers' government, and the aim of the government is

I am the bridge between BRS activists & KCR: Kavitha

ware company's call centre,

they added. According to police,

both parties attacked each other.

Purported videos showed the

IAF officer roughing up the

accused and creating a scene in

public. The officer was seen

arguing with Kumar and hitting

him, even as his wife tried to

stop him. The incident occurred

while the officer was on his way

to the airport with his wife, who

is also an IAF officer.

PNS BHADRACHALAM

PNS ■ BENGALURU

A man was arrested in connec-

tion with an incident in which a

40-year-old IAF officer was

allegedly assaulted and verbally

abused by a group of Kannada-

speaking individuals who chased

him on a bike in Bengaluru early

Monday morning. Police have

works as a team head at a soft-

The accused, Vikas Kumar,

termed it a case of road rage.

In a fiery address to party workers and Telangana activists in Bhadrachalam, BRS MLC Kavitha reaffirmed her allegiance to K. Chandrasekhar Rao and vowed to act as a bridge between him and party cadres.

Describing herself as "a bridge between both KCR and the party," Kavitha said, "Any issue, any need, workers can reach out to me. I conr it my responsibility to protect every sin gle worker of the BRS. I am the bridge between karyakartas and KCR."

Launching a scathing attack on the Congress government, she warned that it was the 'primary threat' to Telangana's development. "The Rs 10,000 crore go?

Congress will not protect Telangana. That is the responsibility of BRS workers. The government today is full of lies and betrayal. They appear like Telangana leaders, but their actions are entirely anti-Telangana," she said.

Referring to the Congress government's handling of debt and social welfare schemes, Kavitha said, "They took loans of around Rs 1.6 lakh crore, but when asked where the money went they refuse to answer. They mortgaged land worth Rs 40 000 crore for Rs 10 000 and now claim they spent that on Rythu Bharosa and farm loan waivers. But 60 per cent of farmers have not got loan waivers, and 50 per cent haven't got Rythu Bharosa. So, where did that

Based on a complaint by the

officer's wife, Squadron Leader

Madhumita Dutta, a case has

been registered at the

Byappanahalli police station

against unknown individuals.

Police (East) Devaraj D told PTI:

"This is a case of road rage. An

altercation took place, and both

sides attacked each other. The

accused has been taken into cus-

Deputy Commissioner of

Ponguleti loses ...

Continued from page 1

their problems without paying a single rupee. Ponguleti said the government is going to appoint 6,000 licensed surveyors for surveying land. The government is going to send one Grama Paripalana Officer (GPO) to each village in the first week of May, he added.

He said the government will solve Sada Bainama applications and the gov-Bharati Act effectively. The government will deliver justice to all farmers through the Bhu Bharati Act, he added.

Gold prices ...

Continued from page 1

The August contract of the metal spurted by Rs 2,104 or 2.19 per cent to hit a fresh peak of Rs 98,000 per

10 grams.
The October contract breached the Rs 98,000 per 10 grams-mark, climbing Rs 2,617 or 2.73 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 98,600 per 10 grams on

"Gold prices extended their record-breaking rally as the fresh week kicked off with strong early buying. Comex gold approached the USD 3,400 mark, MCX gold registered its fresh all-time highs," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

CM makes ... IAF officer alleges assault in Bengaluru; one arrested

Continued from page 1 market and global exports." The TelanganaRising delegation pitched a wide range of projects, including the 370km Regional Ring Road, Metro Rail expansion, Musi River rejuvenation, and the establishment of a Net Zero Future City spread over 30,000 acres, being developed in collaboration with Japan's

Marubeni Corporation. Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu underlined the state's commitment to a

partnership-based investment model.

"We don't just offer policies, we offer partnerships. Telangana is building the Future City as India's first Net Zero industrial city, with smart mobility and green energy," he said. He added that the zone

between the ORR and the upcoming RRR is being developed as a dedicated base for companies dealing in EVs, semiconductors and aerospace products, supported by a dry port with sea-link connectivity.

Modi holds talks ...

Continued from page 1

Washington is also pushing New Delhi to buy more American oil, gas and military platforms to bring down the trade deficit that stands at around USD 45 billion in India's

The US was the largest trading partner of India with overall bilateral trade in goods and services amounting to USD 190 billion for calendar year 2023. In the financial year 2023-24, the US was the third largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India with inflows of USD 4.99 billion.

TODAY **ALMANAC** Month & Paksham Krishna Paksha Apr 21 06:58 PM Navami: to Apr 22 06:13 PM Apr 22 06:13 PM to Apr 23 04:43 PM Nakshatram: Apr 21 12:37 PM to Apr 22 12:44 PM Apr 22 12:44 PM Dhanishta: to Apr 23 12:07 PM 3:22 PM to 4:56 PM Rahukalam: 9:06 AM to 10:40 AM Yamagandam: 04:38 PM to 06:11 PM Varjyam 12:14 PM to 1:48 PM Gulika: Amritakalam: 01:59 AM to 03:33 AM Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:49 AM to 12:39 PM HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Partly Cloudy **Temp:** 36°° **Humidity:** 48% Sunrise: 5:55 AM Sunset: 6:34 PM Updated: April 21, 2025 5:00 PM

AP sanctions ...

Clusters.

Continued from page 1 citing its credibility and employment promise, no such defence

has been made yet for Ursa

Sources indicate that, given the media heat and public outcry, the government may be delaying the formal issuance of the GO in the case of Ursa Clusters. Whether it quietly clears the file in the coming days or shelves the proposal remains to be seen.

Critics point out that giving land to an unproven company at a time when tech giants are being offered land at negligible rates shows a stark contradiction in transparency and due dili-

In Telangana too, Ursa Clusters came to the fore again with BRS spokesperson Krishan Manne stating, "We told you in January 2025. There is no company named Ursa Clusters. The Rs 5000 crore Telangana MoU is bogus and the 60-acre allocation in AP is also bogus.

'Very clear EC is ...

Continued from page 1
The BJP-Shiv Sena-NCP coalition

Mahayuti had trounced the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance of the Congress, NCP (SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT) in the Maharashtra polls in

November last year. Taking exception to Gandhi's remarks against the Election Commission, BJP MP and national spokesperson Sambit Patra alleged that Gandhi was venting his ire over the Enforcement Directorate's action in the National Herald case on the Election Commission.

"Nothing will happen by doing so. The ED will not spare you because agencies work on the basis of facts and the National Herald matter is an open and shut case. "You will not be spared. You and your mother will be caught with proceeds of crime and sent to jail," he said at a press conference at the BJP headquarters in Delhi.

Both Rahul Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi will be behind bars in connection with the case, he asserted.

Pope Francis ...

Continued from page 1 He spent 38 days there, the longest hospitalization of his 12-year papacy. But he emerged on Easter Sunday a day before his death — to bless thousands of people in St. Peter's Square and treat them to a surprise popemobile romp through the piazza, drawing wild cheers and

applause. From his first greeting as pope a remarkably normal "Buonasera" ("Good evening") — to his embrace of refugees and the downtrodden, Francis signaled a very different tone for the papacy, stressing humility over hubris for a Catholic Church beset by scandal and accusations of indifference.

After that rainy night on March 13, 2013, the Argentine-born Jorge Mario Bergoglio brought a breath of fresh air into a 2,000-year-old institution that had seen its influence wane during the troubled tenure of Pope Benedict XVI, whose surprise resignation led to Francis' election.

India announces ...

Continued from page 1

Pope Francis, Supreme Pontiff of the Holy See passed away on April 21. As a mark of respect, three-day state mourning shall be observed throughout India." As per the schedule, two days'

state mourning will be on April 22 (Tuesday) and April 23 (Wednesday). Besides, one day's state mourning will be on the day of the funeral, the statement said. Meanwhile Political and religious

leaders from across the country offered glowing tributes to Pope Francis who died on Monday, hailing him for his "compassion and humility" and commitment to social justice. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was deeply pained by the passing of Pope Francis, adding that he will always be remembered as a beacon of compassion and spiritual courage by millions across the world.

"In this hour of grief and remembrance, my heartfelt condolences to the global Catholic community," he said in a post on X.

HC quashes ...

relief.

Continued from page 1 damaged her party's image. The FIR was registered on September 30 last year. However, after hearing arguments from both sides, the High Court ruled in favour of KTR and quashed the case, granting him

In another case, the High Court also dismissed the FIR registered at Mahadevpur Police Station, where KTR was accused of flying a drone over the Medigadda Barrage without permission.

The complaint was filed by an irrigation official who claimed the act posed a threat to the dam's safety. KTR's counsel, advocate TV Ramana Rao, argued that the barrage was not a restricted area and alleged that the case was politically motivated.

The prosecution countered that drone flying near such structures could endanger public infrastructure. The High Court, after hearing both arguments, quashed the FIR.

SC collegium ...

Continued from page 1

the transfer list. Justice Hemant Chandangoudar is being recommended for transfer to the Madras High Court, while Justice Krishnan Natarajan is to be sent to the Kerala High Court. Justice NS Sanjay Gowda is being moved to Gujarat, and Justice Dixit

Krishna Shripad to the

Orissa High Court. The Supreme Court Collegium said that the transfers are being effected, "to infuse inclusivity and diversity in High Courts and to strengthen the quality of

administration of justice." The recommendation is now pending approval from the Union Ministry of Law and Justice. Once cleared, the transfers will be formally notified and executed by the respective High Courts and

the President of India.

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CITY EVENTS

Kuchipudi dance

By temple dancers of Kuchipudi

Ravindra Bharathi

April 21, 9 am.

Kuchipudi dance

By Bagavathula Sethuram

Venue

Ravindra Bharathi

April 21, 1:30 pm.

Live Musical Orchestra

By Sri Krishna Swara Raaga

Sravanthi

Venue

Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha

April 21, 9 am.

Book release function

By Venkateswarlu

Venue

Conference Hall - Ravindra

Bharathi

April 21, 1:30 pm.

Book release function

By Sathkala Bharathi

Conference Hall - Ravindra

Bharathi

April 21, 6 pm.

PNS HYDERABAD

Naranur block, Adilabad

(Telangana) was conferred with the honour of recognition

for bringing sea-change in people's lives with initiatives

Tuberculosis, nutrition cam-

paign, science technology lab,

natural farming and Common

Services Centres. District

Collector Rajasri Shah took the

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi, on Monday, addressed

the civil servants on the occa-

sion of 17th Civil Services

Day at the Vigyan Bhawan in

the national capital. He also

award from PM Modi.

City Pioneer

The Pioneer

HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | APRIL 22, 2025

POSTERS ON HEATSTROKE

PREVENTION AND SAFE

MANGO RIPENING

PRACTICE UNVEILED

In view of the rising temperatures

and increasing risk of heat-related

illnesses. Minister for Health.

Medical and Family Welfare, C

Damodar Rajanarasimha unveiled

two public awareness posters at

The first poster, prepared by the

essential precautions to be taken to

occasion the Minister detailed the

importance of public awareness in

combating heat-related health risks.

He appealed to citizens to remain

vigilant and follow preventive

measures such as: Avoiding

prolonged exposure to direct

sunlight, especially during peak

water when stepping outdoors.

as caps or umbrellas. Seeking

in case of dizziness, fatigue, or

other symptoms related to

heatstroke

afternoon hours. Carrying drinking

Wearing light, breathable clothing

and using protective headgear such

immediate medical attention at the

nearest Government Health Facility

The Minister also urged the public

to support one another by helping

those affected by heat stroke and

contacting emergency services via 108 for timely medical intervention.

the Telangana State Medical

Services and Infrastructure

Health Department, outlines

prevent heatstroke. On this

Development Corporation

(TGMSIDC) office.

PNS HYDERABAD

Residents submitting their grievances to HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath

52 COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN PRAJAVANI

encroachers to clear road blockages

PNS HYDERABAD

Commissioner of the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency (HYDRAA) AV Ranganath has issued a stern warning to those obstructing roads in various layouts and residential areas. He advised citizens not to create hurdles for road access and public utilities.

"If any obstructions are found, we will remove them immediately," said the Commissioner, assuring that HYDRAA is actively monitoring the Outer Ring Road (ORR) region to ensure smooth traffic flow.

He said that public utility spaces - such as parks, schools, libraries, community halls and primary health centres - must be preserved and used as intended. "Encroachments on lands meant for public use will be cleared without delay and returned to the public," he

On Monday, HYDRAA's Prajavani grievance cell received 52 complaints, including several reports of walls being constructed across roads, blocking access, and individuals assigning fake plot numbers (by-numbers) to grab public lands.

Residents have also complained that although they own legal plots surrounded by houses, they are being denied permissions to build homes under the pretext of Full Tank Level (FTL) norms related to nearby lakes. The Commissioner assured that FTL demar-

cations will be finalized soon. The major complaints are Bowrampet, Dundigal Municipality (Medchal-Malkajgiri):

A former public representative allegedly constructed a guest house on 25 guntas of government land (Survey No. 345) and occupied an additional 36 guntas (Survey No. 14) by excitating falso plot numbers. 14) by assigning fake plot numbers.

Ferozguda, Balanagar (Medchal-Malkajgiri): Residents of Madhavi Nagar reported illegal occupation of a designated park area. Despite a court order in their favor, the encroacher continued construction. They urged HYDRA to acquire the 300-square-yard land for park development.

Teen dies after injecting prescription drugs

PNS HYDERABAD

A first-year intermediate student died and two of his classmates were critically injured after reportedly injecting themselves with prescription drugs and consuming them along with tablets in Hyderabad on Monday.

The deceased, 17-year-old Mohd Abdul Nasser, was a student of MS Junior College in Aramgarh. According to his uncle, Syed Hussain, Nasser and two classmates allegedly sourced the injections and tablets from a drug peddling racket operating in their locality.

Nasser succumbed to the drug reaction while undergoing treatment at Osmania General Hospital. The two other students remain in critical condition - one admitted to Princess Esra Hospital and the other to Owaisi Hospital.

Sved Hussain filed a complaint at the Balapur police station and appealed to the authorities to trace the origin of the drugs. Balapur police held a meeting with local pharmacists to track the source of these substances. So far, one alleged drug supplier, identified as Sahil, has



ASPIRATIONAL BLOCK PROGRAMME

Narnoor block recognised

among Top 5 in country

HM warns private medical colleges on ghost faculty



Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha addressing a meeting with the officials

PNS HYDERABAD

Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha convened a highlevel meeting with the managements, deans and principals of private medical colleges at the Secretariat on Monday.

The meeting focused on reviewing various aspects of medical education, including quality standards, adherence to National Medical Commission (NMC) regulations, faculty deployment, student attendance, fee structures and stipend issues.

He warned them against recruiting ghost faculty and stipend com-

Parigi MLA Rammohan Reddy, Health Secretary Christina Z Chongthu, Kaloji Health University Vice-Chancellor

tation of various government

welfare schemes. The awards

were given in three categories

- holistic development of dis-

tricts, aspirational blocks pro-

Nandkumar Reddy, DME Dr Narendra Kumar and other senior officials also participated in the dis-

Telangana-trained doctors are gaining international acclaim, leading prestigious medical institutes across the world. This is a result of the strong academic standards maintained in the State.

The Minister expressed concern over reports of private colleges employing ghost faculty (non-existent or absent faculty). He warned that such practices could severely impact the quality of medical education.

Stressing that poor standards in medical education can directly affect public health, he said the government will take stringent action against colleges that fail to comply with quality norms.

Several complaints have surfaced regarding colleges withholding stipends meant for medical stu-

The Minister firmly stated that stipends must not be compromised, as it could affect students' education and morale. He directed that teaching hos-

pitals affiliated to medical colleges must strictly follow the Clinical Establishment Act guidelines.

Colleges were warned against harassing students for additional or advance fee payments.
Such actions would not be tol-

The Minister assured college representatives that issues raised regarding NMC regulations would brought to the Commission's notice and efforts would be made

PRAJAVANI PROGRAMME

193 petitions received across six GHMC zones

PNS HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Ilambarathi has urged officials to responsibly address and resolve all

the Prajavani programme. During Monday's Prajavani session held at the GHMC head office, Commissioner Ilambarathi received representations from citizens across various parts of the

He instructed the department to immediately forward the complaints to the respective wings for prompt action.

Stressing accountability, the Commissioner said, "Évery grievance must be thoroughly examined and appropriate measures should be taken to resolve it. Officials must work in coordination to prevent repetition of similar com-

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) Commissioner Ilambarathi receiving petitions during Prajavani In this session, the GHMC received a total of 82 petitions at its head office. Among them, 32 were related to Town Planning, 9 to the Tax

the

Across GHMC's six zones, a total of 111 petitions were recorded: Kukatpally Zone: 40, Serilingampally Zone: 22, LB Nagar Zone: 21, Secunderabad Zone: 18, Charminar Zone: 9 and Khairatabad Zone: one.

ASHA WORKER AND STAFF FELICITATED

conferred the Prime Minister's

Awards for Excellence in

recognise the contribution of

civil servants in the implemen-

The awards are meant to

Public Administration.

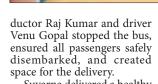
Baby born on RTC bus gets lifetime free pass

PNS HYDERABAD

In an inspiring act of compassion and service, Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) on Monday felicitated three individuals who helped a woman deliver her baby onboard an RTC bus. Managing Director V.C. Sajjanar honoured conductor Raj Kumar, private hired bus driver Venu Gopal, and ASHA worker Malli Kanthamma at Bus Bhavan for their timely and humane

The Corporation also announced a lifetime free bus pass for the newborn girl born onboard the Hyderabad-Kollapur Express. ÁSHA worker Kanthamma, who assisted in the delivery, was awarded a one-year free pass to travel in Deluxe and Super Luxury RTC services.

The incident occurred on April 15, when Suvarna, a pregnant woman returning to her hometown after medical tests in Nagarkurnool, experienced sudden labour pains near Adirala village in Peddakothapally mandal. ASHA worker Kanthamma, accompanying her, alerted the bus staff. Acting swiftly, con-



Suvarna delivered a healthy baby girl with Kanthamma's assistance, and both mother and child were later taken to a government hospital via an 108 ambulance.

Speaking on the occasion, MD Sajjanar praised the RTC team's quick thinking and compassion. "Such service during emergencies is the true spirit of RTC. We are proud of our staff and ASHA worker Kanthamma," he said.

In another touching gesture, the TGSRTC also felicitated Gorl Sumasri, a young woman from Chimmanaguntapalli village in Wanaparthy district who secured the 179th rank in the recently announced Group-1 exam results. Her father, late Gorl Krishnaiah, served as a conductor at Wanaparthy depot and passed away during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognising her achievement, Sajjanar congratulated Sumasri and encouraged her to uphold excellence in public service.

"Your success is a proud moment not just for your family but also for the RTC fraternity," he said.

Éxecutive Director Munishekar, Chief Personnel Manager Usha Devi, and depot managers Krishnamurthy and Venu Gopal from Hyderabad-2 and Wanaparthy also participated in the event.

WHATSAPP GROUP 'SID' EXPOSED

HYD teens addicted to e-cigarettes, vapes

In a major crackdown, the Telangana Anti-Narcotics Bureau (TGANB) and Hyderabad City Police have busted a city-wide illegal e-cigarette and vape distribution WhatsApp group named 'SID'. The operation targeted vulnerable youth and school-going children, many of whom were lured into the racket via flashy product ads shared on the

During anti-drug awareness campaigns near prominent schools and colleges in Abids - including Little Flower School, St Mary's Jr College, Rosary Convent, and others suspicious activity was flagged by teachers concerned. Acting on these inputs, TGANB traced the illegal network back to Sadiq Lalani and his brother Anil Lalani, residents of Nampally.

Investigations revealed that the accused used the WhatsApp group SID, with nearly 500 members, to advertise new stock of banned e-cigarettes and vapes. Orders were placed via UPI, wallets and bank transfers, not only through the accused's accounts but also using those of his sister, parents' friends and childhood associates to evade detection.

Over 13 juveniles were found actively engaged in purchasing these products.



minors are at high risk of falling into deeper drug abuse. Local police will visit their homes to counsel parents and offer intervention.

The accused sourced banned items from Amit (New Delhi) and Waseem (Mumbai). Financial transactions exceeding Rs 50,000 were routed via hawala operators Mangi Ramji Goutĥam and CR Sharma while smallpayments used regular banking. Deliveries were made using platforms like Rapido, Uber and DTDC courier, raising questions about negligence on their part for failing to screen suspicious parcels.

During the raid on Sadiq Lalani's residence, officials seized 7 cartons containing a total of 1,217 e-cigarettes, valued at approximately Rs 25 lakh. The haul included popular brands like Elfbar, POD Salt, Waka, Ignite, Juul and

Additionally, Rs 18,440 in cash, \$225 USD and \$100 Canadian Dollars were recovered. Bank records suggest the racket generated over Rs 1 crore in sales across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Section, six to sanitation, five Department, Three each to

Engineering Administration, Health, Land Acquisition and Estates, two each to Projects, UBD, Lakes, Electrical, Finance, Elections

and UCD, one each to Advertisement, Vigilance, and CPRO and one complaint was received via phone call.

Aircraft rescue training resumes

PNS HYDERABAD

GMR Aero Academy (GMR AA), accredited aviation training institution, announced the recommencement of its Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) training programme on 21st April 2025 at its Hyderabad campus.

The internationally recog-

nised ARFF programme, which had previously trained over 350 personnel in Hyderabad hetween 2013-2018, will resume with its 9th batch starting May 14, 2025. The 24-week programme features ICAO-compliant curriculum, hands-on training with modern firefighting equipment, and instruction from industry-leading faculty.

TAKING BRIBES ACROSS TELANGANA

Five officials, TV reporter caught

PNS HYDERABAD

In a sweeping crackdown on corruption, the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on April 21 apprehended five government officials and one television reporter across four districts for allegedly demanding and accepting bribes for routine official work. The arrests were made in quick succession, exposing deeprooted irregularities in departments ranging from revenue and municipal administration to police and engineering In the most high-profile

case, Sudharshanam Raghu, Deputy Executive Engineer at Nagaram Municipality in Rangareddy district, was caught demanding Rs 1.30 lakh and accepting Rs 1 lakh through outsourced work inspectors V Rakesh and V Suresh. The bribe was collected to clear CC road bills worth Rs 11 lakh. The ACB recovered the amount from Rakesh, whose hands later tested positive during chemical verifica-In Jangaon district, Vineet

Kumar, Revenue Inspector at the Chilpur Tahsildar office, was arrested for accepting a complainant for processing a mutation file. The money, placed on the back seat of the officer's car, was recovered and confirmed through chemical tests.

A more sensational case emerged from Manuguru in Bhadradri Kothagudem, where Inspector of Police Soma Satish Kumar and Big TV reporter Mittapalli Gopi were caught red-handed while dealing with a Rs 4 lakh bribe. The bribe was allegedly demanded to ensure the omission of names from a sensitive FIR. A partpayment of Rs 1 lakh was

recovered from the reporter, whose hands and clothes tested positive for bribe-related chemicals.

In Nizamabad's Armoor, Senior Assistant N Srinivasa Sharma from the Panchayat Raj Division was caught accepting Rs 7,000 for processing Fund Transfer Order documents. The bribe was recovered from his desk during the operation.

All the accused were arrested and produced before the respective ACB Special Courts in Warangal and Hyderabad. Officials confirmed that investigations are ongoing.

Intermediate results to be declared today

PNS HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) will release the results for the Intermediate Public Examination (IPE) March 2025 on Tuesday, April 22 at 12 noon.

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka will officially announce the results. He will be accompanied by Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar.

This year, a total of 9,96,971 students appeared for the IPE exams held from March 5 to March 25.

Among them 4,88,448 were first-year Intermediate students, 4,40,788 were regular second-year students and 67,735 were private second-year candidates.

The examinations were conducted across 1,532 centres, including 400 government sector junior colleges and additional centres in private colleges and

Telangana





HYDERABAD | TUESDAY | APRIL 22, 2025

45 beneficiaries get Rs 1 lakh each

PNS YADADRI

Government authorities are very strict in adhering to rules while taking measurements of Indiramma houses built up to basement level. They have been clearing bills of the beneficiaries who conformed to the rules.

Accordingly, the State government credited Rs 1 lakh each into the bank accounts of 45 beneficiaries who successfully completed construction of Indiramma Houses up to basement level.

They clearly specify that if the total plinth area falls below 400 sft or exceeds 600 sft, the beneficiaries' bills would not be cleared under any circumstances.

Moreover, if the structure was built using the existingor old wall, the prospect of clearing the bills would be poor, warn the officials.

The officials insist the beneficiaries to change their structure conforming to the rules so

that their bills will be cleared. In all, 2,01,977 have applied for Indiramma houses from 17 mandals of the district. But, the officials cleared the applications of only 52,109 at the Grama Sabhas.

They have sanctioned 758 houses in 17 villages of 17 mandals. Of them, work on 456 houses has been grounded and construction of 83



houses has been completed up to the basement.

INDIRAMMA INDLU

The officials took measurements of houses and found that 12 houses did not conform to the rules. The plinth area of some houses falls less than 400 sft while that of some other houses exceeded 600 sft. Besides, some other houses were built merging the old walls with the struc-

The officials have advised the beneficiaries to correct the mistakes, saying that their bills are not going to be cleared otherwise.

Of the 71 beneficiaries who

adhered to the rules while constructing their house, the government sanctioned Rs 45 lakh at the rate of Rs 1 lakh to each of the 45 beneficiaries. The money has been credited into the bank accounts of beneficiaries. The officials prepared bills with regard to 26

other beneficiaries They assured the beneficiaries that the amount will be credited into their bank

FARMERS TO RECEIVE UNIQUE BHUDHAAR CARD

'Bhu Bharati-2025' to resolve all land issues: Minister Ponguleti

Telangana Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy stated that the newly introduced Bhu Bharati-2025 legislation will bring justice to every farmer involved in cultivation and ensure equitable land rights for the poor, marginalized and backward com-

Participating as the chief guest in an awareness seminar organised in Chandampet mandal of Nalgonda district on Monday, the Minister emphasised that Bhu Bharati is a flagship initiative by the State government aimed at resolving longstanding land issues.

He revealed that four mandals have been selected as pilot zones under the new policy, with the pilot project expected to conclude by the end of April. From June 2, land disputes in these mandals will be addressed permanently.
Additionally, from May 1, one mandal in each district will be selected under the pilot phase, with Chandampet mandal being considered due to its underdeveloped status.

As part of the initiative, revenue officials at the level of Tahsildars will visit each village to accept landrelated grievances directly from farmers, who will not be required to pay any fee for resolution. The State government also plans to deploy 6,000 licenced surveyors and assign 10,695 village administration

officers starting early next month.



Telangana Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy addressing an awareness programme on Bhu Bharati in Chandampet mandal of Nalgonda district on Monday

Minister Srinivas Reddy added that every landholder will receive a unique 'Bhudhaar' card, similar to Aadhaar, with a dedicated land account number. A new legal provision mandates that land surveys be conducted at the time of registration to avoid future disputes. The government aims to address the 926,000 pending 'Saada Bainama' (unregistered land deed) applications by validating and regularising eligible cases.

He assured that land given under de-limited forest areas and during resettlement processes would be reassessed and rightful cultivators will receive legal titles. "In the past, the public had to visit government offices under the Dharani system. With Bhu Bharati, the system

itself will reach the people," he said. Local MLA Balu Nayak, who

presided over the meeting, praised the government for crafting a 100year sustainable land legislation. He requested that Chandampet, like Tirumalagiri Sagar, be prioritised as a pilot mandal, and called for proper enjoyment surveys and resolution of forest-assigned land dis-

He also appealed for additional allocation of Indiramma housing units under special quotas for SC/ST families in Devarakonda constituency. He highlighted that the Dindi Lift Irrigation Project, launched with Rs. 1,800 crore in funding after the present government took office, will provide irrigation to 150,000 acres.

3 killed as two cars collide

Three persons, including a woman, were killed and six injured when two cars collided head-on at the Venkatraopeta gate in

Maize drenched

at Nagarjurnool

market yard

Heavy rains lashed the district

on Monday leading to drenching of thousands of bags of

maize brought to the market

yard here in the absence of any arrangements to save the

maize crop. The farmers are concerned over the lightning

rain playing havoc with their

The market committee offi-

cials should have made arrangements like providing tarpaulins to protect the maize

lives.

PNS NAGARKURNOOL

Md Ghouse, Ali and Azeem Begum. **GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA** Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department FORM - VII

Kaudipallimandal on Hyderabad-Medak part of the national highway 765 on the intervening night between Sunday and

Monday. The deceased were identified as

DECLARATION Act, 2013 (Central Act 38(2013) and as per the state rule 25 (1)

Collector's Office File No.G3/2945/2024 Gazette No. 31/2025

an extent of Acres 18.04 Gts in Potlapalli village of Husnabad mandal o Siddiped etatrict for public purpose Le. for excession of Minors and Sub Minors on Distributary 4 of Gouravelly reservoir's Left. Main. Canal Accordingly, a decision has been taken in this regard.

Therefore a declaration has been issued to acquire the land with the following measurements in Pottopelli village of Husrabad Mandal of Siddipet district for public purpose is. for excassion of minors, subminoss and distributory-4 of Gouravelly reservoir's left main canal as

SCHEDULE

SD Babu S/o Bashamiya (0.04)

Mutuku Mallareddy S/o Saireddy (0.14)

Kantala Vanaja W/o Ramreddy (0.08)

SD Maheer Pasha (0.07)

SD Sarver (0.03)

Gujjala Nagireddy

Devisani Rajareddy

Devasani Rajireddy

359 Dry/ 0.07 Devasani Narasimha Reddy Palta Sio Yadava Reddy (0.07)

8 358 Dryf 0.13 Jegiri Srinivas Pata Sio Ramaswami (0.13)

0358 Dryf 0.05 Sio Lingeiah (0.0150)

4586 Dry/ 0.15 Chepyala Mallaiah

Gajavelli Ramulu Sio Venkataiah (0.0350)

Battini Rajitha Wo Yellalah (0.17)

Chiluveru Laxeni W/o Srinivas (0.

0.13 Dasivelli Rajaiah S/o Srinivas (0.13

Silveru Mondaiah Sio Komuraiah (0.19)

Rangu Yellalah Sib Venkalah (0.02)

Bandi Lingalah Sio Odalah (0.0250) 0.12 Bandi Kondalah S/o Odalah (0.0250)

Marka Chandraiah Sio Rangalah (0.029

Bandi Kondalah S/o Odalah (0.02)

Anagandula Raju S/o Venkatalah (0.10)

Sio Venkataiah (0.15)

Pry 0.09 Rangu Yellaiah S/o Venkaiah (0.09)

15/582 Dryf 0.06 Sliveru Mondaiah Slo Komuraiah (0.06

21 556 Dry/ 0.22 Bandi Lingalah Sio Odalah (0.02)

23 572 Protein 0.13 Marka Chandralah S/o Rangalah (0.13)

24 568 Dryf 0.23 Mamindia Shartha Wo Sankaraiah (0.14) Pertei Anagandula Rajawya (0.09)

Orar 0.06 MD Sayed (0.06)

36 57 Profile 0.04 Basineddy Venkatreddy S/o Narsimha Reddy (0.04)

Orac 0.04 Kaliepali Malaiha S/o Pochaiah (0.04)

SE SEC Cox 0.01 Kolluri Uppelalah (0.01)

48 521 Dry 0.05 Topparaboine Chandraigh Sio Balaigh (0.03)

Dryf 0.06 Regula Rajalah

40 PORT 0.15 Regula Veeramallu

S 483 Dryf 0.18 Regule Ayochya S/o Lingalah (0.09)

7 467 Cry 0.07 Tatipamula Mallaiah (0.07)

3 | 370 | Dy Potal (0.17 | Manaveni Rajaiah (0.17).

371 DyFoto 0.20 Barnendia Mallesham,

381 Dy Pots 0.37 Road (0.02)

Extent 4.24

Total Extent 18.04

8 468 PK 0.08

S/o Mallaigh (0.05)

Regula Lingalah S/o Veeramallu (0.05)

Wlo Kanakalah (0.04)

Tipparaboina Balaiah

excavation of Minor 2R of D2 on Gouravelly Left Side Mai Canal from KM 5.495 to KM 6.525

Devasani Sushila Dio Rajireddy (0.33)

Kurmelli Ramulu Sib Mallalah (0.10)

Bandi Sammalah Sip Yellalah (0.13)

Yeluguri Ramulu S/o Ramalah (0.25)

Yeluguri Rajanna Sio Srihari (0.17)

Marka Chandra Goud (0.0050)

Marka Yellaiah Sio Mallaiah (0.09)

DyPota 0.03 Devasani Sushila Dio Rajireddy (0.

Ramesh & Nagesh (0.20)

Karra Aruna (0.09)

Sayed Matkar (0.21

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& Sons (0.02)

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Regula Chandraiah S/o Veersiah (0.0

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Toy 0.13 Taguram Ramaswamy
S/o Venkatalah (0.13)

33 534 Charles 0.09 Tatipamula Sinu Sio Malaiah (0.09) 33 533 Charles 0.23 Gurthuri Chandramouli (0.23)

Sio Bhoamreddy (0.01)

Sio Laxmareddy (0.09)

from the rain.

In Mammayipalli of Bijinepalli mandal, electric poles got uprooted under the impact of heavy gales accompanying rain. Óverhead elec-MD Maheer Pasha 2 386 Dryf (0.32 Sio Sayed Pasha (0.08) tric cables got snapped and dangerously lying on the ground. Two poultry farms on outskirts Mahadevanpalli were razed to the ground under the impact It poured heavily in

Parvatayapalli and its adjacent villages causing extensive damage to mango crops. The farmers have been appealing to government to come to their rescue.



89% of ration card holders collect quota of fine rice

PNS KARIMNAGAR

The ration card holders, who were reluctant to receive the coarse variety of rice distributed through the fair-price shops earlier, have been lining up to the fair-price shops as the State government started distributing fine variety of rice from April 1 to the card hold-

of fine variety of rice was started, but the distribution of 70% of the rice to the cardholders has been through within 10 days. The ration shops were bursting at the seams with the card-holders flocking them all these days.

According to official reports, 89% of the ration card-holders received fine variety of rice across the State as on Saturday last. Gauzing the response, the FP dealers have been keeping their outlets open till the last card-holder received his was distributed among the ration cards is 5.71 lakh.

supply of fine variety of rice. The total number of ration

cards across the State is 90,40,196 with a total number of 2.85 crore beneficiaries. Earlier, only 77.50 lakh card holders got the coarse variety of rice released, leaving the rice meant for distribution among 13 lakh card holders with the

With the Congress regime to card holders, the beneficiaries are keen to get their quota of rice released.

During April 1 to 19, 1,67,017 tonnes of fine variety of rice was collected by 80,27,290 card holders. During the corresponding period in March, 72,50,906 card holders collected 1.49 tonnes of coarse variety of rice. Comparatively, 17,019 tonnes of fine variety of rice was distributed to 8 lakh card holders in April. So far 89% of the fine variety of rice card holders. However, officials predict that by the month-end 95% of the ration card holders would collect their quota of rice. Among 31 districts in the State, fine variety of rice distribution ranged between 85 and 95%. It is pertinent to note here that the distribution of rice in Medchal and Rangareddy districts exceeds the total number of ration cards. By virtue of the nortability of the ration cards migrant people to Hyderabad have been collecting their rice quota from the local FP shops. Therefore, the number of persons collecting their quota in Medchal and Rangareddy districts has increased. In Medchal district, the total number of ration cards is 5.28 lakh. However, 5.90-lakh card holders collected their quota in the district. Similarly, 6.02-lakh card holders collected their quota in Rangareddy district,

where the total number of

Rs 1500-cr solar power line works progressing at brisk pace

PNS CHEVELLA

Works related to bringing solar power to Telangana from Bidar in Karnataka to cater to electricity needs of new industrial units to be set up not only on the outskirts of Hyderabad district but also in other parts of the State is progressing at a brisk pace.

For the purpose, the State g works related to laying 765 KV solar power line at a cost of Rs 1,500 crore. The works are under way in Rangareddy, Vikarabad and

Hyderabad districts. The solar power line would be linked to the power grid at Mamidipalli in Maheswaram on the outskirts of Hyderabad. In all, 624 electric towers are being built all along the distance between Bidar and Maheshwaram, separated by 240 km. In all, 306 towers are being built from Bidar to Nawabpet in Chevella Assembly constituency.



Similarly, 318 towers are being built between the Chevella outskirts and Kandukuru in Maheswaram. The land is being acquired from farmers ranging between 650 square yards to 1,500 square yards to erect

To lay the 765 KV powerline, the farmers were promised a compensation of Rs 700 a square yard. However, upon protest by the farmers of Regadi Ghanapur, Devarampalli and Mamidipalli regions.

since their land prices have escalated, they called on Collector Narayanareddy and sought justice. The collector ordered Chevella RDO Chandrakala to probe into the She submitted a report

demanding higher compensation

favourable to the farmers leading to the government increasing the payment of compensation from Rs 700 a square yard to Rs 1,850.

It would put a burden of Rs 250 crore on the government. However, the government already disbursed Rs 125 crore to the farmers.

In the first phase, solar power would be given to Fabcity from Maheswaram. In the second phase, Mahabubnagar will get the solar power supply.

Similarly, in the third phase Warangal will get the solar power supply. In all, 2500 MW of solar power would be distributed to various industrial units in these

Grandson of Kumram Bhim in dire straits

251.67 acres of forest lands encroached

PNS KUMRAMBHIM **ASIFABAD**

PNS SIRCILLA

Yellareddypeta

Kumram Sone Rao, the grandson of Adivasi revolutionary leader Kumram Bhim who revolted against the erstwhile Nizam rulers with the slogan of Jal, Jameen and Jangal, and his he called on the local MLA to spouse have been attending NREGS works to support the MLA and also to the District family, indicating the dire poverty of his family. Sone Rao lives action. Sone Rao had applied to in Dobe village of Kumrambhim the government seeking similar Asifabad district and attending support that was given to

There is indiscriminate felling of

trees in the forest area, which is

spread over 379.14 square km in

the district. As a result of cutting

down of the trees in the forest area,

the green cover in the forest area

did not exceed 18.78%, due to lib-

eral felling of trees in Veernapalli,

NREGS works along with his wife Gouri Bai for the past 15 days to earn their daily bread.

Earlier, the State government sanctioned five acres of land, but Sone Rao family did not own a roof over their head.

Earlier, on several occasions represent his problems to the Collector, but there was no Gussadi dancer Raju to him also. He also sought disbursement of pension every month to support his family.

The government authorities remember people of eminence like Kumuram Bhim and contend with paying glowing tributes to them recalling their achievements and forget to support the families of such eminent persons.

Tribals owed their enjoyment of rights of Podu lands to the struggles waged by Komuram Sone Rao's family.

Bhim. Several tribals have been tilling their own lands and pursued good education and landed in good jobs. They owe all this to the sacrifices made by leaders like Komuram Bhim.

The Sone Rao family is languishing in poverty without any money with them. His pitiable condition became a point of discussion on the lips of everyone.

The people have been appealing to the government to come immediately to the rescue of

ing the progress at the district

level, the authorities are apparent-

ly not focusing on the problems at

the field level.

forest personnel.

BHATTI SLAMS BRS OVER DECADE OF NEGLECT

Madira job mela empowers 5,000 youth in a day

PNS MADIRA

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday inaugurated a massive job fair at Madira, providing employment opportunities to over 5,000 youth in a single day. Speaking at the event, Bhatti launched a pointed attack on the previous BRS government, alleging that in a state achieved after years of struggle, jobs were cornered by a select few political elites while lakhs of youth remained directionless.

"Our government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, has taken a three-pronged approach to employment generation," Bhatti said. He listed

the first layer as filling government vacancies, recalling that the TSPSC was cleaned up and a job calendar released. "In our first year, we filled 56,000 posts. Another 30,000 recruitments are in the pipeline," he

The second component, he explained, focuses on creating a supportive ecosystem for multinational companies to invest in Telangana.

"As part of this, the CM and Industries Minister Sridhar Babu went to Davos and secured MoUs worth Rs. 1.8 lakh crore," he said, adding that the CM's ongoing Japan tour is also aimed at bringing global investments and job opportunities to the state.

GREATER WARANGAL MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

TENDER NOTICE No. EE-III/GWMC/CTN/02/e-proc/2025-26, Date: 19.04.2025

Reserved for SC (2 No. of works): Rs.6.40 Lakins; Reserved for Waddera (1 No. of work): Rs.1.20 Lakins Total (14 Nos. of works)

Starting date for downloading: 22-04-2025 from 10.30 am onwards 30-84-2025 up to 3.00 P.M Opening of Bids (Technical) 30-84-2025 at 4.00 P.M.

'urther details can be seen on @ "e" procurement market place @ https://tendec.telangana.gov.in ovinloading of works starts from 22-94-2925, 19.39 A.M onwards DIFR.R.O. No.: 621-PRICL/ADVINI2025-36, Dt. 21-04-2025 Greater Warrangal Municipal Corporation

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

enders are invited from Registered Contractors/Agencies for the works listed on o tender.telangens.gov.in*for (14) work under General Funds for Rs.45.29 Lakhs, ABSTRACT OF WORKS

Rs.45.29 Lakhs SCHEDULE OF TENDER PROCESS

ontact Details: Executive Engineer, Nakkalagutta Circle, GWNC. Cell No. 7688888882, email

Sub-Minors on Destination—4 of Country My reservoirs List Main Carret, only in the villagers is getting displaced and hence the question of their rehabilitation and resettlement does not arise.

Minor of cool, itom-stone, state or other minorals lying under the said land or any porticular portion of the said land are not needed. The plan of the above said land to be acquired may be inspected in the office of the Revienue Divisional Officer, Huseabad during working hours on any working day. Sdi-Land Acquisition Officer & Sdi-Add. Collector Sdi-Dist. Collector

Raverue Divisional Officer,

The declaration has been issued for the acquisition of the land as no objections to the acquisition of land, responding to the preliminary notification under Section 15 of the Central Act 30/2013 were received within the

Since the land acquisition is for the purpose of excavation of Minors and

Yellareddypeta mandal, some

Rudrangimandals of the district, where the forest cover was very According to a report submitted to the vigilance department, the forest officials reported that 251.67 acres have been encroached under various forest

In Gollapalli section of the



unidentified persons set fire to the trees in forest area on the outskirts of Gundaram village. The officials have identified that at least 50 hectares of land has been encroached in this area. In Timmapur, Venkatapur and Guntapelli Thanda areas huge

trees were felled to convert 12 hecatres of land conducive for practice of agriculture.

The forest department has identified that at least 40 hectares of land on the outskirts of Garjanapalli village has been encroached. In Vanpalli forest area of Veernapalli mandal, the tribals have been practicing Podu.

In Konaraopeta mandal's Sivangalapalli and Vattimalla villages there is confusion over the demarcation of boundaries of lands belonging to revenue department and forest department. In Timmapur and Rudrangi mandals, in several tribal hamlets forest land has been levelled and

Podu is being practiced. Field visits are very rare in the forest department. Barring review-

Annually, saplings are being planted as part of the plantation drive. The authorities give no significance to safeguard the trees in the forest area instead of giving priority to safeguard the saplings planted as part of the avenue plantation. Therefore, miscreants have been cutting down trees in the forest area. The forest department officials go on record that they have taken possession of the forest land from encroachers. But, on the contrary they would have to face severe opposition at the field level, fueling doubts in the minds of the people on the claims of the

ACROSS THE STATES



Man lynched, another injured over 'goat theft'

person was allegedly lynched by a mob and another suffered injuries in the attack by locals over "goat theft" at Bokul tea All Julies in the attack by located the state in Assam's Dibrugarh district on Monday, police said. The duo had come to Hatigarh Bokpara Division of the tea estate on a two-wheeler early in the morning, and locals later caught them while allegedly trying to steal goats, they said. The mob then assaulted the two persons, leading to the death of one and injuring the other grievously, a police officer said. The twowheeler was also set ablaze by enraged locals, he said. Top officials, including the district commissioner and superintendent of police, rushed to the spot following the incident to ensure the situation remained under control. The identity of the deceased is yet to be ascertained. The injured person is undergoing treatment at the Assam Medical College and Hospital here, and his condition is stated to be critical, the official said. "We are carrying out the initial investigation and the culprits will be brought to book," Dibrugarh Deputy Commissioner Bikram Koiri said.



83 people in custody for Sambhal violence

man was arrested for alleged involvement in the November 24 violence in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal, in Which four people died following clashes between locals and security personnel during a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid, police said. With this, the total number of persons arrested for the violence rose to 83. Police said Mohd Asif (22) was arrested for allegedly being involved in the violence, Sambhal Police said in a statement. Asif allegedly told cops during interrogation that when a crowd gathered at the Hindu Pura Kheda and Nakhasa crossing on November 24, he set fire to police vehicles and pelted stones and bricks "with the intention of attacking and killing" police personnel. Asif, who is from Sambhal district, has been sent to jail, they said. Sambhal has been tense since November 24 when violence took place during a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid in the Kot Garvi area of the city.



Chandrapur sizzles at 45.6° C

handrapur recorded a temperature of 45.6 degrees Celsius on Monday, becoming the hottest city in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region, an official said. The district administration has issued a heatwave alert for three days, advising citizens to take precautions when they step out. As per the Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC), Nagpur, 11 cities in Vidarbha have recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius, with Chandrapur recording the highest 45.6 degrees Celsius. The district has been facing intense heat waves since last week, and a heatwave alert has been issued in one or two places in Chandrapur district till April 24. Bramhapuri tehsil recorded a temperature of 45 degrees Celsius and remained the second hottest city in the region.

'SORRY STATE OF AFFAIRS'

SC slams Delhi govt over delay in premature release of prisoners

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Calling it as sorry state of affairs, the Supreme Court on Monday rapped the Delhi government over the delay in the premature release of prisoners. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan also censured the sentence review board (SRB) for rejecting prayers of premature release.

"Sorry state of affairs prevails in the manner in which the Delhi government is dealing with the issue of premature release of prisoners. There is much to be said about it," the bench said. The top court observed despite the assurance of the Delhi government nothing was done and called for a deeper probe of the manner in which the issue of premature release was being handled.

The top court had previously slammed the Delhi government over the delay in deciding remission plea filed by 114 convicts, including a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist who was convicted for conspiring to wage war against the country and was awarded life imprisonment

'NAGRIK DEVO BHAVA'

PM's good governance mantra to bureaucrats

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday asked civil servants to follow the principle of "Nagrik Devo Bhava" while redressal of issues of underprivileged people, and emphasised last-mile delivery to ensure inclusivity in develop-

Addressing the 17th Civil Services Day function here, he said the civil servants should see themselves not just as administrators but as architects

of a developed India. Modi said that India has become the most populous country in the world and emphasised the prioritisation of saturation in basic amenities and a strong focus on last-mile

Citing evolving needs and aspirations of the citizens, he said that the civil service must adapt to contemporary challenges to remain relevant.

The prime minister said that the achievements so far must be surpassed manifold, setting higher benchmarks for

He stressed the importance of human judgment in a tech-nology-driven world, urging



of 'Nagrik Devo Bhava' (citizens are like god), likening it to the ethos of "atithi devo bhava" (guests are like god) and called on civil servants to fulfill their responsibilities with dedication and compassion.

Modi invoked the principle

tive, listen to the voices of the underprivileged, understand their struggles, and prioritise He highlighted that this resolving their issues. Modi invoked the principle

of "Nagrik Devo Bhava" (citizens are like god), likening it to the ethos of "atithi devo bhava" (guests are like god) and called on civil servants to fulfill their responsibilities with dedication and compassion.

civil servants to remain sensi-

The prime minister emphasised the need for renewed commitments to improve

nutrition for citizens and declared that the ultimate goal must be 100 per cent coverage and 100 per cent impact.

approach has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty in the past decade and expressed confidence that it will lead to a poverty-free India.

Modi said micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) sector, startups, and young entrepreneurs in India have an unprecedented opportunity amid global changes.

The prime minister said that if a small country provides better ease of compliances to its industries, it could outpace Indian startups, and added that there was a need for India to continuously evaluate its position in global best prac-

He said that while the goal of Indian industries is to create globally best products, the goal of India's bureaucracy must be to provide the world's best ease of compliance environment.



Focus on improving healthcare: Nadda

Expresses concern over underutilisation of health funds by states

PNS NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister J P Nadda on Monday expressed strong concern over the underutilisation of allocated health funds by states and asked them to focus on improving healthcare infrastructure.

Chairing a session at the 17th Civil Services Day celebrations here, Nadda said, "I will not allow this narrative to continue that there's no money or capacity to spend it. Utilisation certificates are not even submitted for funds already given."

He recounted a recent visit to a state where allocated funds remained unspent for three years due to repeated tendering and delay in equipment procurement.
"Models have changed, new

versions have come, but the tender process hasn't even begun," he said.

Calling implementation the crux of the problem, Nadda said, "We can aim for the world's largest health coverage program...we will not let it go

down the drain."

He stressed that accountability and coordination across all administrative levels are essential, especially when outof-pocket expenditure for health has reduced from 62 per cent to 39 per cent — calling it a clear sign of the benefit to common citizens.

Highlighting the need for administrative reform within the health sector, Nadda said that many officials, including state health directors and chief medical officers, lack proper training and are hesitant to make decisions.

'Abuse of power to dent reputation of Sonia, Rahul'



Chidambaram on **ED** action in **National Herald** case

PNS NEW DELHI

The "political assault" on the integrity and reputation of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi is an "abuse of power", former Union minister P Chidambaram said on Ionday as he questioned ED chargesheet against the Congress leaders in the National Herald case.

Addressing a press conference at the Delhi Congress office, Chidambaram alleged that the facts of the case made it clear that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) at the behest of its "political masters is carrying on a vendetta against" the opposition party leaders.

There were no proceeds of the crime in the case and hence there could not be a money laundering case and as such the ED has no jurisdiction in it, the senior Ćongress leader claimed and asserted that the party will "prevail over the assault"

"The entire Congress party will resist and fight back this political assault on its leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. Truth will prevail, justice will prevail, we will prevail," he said.

Defending the Gandhis, Chidambaram said in the conversion of loan to equity that happened in the case of Associated Journals Limited (AJL) and Young Indian (YI), the Congress loaned Rs 90 crore to AJL over a period of 10-12 years. That loan was Young In is irrecoverable, he said. "Therefore the loan was converted into equity," he said and added it is a well-known instrument employed by the

Recently, Chidambraram said, the Government of India (GOI) converted the liability of Rs 36,000 crore owned by Vodafone India to it, into equity. Now, the Government of India equity in Vodafone India is 48.99 per cent, he said.

Kharge's rally: Cong sacks Buxar chief

PNS PATNA

A day after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's rally in Bihar witnessed a thin turnout, the party on Monday sacked the Buxar district unit chief over "irregularities and lack of coordination" in organising the event.

Buxar District Congress pres-Stadium."

ident Manoj Kumar Pandey has been suspended indefinitely and stripped of all organisational posts, Rajesh Rathod, chairman of the media cell of Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee (BPCC), said. "The party has decided to suspend Pandey from all posts he was holding in the organisation, including that of Buxar District Congress president, with immediate effect due to lack of coordination and irregularities on his part in connection with the party's 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan' rally held at Dalsagar

Accused Rana wants to talk to family, moves court

2008 MUMBAI ATTACKS

PNS NEW DELHI

Jailed 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks accused Tahawwur Hussain Rana has moved a court seeking the permission to talk to his family members.

Rana moved a plea through his counsel on April 19 before special judge Hardeep Kaur, who on Monday directed the NIA to file a reply by April 23. The 64-year-old Pakistani-

origin Canadian businessman was on April 10 sent to 18 day custody by a court. The NIA alleged as a part of the criminal conspiracy,

accused David Coleman Headley, had discussed the entire operation with Rana before his visit to India.

Anticipating potential challenges, Headley sent an email to Rana detailing his belong-



ings and assets, the NIA told the court seeking his remand. Headley also informed

Rana about the involvement of Pakistani nationals Ilyas Kashmiri and Abdur Rehman, who are also accused in the case, in the plot, it alleged.

Rana, a close associate of 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks main conspirator David Coleman Headley alias Daood Gilani, a US citizen, was brought to India after the US Supreme Court on April 4 dismissed his review plea against his extradition.

ISRO achieves docking of SpaDeX satellites for second time: Min



PNS NEW DELHI

The Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully executed the second docking of the two satellites which are part of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission, Union minister

Jitendra Singh said on Monday. "#ISRO

SPADEX Update: Glad to inform that the second docking of satellites has been accomplished successfully," Singh, the science and technology minister, said in a post on X.

The SpaDeX mission launched on December 30 last year when the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) placed the two satellites -- SDX01 and SDX02 -- in orbit to demonstrate the docking

'In race for tech supremacy, India can ill-afford to be mere spectator'

PNS NEW DELHI

The race for technological supremacy has begun, and India can ill-afford to be a mere spectator in it, Lt Gen Amardeep Singh Aujla, the Army's Master General Sustenance (MGS), said on Monday.

He called on the defence industry to "march together" with the armed forces to create a secure future for the armed forces in the plains or country.

In his address at an 'Industry Interactive Session' hosted by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry here, Lt Gen Aujla impressed upon the representatives of the domestic defence industry the importance of "customised solutions", as what is needed for Siachen will be different from the requirements for the

the desert.

"I am also looking at a capability that this industry should have. At the end of the day, even if we are in a conflict, you should be able to give me a solution based on my requirements within the earliest possible timeframe. So, that is the level of investment and R&D that has to happen,"

Cong plans march against proposed anti-urban naxal law

PNS MUMBAI

Mumbai Congress president Varsha Gaikwad on Monday demanded the withdrawal of the proposed law against urban naxalism in Maharashtra, alleging it will be misused by the government to suppress the

people's voice against injustice. Gaikwad said a protest march will be organised in Mumbai on Tuesday against the bill, scheduled to be introduced in the monsoon session of the state legislature.

Missionaries of Charity in

Kolkata and met the Indian lead-

ership.

The first pontiff to visit India

was Paul IV, who visited Mumbai

in 1964 to attend the International

Eucharistic Congress.Modi, along

with External Affairs Minister S

Jaishankar first met Pope Francis

in Vatican City in October 2021

on the sidelines of the G20



US V-P Vance, family visit Delhi's Cottage Emporium; admire Indian handicrafts

PNS NEW DELHI

US Vice President JD Vance, accompanied by his Indian-origin wife Usha and their three children, on Monday visited the Central Cottage Industries Emporium (CCIE) located in Janpath in the national capital, where they purchased some traditional İndian handicrafts.

The Vances, who landed in Delhi this morning, began their India visit with a morning tour of the Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple, situated near the banks of the Yamuna. Later, they stopped by the Cottage Emporium, a government-run showroom known for authentic handloom and handicraft products from across India.

"It was a wonderful visit and he (Vance) enjoyed it a lot. We were quite enthusiastic. He also purchased some items from our showroom," CCIE

General Manager Meera Somani told PTI videos.

According to Cottage Emporium staff, the Vances picked up wooden items, handloom products, and brassware. "They were very happy to see Indian handicraft and handloom products under one roof," Anil Rajak, a staffer,

Established in 1952, the Central Cottage Industries Emporium was envisioned as a platform to revive India's craft heritage, impacted by industrialization in the postcolonial era. For over seven decades, it has served as a cultural window to the world, supporting artisans and promoting traditional crafts.

The Vance family arrived in Delhi to a warm reception earlier in the day and was received at the airport by Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

A papal visit that could not fructify

PNS NEW DELHI

Pope Francis was likely to visit India next year but his sojourn could not materialise after he breathed his last on Monday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Pope Francis twice -in 2021 and 2024 -- and extended an invitation for him to visit India that the pontiff had accepted. Union minister George Kurian, who visited Vatican City last December, said the muchawaited visit was expected to take place after the celebrations of the jubilee year of Jesus Christ's birth by the Catholic Church in 2025.

came to New Delhi to preside over the concluding celebrations of the Special Assembly of Synod The last papal visit to India was of Bishops of Asia. He had met in 1999 when Pope John Paul II the then vice-president Krishan

Bihari Vajpayee. Pope John Paul II also visited India in February 1986 and toured different parts of the country, including the

The prime minister had extended an invitation to Pope Francis to visit India at an early Kant and prime minister Atal

date. Modi also met Pope Francis on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Apulia, Italy, in June last year and renewed the invitation for him to visit India

Summit in Rome.





Visa shock for Indian students

US revokes hundreds of student visas: 50 per cent affected are Indian students

n a move that has sparked concern across academic and diplomatic circles, the Trump administration has revoked student visas for hundreds of international students, with a staggering 50 per cent of the affected individuals hailing from India. The American Immigration Lawyers' Association (AILA) has revealed this information. AILA collected 327 reports of visa revocations and Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) terminations from students, attorneys, and university personnel. What is of concern to India is that this move disproportionately affects Indian nationals, followed by students from China (14 per cent), South Korea, Nepal, and Bangladesh. There are serious concerns about the transparency and consistency of the process, as the actions lack proper oversight and are leaving students with little to no recourse. The revocations are not only a personal and academic setback for the students involved but also reflect a growing unease in the international student community. Many have described the process as abrupt and arbitrary, with limited opportunities to appeal SEVIS terminations or clarify misunderstandings. For Indian students, who comprise one of the largest populations of international students in the United States, this development is deeply unsettling. These students invest heavily – both financially and emotionally — in pursuing higher education in the US. The visa revocations interrupt academic progress, affect employment opportunities tied to their studies, and, in many cases, may force them to leave the country abruptly. The psychological toll is equally significant. Students face uncertainty, fear of deportation, and the potential stigma of visa termination, which could affect future travel and academic prospects.

The ramifications of this policy move extend beyond individual students to American educational institutions. International students are a vital source of revenue for US universities, contributing billions of dollars annually through tuition and living expenses. Many graduate programmes in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) - areas critical to US innovation - rely heavily on international talent, particularly from India and China. With increasing visa uncertainties, universities may find it harder to attract top global students. This could result in lower enrolment numbers, loss of funding, and a diminished reputation for academic inclusiveness and excellence. Moreover, such measures may deter future applicants, who may opt for more welcoming countries such as Canada, Australia, or Germany. While the Trump administration has not offered detailed justifications for these specific revocations, the actions are consistent with its broader immigration stance.

Throughout his presidency, Donald Trump emphasised tightening immigration controls and "putting Americans first," often casting a sceptical eye on visa programmes — even those meant for students and skilled workers. One reason for these revocations may be tied to concerns about misuse of visa programmes, fraudulent enrolment, or security vetting. However, critics argue that such justifications are being applied too broadly, punishing legitimate students and tarnishing the US's image as a global education hub.

The Trump administration's decision to revoke a significant number of student visas, disproportionately affecting Indian nationals, marks a troubling development in US immigration policy. If left unchecked, such policies could shift global student mobility away from the US, undermining the nation's historical status as the premier destination for higher education.

<u> _eaderspeak</u>

Very sad news on the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis.

Pope Francis was compassionate and kind human being and

EDGARS RINKEVICS, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

On behalf of the people of Latvia I express my deep

condolences to all the Catholics and the Church.

he will be greatly missed.

India's expanding maritime vision

As India reimagines its role in the Indo-Pacific, this quiet yet profound pivot signals not only a strategic response to China's growing presence, but also a deeper civilisational reawakening rooted in partnership, not patronage

hen Prime Minister Narendra Modi first outlined India's $SAGAR\ vision -- Security\ and$ Growth for All in the Region in 2015 during a visit to Mauritius, few could have predicted how it would evolve into a sweeping geopolitical doctrine encompassing not only the Indian Ocean but the western coasts of Africa and beyond. Nearly a decade later, India's maritime strategy is undergoing a quiet yet profound transformation. From SAGAR, the nation is now navigating toward Mahasagar — literally, the "Great Ocean" — signalling a decisive pivot in India's foreign and security policy with Africa in clear sight. The SAGAR initiative, initially conceived to promote maritime security and economic cooperation among Indian Ocean nations, has served as a foundation for India's role as a "net security provider" in the region. But today's reality demands more than regional stewardship. The increasing footprint of China in the Indian Ocean, from Gwadar to Djibouti, and the growing strategic relevance of the western Indian Ocean island states, have prompted India to recalibrate. The shift to Mahasagar (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security And Growth Across Regions) represents not just a change in terminology but a fundamental reimagining of India's role in the Indo-Pacific.

At the heart of this transformation lies Mauritius, a small island nation with outsized significance. More than a maritime partner, Mauritius shares a cultural and civilisational bond with India that predates diplomatic relations. Home to a large Indian-origin population, Mauritius has become a trusted partner in India's security calculus. Over the years, India has extended grants, built infrastructure, supplied patrol vessels and aircraft, and helped set up coastal surveillance radar systems across the Mauritian archipelago. But it is the development of the Agalega Islands — with an airstrip and jetty capable of supporting military-grade assets — that best symbolises the quiet assertiveness of the Mahasagar vision.

Critics argue that India's investment in Agalega mimics the Chinese playbook of dual-use port development seen in Hambantota and Gwadar. However, the crucial difference lies in the nature of India's partnerships. Unlike China's debt-driven port diplomacy, India's maritime engagement rests on mutual respect, development cooperation, and the principle of shared security. The Indo-Mauritian relationship is one of kinship diplomacy — one that grows not just from strategic needs but from shared history and people-to-people ties.



But the Mahasagar doctrine does not stop at Mauritius. It casts a wider net — one that spans from Seychelles and Madagascar to Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania. India is increasing its naval engagements, signing

logistics and defence agreements, and offering capacity-building assistance across the African coast. The logic is strategic: the western Indian Ocean is not just a transit zone but a critical maritime highway for global trade, energy

routes, and naval mobility. With China making aggressive inroads through the Belt and Road Initiative and military bases like the one in Djibouti, India is asserting its own footprint — not by coercion, but through collaboration. The pivot to Mahasagar also highlights India's ambition to become a blue-water navy with global reach. Indian naval ships are now a common sight in African ports. Naval exercises, hydrographic surveys, humanitarian missions, and training programmes have become regular features of India-Africa maritime relations. The Indian Navy is no longer a regional patrol force; it is fast becoming a symbol of India's strategic confidence, capable of shaping the security architecture of the

entire Indo-Pacific. Importantly, this transformation is not purely militaristic. The Mahasagar vision also embraces the idea of the blue economy — a sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and ecosystem health. India's support for maritime infrastructure, fisheries development, and coastal tourism in partner countries underscores its commitment to holistic maritime growth. It is a model that seeks not just security but shared prosperity.

The messaging is also clear. As China intensifies its presence through military bases and commercial ports, India is building friendships. Where Beijing offers loans, India offers trust. Where China sets up surveillance posts. India establishes radar stations with shared access. Where China builds harbours that could dock submarines, India helps build coast guard stations to fight piracy, smuggling, and maritime crime. This contrast is not lost on African nations seeking partners who respect sovereignty and sustainability. Domestically, the Mahasagar strategy aligns with India's broader geopolitical identity. As a civilisational power with ancient maritime traditions — from Chola expeditions to trade with East Africa and the Gulf — India is reclaiming its historical place in the oceanic realm. The Indian Ocean is not a frontier — it is India's historical highway, linking cultures, religions, and com-

merce. By integrating Africa into this vision, India is not expanding its reach; it is reawakening a dormant maritime consciousness.Ĭn geopolitical terms, this shift could not come at a more crucial time. As the global order becomes increasingly multipolar and the Indo-Pacific emerges as the new theatre of strategic competition, India's Mahasagar doctrine provides a distinct alternative.

It blends hard power with soft diplomacy, regional ambition with global responsibility, and tradition with modern strategy. It positions India not just as a counterweight to China, but as a civilisational ally to Africa — one whose rise is guided by partnership, not patronage. What began in 2015 as a regional security initiative has now matured into a grand ocean dream. The journey from SAGAR to Mahasagar is more than a maritime shift — it is a statement of

It tells the world that India is ready to lead not by dominance, but by example. And in doing so, it has found a natural partner in Africa and a reliable anchor in Mauritius. "An ocean for all, free and open, where every nation may sail in peace and security," aptly said Woodrow Wilson.

(The author is Professor, Centre for South Asian Studies, Pondicherry Central University, India.

India's demographic dividend at risk



BY KAJLEEN KAUR

ndia boasts a demographic dividend, with a working-age population (15–64 years) of around 67 per cent, which can propel economic growth. This momentous opportunity, however, necessitates optimising the potential of the available labour force by ensuring a reduction in unemployment and underemployment and building human capital.

The macroeconomic growth models explain long-term sustainable progress as a function of labour force growth and technology built over time with human capital.

India faces no dearth in population and therefore labour force, but it lacks education, which is necessary to develop individuals' productivity and foster technological advancements. Besides, the economy languishes with high unemployment, which fails to realise the so-called "demograph-

The India Employment Report 2024 shows the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) at 52 per cent, compared to 76 per cent in China. This indicates that nearly half of the possible dividend is forfended.

To further add to the woes, the female LFPR stands at 37 per cent in India, compared to an average of 70 per cent in China. This places India as the 13th lowest female LFPR.

soaring unemployment rates. Shockingly, they account for 83 per cent of the unemployed workforce. Even more disappointing is the share of youngsters with higher education in the total unemployed, which has almost doubled from 35.2 per cent in 2000 to 65 per cent in 2022.

This brings to the surface the grave reality that a large portion of the potential labour force capable of contributing to growth is dissipated.

More particularly, India adds 3 million graduates annually, but 33 per cent of them are unemployed or underemployed (CMIE, 2024). There exists a wide gap between industry requirements and the education system.

Only 15 per cent of our workforce has formal vocational training, compared to 70 per cent in South Korea (UNESCO). However, the Government's initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, and Skill India Digital Hub are trying to bridge this divide. The Economic Survey 2023-24 notes that the Indian economy needs to generate an average of nearly 78.5 lakh jobs annually until 2030, in the non-farm sector, to cater to the rising workforce. This is further distressed as around 90 per cent of the workforce is engaged in informal work, facing irregular work and income, absence of social security benefits, and substandard working conditions.

The manufacturing sector, which has huge untapped potential to absorb unskilled and semi-skilled labour that

The report also highlights that India's youth grapples with moves away from agriculture, contributes only 14 per cent to the GDP in India as compared to 27 per cent in China.

While the agrarian sector employs 43 per cent of the workforce, it contributes only 16 per cent to GDP. India's economic growth has been primarily driven by the services sector, which lacks employment absorption because of skill

Additionally, the advent of artificial intelligence is undeniably a threat to the already dismal employment situation, further aggravating the population-to-opportunities mismatch. There is an ardent need to prioritise labour-intensive manufacturing to engage unskilled labour, along with concentrated efforts to support MSMEs.

Moreover, the transforming nature of employment, such as the gig workforce, is expected to form 6.7 per cent of the non-agricultural workforce or 4.1 per cent of the total livelihood in India by 2029–30; the labour policy must ensure a robust minimum level of employment quality.

Most importantly, for India to harness its demographic dividend and not make it a missed opportunity, investment in skilled education is needed to nurture a workforce equipped with employable skills.

India's demographic dividend offers immense potential, but without addressing unemployment, skill gaps, and informal employment, it risks becoming a lost opportunity.

The writer is Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, SGGSCC, University of Delhi. Views are personal)

Letters to the Editor

SC reins in overreaching Governor

Madam — The Supreme Court has issued a timely and firm reminder to Governors across various states that they are not political gatekeepers or watchdogs, but constitutional functionaries. They are duty-bound to act within the framework of the Constitution, and failure to do so will invite judicial intervention — as seen recently in Tamil Nadu. The case involving Governor R N Ravi is a stark example. His tenure has been marred by political friction, constitutional brinkmanship, and disregard for democratic norms. The Supreme Court made it unequivocally clear: Governors cannot stall the legislative process or undermine the will of elected Governments. Under the Constitution, a Governor may return a bill once for reconsideration or reserve it for the President. Prolonged delays — stretching into years are unacceptable. Such actions are not only unconstitutional but also a dereliction of duty.

This ruling brings much-needed clarity and alignment between state and central governance. Just as the President must assent to a re-passed bill by Parliament, Governors must do the same at the state level. They have no veto powers based on political preference. By reaffirming that legislatures, not unelected officials, are the cornerstone of democracy, the Supreme Court has upheld the spirit of federalism. Its directive is both appropriate RK JAIN I BARWANI and timely.

UNESCO recognises Bhagavad Gita

Madam — This refers to the recent news, "Manuscripts of Bhagavad Gita, Natyashastra added to UNESCO register" (April 19). It is a matter of immense pride for the spiritual and cultural communities in India and abroad that manuscripts of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita and Bharat Muni's Natyashastra have been included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

The Bhagavad Gita holds a timeless place in the spiritual consciousness of India. The guidance imparted by Lord Krishna to Arjuna, through 700 verses across 18 chapters, offers eternal wisdom and remains relevant to this day.

Its teachings continue to illuminate the path for followers of Sanatan Dharma and inspire philosophical discourse worldwide. Similarly, the Natyashastra — an ancient treatise on performing arts — underscores India's deeprooted cultural traditions.

This international recognition reinforces the richness of India's intellectual and spiritual legacy. The inclusion of the Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra manuscripts in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register is a proud moment for India.

This global recognition highlights the enduring spiritual, philosophical, and cultural significance of these ancient texts, reaffirming India's profound contributions to the world's intellectual and artistic heritage.

YUGAL KISHORE SHARMA I FARIDABAD

Made in India gets global traction

Madam — India's "Made in India" initiative is gaining strong traction, positioning the country as a rising global manufacturing hub. Several developments signal this shift: India now produces 20 per cent of the world's iPhones, there's a notable rise in exports of Indian-manufactured weapons, and countries such as Canada are exploring collaboration on Vande Bharat Express trains.

The ongoing trade conflict between the United States and China is likely to accelerate this trend. With China threatening to withhold rare earth materials crucial for the manufacturing of weapons and electronics, the U.S. defence and tech sectors could face significant disruption.

This presents a unique opportunity for India to step up and fill the gap. Now is the opportune moment for India to aggressively promote its manufacturing sector.

With the right policies and strategic investments, this shift could lead to a substantial economic boost and elevate India's position in the global supply chain.

India's growing manufacturing capabilities, from iPhones to defence exports, signal its emergence as a global industrial hub.

Amid US-China trade tensions, India has a unique chance to fill critical supply chain gaps. Strategic investments now can propel economic growth and cement India's role in global manufacturing leadership.

AMARJEET KUMAR I HAZARIBAGH

BANGLADESH MUST END TARGETED VIOLENCE AGAINST HINDUS

propos "Protect minorities without excuses: India tells Bangladesh" (The Pioneer, April 20), the recent brutal killing of Bhabesh Chandra Roy — vice-president of the Biral unit of the Bangladesh Puja Udiapan Parishad and a respected Hindu community leader - has shocked and saddened many. In just the past two months, there have been 76 attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh, leading to 23 deaths.

These attacks have intensified following the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina amid student-led protests. Since then, the Hindu minority has faced relentless violence, property destruction, and severe harassment. Under the interim Government led by Muhammad Yunus, the situation has deteriorated further, with perpetrators enjoying impunity

This pattern points to a systemic targeting of Hindus and an alarming disregard for basic human rights. The atrocities against minorities not only weaken the secular fabric of Bangladesh but also strain its ties with India. Despite repeated diplomatic appeals and condemnations from India, the persecution continues unabated. It is imperative that Bangladesh acts swiftly to protect its minorities and uphold justice.

In light of ongoing violence against Hindus in Bangladesh, including the recent killing of Bhabesh Chandra Roy, India has rightly urged Dhaka to act without excuses.

Since Sheikh Hasina's ouster. attacks on minorities have surged under the interim Muhammad Yunusled Government. With over 70 incidents in just two months, the impunity of perpetrators is deeply troubling.

Bangladesh must urgently uphold minority rights, restore law and order, and prevent further erosion of its secular and diplomatic standing - else it runs the risk of total breakdown

N. SADHASIVA REDDY I BENGALURU

Please send your letter to the letterstopioneer@gmail.com. In not more than 400 words.





The Supreme Court roars for the forests

The Supreme Court has once again stepped in with unprecedented urgency and resolve. In a suo motu intervention, the Court expressed outrage at the illegal felling of over 100 acres of forest land in Telangana



he Supreme Court of India, on December 12, 1996, in its epoch-making on TN Godavarman Thirumullapad vs Union of India and Others, had set into motion a marvellous judicial intervention on forest conservation in the coun-— and the rest is the history of an innumerable number of orders in correcting the several wrong decisions affecting forest and wildlife conservation in the country.

After 29 years of experience of judicial intervention, in yet another suo motu intervention on April 3, 2025 — thanks to the students of Hyderabad University and the media — the Supreme Court Bench headed by Justice B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih, helped by Senior Advocate K Parmeshwar (the amicus curiae in the Godavarman forest cases, who alerted the Court to media reports about the deforestation),

The Bench acted swiftly, expressing shock at the scale of the tree felling and the use of heavy machinery to clear approximately 100 acres in just a few days — directing the Registrar General of Andhra High Court to visit the site of the felling and submit the report the same day in the afternoon of April 3 itself.

The Registrar General, after visiting the site in the afternoon, sent the report; and then the Bench, in a very forthright, acerbic tone, warned the state Chief Secretary and senior bureaucrats of putting them in jail in the same location by constructing a temporary jail.

The Court comments are scathing for the Telangana Governemnt but in favour of trees, wildlife and the natural environment, which are part of our ecosystem but cannot speak and protest, yet they are the resource base for human survival.

The Court heard the case again on 16 April and again warned the Chief Secretary and other officers of sending them to imprisonment for felling trees over 100 acres if the damage was not addressed through a restoration plan and directed the Telangana governemnt to submit the same in the next four weeks.

While hearing the case, the Bench reiterated that the 1996 Supreme Court order is sacrosanct in defining what constitutes forests - irrespective of the status of the land.

The Bench, while reiterating its warning to the officers of state, directed the state Chief Wildlife Warden to ensure protection to wildlife and asked for a restoration plan for the 100-acre felled forests, while also stating that high-rise buildings cannot be made in the company of wildlife. It made it clear that the State Government had to take permission for felling of all kinds of trees be it recorded forests or otherwise — if it comes under the purview of deemed forests as outlined in the 1996 order of the Supreme Court.

So, the die has been cast so far as the definition of forest is concerned, coming as it did after



the Forest Conservation (Amendment) Act was passed by Parliament in 2023. The amendment primarily clarifies the scope of forest land and simplifies procedures for certain activities.



The amendment clarifies that forest land includes areas notified under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, or recorded in Governemnt records as forest land as on the 1980 Act's enforcement

The Act exempts certain types of land from its purview, such as land within 100 km of India's border needed for national security projects, small roadside amenities, and public roads leading to a habitation.

Now, the observations of the Supreme Court Bench have restored the 1996 order of the Supreme Court, and hence all states are dutybound to obtain permission for non-forest use of



THE BENCH, WHILE REITERATING ITS WARNING TO THE OFFICERS OF STATE. DIRECTED THE STATE CHIEF WILDLIFE WARDEN TO ENSURE PROTECTION TO WILDLIFE AND ASKED FOR A RESTORATION PLAN FOR THE 100-ACRE FELLED FORESTS, WHILE ALSO STATING THAT HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS CANNOT BE MADE IN THE COMPANY

OF WILDLIFE

deemed forest land.

Now let us examine the context of such virulent observations of sending state officers to jail by the Apex Court on April 3, as well as reiterating it on April 16, 2025. After this, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has also sought a report from the Telangana Governemnt.

It is a stark fact that the forests of the country are not in good shape — and the most important reason is the public apathy for conservation of forests at all levels, be it the public at large, administrative or political leaders of all hues, though they keep tom-tomming on solemn occasions and provide lip service to the forests, biodiversity and river

This is quite revealed from the way our Governments function at both the Centre and state level. We need to look at the State of Forest Report 2023, which clearly brought out that more than 37 per cent of tree cover out of the 82 million ha of forest and tree cover is created by the farmers of the country — and it is worth pondering the fate of forest-related biodiversity on these

farmers' land.

Another grim reminder is the lack of adequate regeneration in recorded forests, as only 48 per cent of the forest areas have adequate regeneration. The degradation is also increasing, as 46,000 ha of recorded forests have nearly completely lost their tree cover.

There is a need that the IAS and IFS officers sitting in the Ministry decide to change this matrix of degradation and work sincerely to ensure a policy framework for better forest and biodiversity

This writer is very forthright in asking the forest service mandarins to get over the clique syndrome and speak in a single voice for the trees, wild animals and our rivers and rivulets. The professionalism these days is seen more in acquiescence and lobbying than in standing for the

It is because of this that the Supreme Court Bench made these sarcastic comments — and it is time now that the officers work honestly and balance the need for development with conservation. Once they stand firm and truthful, then the political masters shall follow.

There is a need for increasing the budget of the forestry sector and empowerment of communities under the Joint Forest Management Programme.

But one of the biggest causes of deforestation is the lopsided and open-ended implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, who — along with foreign-funded NGOs and 'Jhola chhap' social activists and phoney foresters — portray the romantic vision of promoting encroachments on forest land.

They must desist or must be sidelined by the Governemnt and asked to work to make the land so far allotted to tribals productive so that their socio-economic status improves.

It is hoped that this intervention of the Apex Court will force all concerned to change track.In conclusion, the Supreme Court's timely intervention once again underscores the vital role of the judiciary in safeguarding India's forests and wildlife.

The strong stance taken by the Court, including warnings of imprisonment for errant officials reaffirms the sanctity of the 1996 Godavarman order and its relevance despite recent legislative changes. It also highlights the growing civic engagement, especially from students and media, in environmental issues.

Moving forward, it is imperative for administrative leadership and policymakers to prioritise ecological integrity, implement restoration measures, and foster genuine, professional commitment to forest conservation — balancing development with sustainability for future generations.

(The writer is former Director-General & Chancellor of ICFRE, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Views are personal)

Bridging the agritech divide with advanced farming technology

As the agriculture sector stands at a crossroads, scalable innovations like satellite-based sensing, region-specific tools, and inclusive pricing models offer a path toward a more sustainable and tech-enabled agricultural future

he farming industry is one of the significant pillars of the Indian economy, contributing a significant 16 per cent of India's GDP and engaging more than half of the country's population. However, to date, there has been a slow uptake of advanced technologies in agriculture. While several agritech startups have been launched and well-funded by investors, the connection between these ventures and farmers remains a challenge. One of the main problems that these start-ups have to contend with is that of high costs, which tend to be associated with technology.

There are many tools — including those used in precision farming, machinery such as weather stations, and sensors that can be applied to the soil — that hold the future of increased yields and sustainable farming. However, the cost associated with such technologies might be unaffordable for small farmers, who form the largest percentage of India's farming community. Devices such as IoT sensors can cost hundreds of dollars per year, meaning that while a slight increase in yield for such farmers is hard to come by, the devices do not offer value for

More than 80 per cent of farmers in India are marginal farmers, cultivating landholdings of less than five acres. These marginal lands are often fragmented into multiple smaller plots, allowing farmers to grow different crops on the same holding.

This fragmentation poses a challenge for agritech solutions designed for largescale farming. However, satellite-based data solutions can bridge this gap by providing precise, farm-specific insights even for farms having an area of only a quarter of an acre (about 10,000 square feet), enabling even smallholder farmers to optimise their crop management and improve productivity.

The policies of the Indian agricultural sector fluctuate, and some crucial aspects like water — which is a basic necessity for agriculture - are controlled by the state governemnt.

While such interventions as subsidies and grants are useful, they have led to a situation where agritech remains a statesubsidised model rather than a market-



Many new agritechs have come to depend on these Governemnt partnerships for revenue instead of selling directly to farmers, which has impacted the growth and sustainability of most of them in the private

among farmers.

SAT KUMAR **TOMAR**

market. Among the challenges that have limited the embrace of agritech is ignorance

It is essential to understand that large-scale farmers might invest time and resources to evaluate and consider adopting new technologies, while smallholder farmers are more likely to

make decisions by word of mouth or ased on regular practices. This is mainly due to the poor development of facilities and capacity-building to form the basis for adopting innovations in farming technologies.

Cost-Effective Solutions

The first area of intervention for farmer uptake can be increased through improved adoption of technologies that are cheaper to develop. Although IoTbased sensors are costly, satellite remote sensing is feasible.

While IoT sensors can cost several hundred dollars and give localised information, satellite technology offers information for the whole farm area at a considerably lower cost — usually less than 5 per cent of the price of sensors. Satellite remote sensing, combined with artificial intelligence and machine learning, can be used to monitor soil nutrient levels, manage pest and disease risks, and support irrigation water management across large areas of farmland.

These solutions are especially practical and accessible for smallholder farmers. In this way, satellite-based solutions represent a constrained set of technological tools whereby agritech companies can propose complete and high-quality products and services at more competitive prices

localised Solutions

Given the highly heterogeneous climate of the country and the different farming practices followed across regions, it can be said that a market solution carved in one casting will not fit this agritech market. Start-ups must provide region-specific products.

They can, therefore, apply different ways of ensuring their solution reaches farms in varying regions so that farmers

can adopt it. **Pricing Models**

Long-term, technology must be accessible to small and marginal farmers and useful even for field crops like wheat especially in terms of the ultimate cost of the technology delivered to the farm. A scholar cited that the cost of any new technology farmers must consider has to be less than or equal to 10 per cent of the total farming cost. This is crucial for adoption

Affordability is another value that agritech start-ups should embrace, enabling them to offer their products at a cheaper cost and within reach of many farmers. Other revenue models that can be used include fee-for-service or usage plans in which the farmer pays only for what is used.

Fostering Education

Guaranteeing extensive use of such technology — even if it is cheap— requires more education and support. Agritech companies must incorporate education campaigns as a key means of informing farmers about the benefits of using these

This might be achievable through human capital development programmes, farmer organisations or local associations. This paper contends that hands-on training and demonstrations enable farmers to overcome hesitance stemming from a lack of familiarity. Current strategies point to the need to make technology simple and easy to use to minimise the chances of farmers being unable to adopt it on the farm.

Government and Private Sector Collaboration

Although major funding is currently being attracted to agritech start-ups via governemnt grants, the long-term model will require the involvement of both public and private entities.

This implies a need for policies that encourage agritech growth while avoiding excessive dependence on state subsidies. This includes strengthening policy content, creating private-sector incentives, and guaranteeing support for farmers transitioning to better technologies. Scaling efforts via public-private partnerships may help deliver appropriate support to farmers.

Final Thoughts

The Indian agritech industry is at a turning point. Although there is hope in the power of technology to transform agriculture, challenges such as cost, accessibility and uptake remain significant. High-end technologies like IoT sensors and UAVs are often too expensive for small and marginal farmers.

However, affordable and scalable solutions — such as satellite remote sensing, regionalised products, optional pricing structures and farmers' sensitisation -are available. When combined with agricultural expertise and AI/ML, satellite remote sensing emerges as a practical and inclusive solution, making advanced technology accessible even to small and marginal farmers.

India, being one of the top agriculturproducers globally, has a wealth of insights from its diverse farming landscape. These learnings not only improve Indian agriculture but are also leveraged globally to assist small and marginal farmers elsewhere.

(The writer is Founder, Co-founder & CEO.

IN BRIEF



EPFO adds 16.10 lakh net members

Retirement fund body EPFO added 16.10 lakh net members in February, marking a 3.99 per cent increase compared to the same month last year, according to the latest payroll data released on Monday. Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) enrolled around 7.39 lakh new subscribers in February 2025, a labour ministry statement said. This addition of new subscribers can be attributed to growing employment opportunities, increased awareness of employee benefits, and EPFO's successful outreach programs, the ministry stated. The EPFO has released provisional payroll data for February 2025, revealing a net addition of 16.10 lakh members, according to the statement. The year-on-year analysis reveals a growth of 3.99 per cent in net payroll additions compared to February 2024, signifying increased employment opportunities and heightened awareness of employee benefits, bolstered by EPFO's effective outreach



NCLAT upholds liquidation of Sintex Plastics

he insolvency appellate tribunal NCLAT has upheld an NCLT order directing liquidation of debt-ridden Sintex Plastics Technology. A two-member bench of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) also rejected the submission of an unsuccessful bidder that NCLT passed an order for liquidation even though its lone CoC member had abstained from voting. RBL Bank was the sole member of the Committee of Creditors (CoC) of Sintex, owning 100 per cent votes. Subhlaxmi Investment Advisory, one of the resolution applicants, had contended before the NCLAT that the sole member of the CoC abstained from voting, therefore, technically, the resolution plan submitted by it was not rejected. However, rejecting it, the NCLAT said"... the very fact that the sole member of the CoC did not vote in favour of the resolution plan submitted by the appellant (Subhlaxmi Investment), therefore, it had exercised its commercial wisdom and chose to abstain from voting.



Rupee gains 25 paise to settle at 85.13 against US dollar

he rupee sustained its rally for the fifth straight session and settled with gains of 25 paise at 85.13 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, boosted by a sharp fall in the dollar index and a surge in the domestic equities. The dollar index has breached the 99 mark and is trading at its lowest level in three years. Moreover, fresh foreign fund inflows and decline in crude oil prices also favoured the rupee, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85 15 and moved between the intraday high of 85 03 and the low of 85.19 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.13 (provisional), registering a gain of 25 paise over its previous closing level. On Thursday, the rupee closed 26 paise higher at 85.38 against the US dollar. The Forex market was closed on Friday on account of Good Friday. In the five trading sessions, the Indian currency has added 155 paise since its April 9 closing mark of 86.68 against the greenback. "We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias on weak US Dollar and easing trade tariff worries. Improved global risk appetite and fresh foreign inflows may also support the rupee. However, importer buying of dollars may cap sharp gains.

'ACTIVELY ENGAGING WITH US'

India hopes to sign first phase of bilateral pact by Oct: FM

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said India is "actively engaging" with the new US administration and hopes to conclude the first tranche of the bilateral trade agreement "positively" by fall (September-October) this year.

"We are one of the countries which is actively engaged with the new administration of the United States of America to see how best we can get a bilateral trade agreement done," she said during an interaction with the Indian diaspora here.

Earlier this year, US President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to launch talks for a bilateral trade deal amid the lurking fear of reciprocal tariff being imposed by Washington.

"Equally, the priority that we gave to engage with the government here is more than obviously seen with the Prime Minister himself visiting the United States in February. You had the Commerce and

meeting. "I am scheduled to meet the treasury secretary, my counterpart here. So the keenness with which we are engaging with the US administration, even as I talk, I think the US vice-president is in India. He will be engaging with the Prime Minister hopefully this evening or tomorrow," she

Trade Minister come. I have

come here because I also have

the IMF and World Bank

The US and India have aimed for a bilateral trade agreement (BTA), which is a kind of free trade pact. The two have decided to contwo tranches or phases.

"So, the long and short of engaging with the US is not just reciprocal tariff-related matter but in the interest of keeping an agreement in mind and in the interest of one of the largest trading partners with whim we need to have agreement we are working in order that by the fall this year we should have first phase of agreement signed," she said.

US President The announced sweeping recipro-cal tariffs (or import duties) on a number of countries, including India and China, on April 2. However, on April 9, clude the proposed BTA in he announced a 90-day sus-

pension of these tariffs until July 9 this year, except for those on China and Hong Kong, as about 75 countries approached America for trade deals. China is facing up to 245 per cent duty on its goods entering the US.

"In between all this, the Assistant USTR (US Trade Representative) had visited India to see the progress or to engage with the negotiating team who is dealing with the tariff-related negotiation and the bilateral trade agreement that we want to sign. In fact, the progress of the agreement, or the trade agreement that we are working on, at least a first tranche is something which we hope to conclude positively by the fall this year," she said.

Responding to a query on India's future global leadership and how the current budget supports this ambition, Sitharaman highlighted India's progress in critical areas like semiconductors, renewable energy -- including modular nuclear energy --digital infrastructure, and artificial intelligence (AI).

China warns nations making trade deals with US at its expense

PNS BEIJING

China on Monday threatened to impose countermeasures on countries seeking to strike trade deals with the US at its expense in order to get American tariff exemptions.

In a pre-emptive move to stall a host of nations with whom

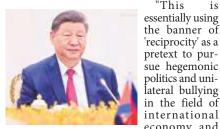
China has lucrative trade ties from striking exclusive trade deals with the US to get tariff exemptions, the Commerce Ministry spokesperson warned that Beijing will firmly oppose such agreements.

The spokesperson made these remarks in a statement while responding to reports that the US is preparing to pressure other countries to restrict trade ties with China in exchange for tariff exemptions, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

'If such a situation arises, China will not accept it and will resolutely take corresponding countermeasures," spokesperson said, adding that "trying to trade away others' interests for temporary gains is like bargaining with a tiger for its skin – it will only backfire."

The ministry warned that it will not tolerate any deals made by foreign governments at the expense of Chinese interests.

It added that China has the right to resolve and the capability to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests.



the banner of 'reciprocity' as a pretext to pursue hegemonic politics and unilateral bullying in the field of international economy and

"This

trade," it said.

China's tough stand came against the backdrop of reports that several countries, against whom US President Donald Trump imposed varied tariffs, are now seeking to work out bilateral trade deals with Washington to resume their exports to access the lucrative UŜ market.

Last week, the Wall Street Journal reported that the US plans to use tariff negotiations to pressure dozens of countries into imposing new barriers on

FIVE-DAY STOCK RALLY

D-Street investors' wealth swells by Rs 32 lakh cr

PNS NEW DELHI

Investors' wealth soared by Rs 32 lakh crore in the five-day stock rally to Monday powered by foreign fund inflows and a broad-based gains in equities. On Monday, the 30-share

BSE Sensex jumped 855.30 points or 1.09 per cent to settle above the 79,000 mark at 79,408.50. In the past five-days, the BSE barometer zoomed 5,561.35 points or 7.53 per cent.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged by Rs 32,03,295.8 crore to Rs 4,25,85,629.02 crore (USD 5

trillion) in five trading days.

"Markets opened higher and extended the gains throughout based rally and positive domestic cues as strong bank earnings over the weekend boosted the overall sentiment. Quarterly earnings season is in full swing with heavyweight banks reporting results over the weekend largely above estimates with strong outlook and positive commentary," Satish Chandra Aluri, Analyst,

Lemonn Markets Desk, said. With foreign investors fast losing their confidence in the US economy and Trump's flipflop tariff policy, we are seeing renewed foreign inflows into markets which are also driving the indices higher, he added.



Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, Power Grid, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, HCL Tech, Axis Bank, State Bank of Infosys, Reliance Industries and Tata Steel were the biggest gainers.

Adani Ports, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Asian Paints and Nestle were among the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge surged 2.20 per cent and the smallcap index jumped 1.67

Key infra sectors growth slows to 3.8 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The output of eight key infrastructure sectors slowed down to 3.8 per cent in March, as against 6.3 per cent growth registered a year ago, according to official data released on

On a monthly basis, the growth rate in the production of these sectors was slightly higher than the 3.4 per cent expansion recorded in

In March, production of crude oil and natural gas recorded a negative growth.

The production growth of coal, refinery products, steel and electricity moderated to 1.6 per cent, 0.2 per cent, 7.1 per cent, and 6.2 per cent, respectively. Fertiliser production rose by 8.8 per cent in March traction in the same month last year. Cement production growth rose to 11.6 per cent in March 2025 from 10.6 per cent in the year-ago month.

The growth of core sectors -- coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity -was 4.4 per cent during April-March 2024-25 fiscal.

SUV contribution rises to 68.5% of overall sales: Hyundai

PNS NEW DELHI

Hyundai Motor India on Monday said SUVs accounted for 68.5 per cent of its overall sales in the last fiscal year, registering a growth of 8 per cent as compared with the 2023-24 fiscal year.

The company expects the SUV contribution to cross 70 per cent in one year.

For FY25, the automaker reported sales of 7,62,052 units as compared with 7,77,876 units in FY24.

Its domestic sales stood at 5,98,666 units while export shipments were at 1,63,386 units in the last fiscal year.

Hyundai said it witnessed a significant shift in customer preference, with penetration of sunroof-equipped vehicles surging to 53 per cent, underence for premium features.

"FY2024-25 has been a landmark year for Hyundai Motor India. The fact that two out of every third vehicle sold by us in India was an SUV is a testament to our deep understanding of Indian customers and our commitment to delivering innova-tion, safety and style,"



Hyundai Motor India Whole-Time Director and COO Tarun Garg said in a state-

The doubling of ADAS FY25, the automaker said.

The company said it growing popularity of sunroof-equipped models reflects the rising aspirations of our customers and their readiness to embrace global technologies, he added.

Currently, sunroof is offered as an optional feature in 12 out of 14 models in the Hyundai portfolio.

Furthermore, Advanced

Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) variant contribution doubled from 6.7 per cent in FY24 to 14.3 per cent in

offering ADAS as an option in nine of its models.

Creta emerged as the largest-selling model in the domestic passenger vehicle segment in March with sales of 18,059 units.

The company sells various SUVs like Venue, Creta, Alcazar, and Tucson in the domestic market.

Evren signs 300 MW renewable energy PPA with NTPC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Evren, a joint venture renewable energy platform launched by Brookfield and the Hyderabad-based Axis Energy Group, has signed a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with NTPC Limited, India's largest integrated power utility.

This agreement, signed for 300 MW, supports the development of around a GW of renewable energy, including wind, solar and battery energy storage.

The project will comprise 500 MW of wind, 330 MW of solar and battery energy storage, ensuring Firm and Dispatchable Renewable



Energy (FDRE) to meet peak demand reliably. The energy will be supplied at the rate of Rs 4.65 per unit, with 0.7 paise/unit the trading commission for NTPC.

The investment in the project stands at USD 750 million, and it is being executed

in Andhra Pradesh.

By leveraging hybrid and storage-based renewable technologies, this project will enable a consistent, firm power supply, helping distribution companies meet their peak hour demand for two hours in the morning and in energy generation."

the evening respectively, meeting renewable energy purchase obligations and managing grid stability effectively.

Sri Murali Surapaneni, the Chief Executive Officer of Axis Energy, said, "This agreement with the NTPC is a proud moment for us. It reflects our commitment to delivering innovative clean energy projects that are scalable, sustainable, and aligned with the nation's vision for a green future. With Andhra Pradesh as a strategic base, we are excited to drive forward a project of this scale and complexity, and set new benchmarks in hybrid renewable

India must engage with China, US on equal terms: GTRI

PNS NEW DELHI

India should engage with China and the US on equal terms and the engagement should be guided by its strategic autonomy, economic interest and global trade principles, not by external pressure, think tank GTRI said on Monday.

These remarks came in the backdrop of China's warning that it would take countermeasures in a "resolute and reciprocal" manner against nations that strike trade deals with America at

the expense of Chinese interests. Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that China's warning of retaliation against countries aligning with the US efforts to isolate Beijing must be viewed through the lens of global supply chain realities. Leading economies, including

the US, EU, Japan, South Korea, and India, are deeply dependent on China for the supply of industrial and consumer goods, it said, adding that China is embedded at every level of the global production hierarchy - finished goods, intermediate products and parts and components.

Replacing China entirely requires building manufacturing capabilities from the raw material stage upward an effort that no country has yet achieved at scale. The think tank said that India must chart an independent course, strengthening its domestic manufacturing base and reducing critical import dependencies through targeted investment in deep manufacturing.

Govt to release unemployment data every month

PNS MUMBAI

The government will start releasing the unemployment data on monthly basis beginning May 15, as against quarterly, a senior official said on

Monday. The data to be released on May 15 will include figures for January, February and March, and thereafter it will be released every month, the

official told reporters here. "For the first three months, we will be releasing the data on May 15. This is the first time that we are doing it," the official from Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation said.

Índia doesn't have a system of high frequency data collection and disclosure on unemployment, unlike other major economies.

Till now, the government had been providing data on urban unemployment on a quarterly basis, and combined rural and urban unemployment data on an annual basis.

The official explained that the data collection is statistically robust and representative, and internal consistency checks are being carried out for the same



its guidance and come out with the private capital expen-

The government will meet diture data by April-end, the official said. From next year onwards, it explained that the data collection is statistically robust and representative, and internal consistency checks are being carried out for the same

will also be releasing findings of a survey of service sector enterprises, the official said.

The government is also working to bring out data on the informal sector captured in the annual survey of the unincorporated sector, on a quarterly basis, the official

An official said that the government has also decided to launch periodic labour force survey for rural areas on a quarterly basis.

Data is the new oil, and there is a need for the same to be credible and timely, the official said, asserting that Indian data is considered to be robust, credible and transparent globally.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT 'E' - PROCUREMENT NOTICE

No. 840/TUFIDC/Unit-1/Parkal/SWD I5cr/2025-26, dt: 21.04.2025 infrastructure developmental work in Parkal Municipality at an estimated cost of Rs.1500.00 Laths. Download start date: 22-04-2025 and download end dates as per uploaded bid document. Further details can be seen @

www.tender.telangana.gov.in Sd/- Superintending Engineer (PH) DPR R.O.No: 632-PPICL/ADVTH/9925-26, Date: 21-64-2925

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

NIT No. 03/E.E. 14/GHMC/2025-26

Date: 19-04-2025

Name of work: Various Civil Engineering works under Division 14, KZ, GHMC Estimate Amount/ ECV: Rs. 7.75 Lakhs, Start date / Last date & time for receipts of Bids: 21-04-2025 @ 11.00 .00 AM / 24-04-2025 @ 11.00 AM. Name & Address officer: Executive Engineer -14, GHMC, 5th floor, Abids Parking Complex, Abids Hyderabad. For further details can be seen at e-procurement website www.tender.telangana.gov.in

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TUESDAY APRIL 22, 2025

Yamini's 'life comes to full circle' moment with her 'paisa-vasool' debut

In a world where dreams are made and broken in the blink of an eye, Yamini Malhotra is a testament to perseverance and passion. After captivating audiences on Bigg Boss season 18, she's now stepping into the world of Bollywood with her debut film Chill Maar Na Bro. In an exclusive chat with The Pioneer, she opens up about her journey, her connection to Maya and what makes this film a special ride for her and the audience

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

> t started with a dream like it always does in Mumbai. A girl from Delhi, armed with ambition, talent and just the right amount of madness, steps into the city of dreams hoping to find her place in the stars. Yamini Malhotra! And now, years later, in

her debut film Chill Maar Na Bro, she plays Maya, an aspiring actor waiting for her big break — a character so close to her real life, she didn't need to prepare, she simply remembered.

From sharing screen space with veterans to recreating a Sridevi moment that brought an entire crew to tears, Yamini's journey is nothing short of cinematic. And as she opens up about comedy, courage and the quiet strength it takes to keep chasing your dream, it's clear: this is more than a role — it's a homecoming. "The character's name is Maya and I felt an instant connection with her. She's an actor from Delhi who's moved to Mumbai with big dreams — just like me and so many others in this industry. She's waiting for that one big break, that one chance to be part of a film that changes everything. It resonated deeply with

my own journey. I didn't have to imagine her life -

While the film has its heart in comedy, Yamini had her share of deeply emotional moments during the shoot One scene in particular took her by surprise. "There's an emotional breakdown scene where I perform to a Sridevi ji's song. I was in costume — this gorgeous blue sari — and we were getting ready to shoot when our dress dada suddenly began to cry," she recalls. What followed left the entire crew speechless, "He told us he used to come to film sets as a young boy with his father, who was also a tailor. He had seen Sridevi ji perform live during that exact song back then. And now years later, he was stitching for the same song recreation. It was a full-circle moment for him. That story hit everyone on set emotionally including me It added a real weight to the scene and gave me goosebumps while performing.

That kind of intensity wasn't something Yamini expected from a comedy film. But Chill Maar Na Bro isn't just about laughs — it's about finding your place, holding on to your dreams and having a little fun along the way. "It's a complete entertainer funny, vibrant, and light-hearted. Every scene has a dash of comedy and you'll find yourself smiling throughout. The energy on set was always upbeat and that's exactly what the audience will feel too full-on entertainment!

To prepare for the role, she didn't need to go through heavy training, but there was a lot of spontaneity involved. "Because it's a comedy film, it really brought out the fun, spontaneous side of me. I believe comedy and entertainment are in my genes, so it came quite naturally. I was also lucky

to share screen space with senior actors like Paresh Ganatra ji. He was incredibly supportive we would sit together, discuss our scenes, improvise lines and plan the rhythm. That collaborative energy made everything easier and more fun.'

She's also fiercely proud of the fact that Maya her character — isn't designed to be perfect. "Maya isn't your typical Bollywood heroine. She's raw, relatable and very real. She doesn't fit into a perfect mold — and that's exactly what makes her stand out. She's got dreams, drive and a charm that lights up the screen in her own way. She brings an authenticity that's refreshing."

Of course, her journey to this point didn't start with Chill Maar Na Bro. For many viewers, she's already a familiar face thanks to her stint in the Bigg Boss house. That experience, she says, changed everything. "It feels surreal," she reflects. "Bigg Boss gave me visibility, but cinema has always been my passion. It's a different kind of discipline altogether and I'm taking it one day at a time with full gratitude.

In fact, *Bigg Boss* played a direct role in her casting. "It's because of *Bigg Boss* that I got this film — the director saw my clips from the show and from Instagram and he told me I came across as so original and real that he immediately thought I was perfect for Maya. So yes, the transition feels beautiful and very special.

She vividly remembers the moment she knew she had officially "arrived" in Bollywood. "It was my entry shot! A bunch of boys were standing in front of me and the camera slowly zoomed in as they moved aside one by one. I was in a royal blue sari

my hair blowing perfectly with the wind... and at that moment, the director looked at the monitor and said, 'WoW Maya WOW!' Everyone started clapping. That was it. That was my Bollywood moment. I felt like. 'Yes — I've arrived.

With its quirky title and feel-good energy, Chill Maar Na Bro promises to be a ride for audiences. "Expect a total rollercoaster ride! It's packed with crazy one-liners, awkward yet hilarious situations, surprise twists and nonstop comedy," she says. "You'll laugh like mad, maybe tear up a little, and definitely walk out with a warm heart. It's an all-inall entertainment package — full paisa vasool!" Naturally, she feels the pressure of living up to the

love she's received post-Bigg Boss. But she doesn't shy away from it. "Definitely — but it's a good kind of pressure. I owe everything to the people who've supported me since Bigg Boss. Their love, encouragement and faith in me keep me going. I just want to make them proud with every performance — and this film is my first big thank you to them."

And if anyone thinks Bigg Boss is just drama and chaos, Yamini would disagree. That chaos, she says, is great training. "Oh yes — Bigg Boss teaches you patience, adaptability and how to stay centred amidst absolute chaos, which is exactly what you need on a film set too," she says. "That emotional stamina helped me stay grounded and focused, no matter what the day looked like. Also, when you've had 200 cameras on you 24/7, you completely lose that fear or inhibition. Now, when I face the camera, I don't even notice it — it's just me being me. That realness, I think, is what shines on screen too.

Transforming healthcare delivery under Ayushman Bharat

ndia's healthcare system is witnessing a massive digital transformation, much like the UPI revolution, with the advent of Ayushman Bharat, the world's largest povernment-funded health initiative. At the heart of this transformation lies the adoption of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs), now integrated with Artificial Intelligence (AI). These Al-driven systems are poised to revolutionise healthcare by making it easier for doctors to adopt, enhancing personalized patient care, improving operational efficiency and enabling data-driven decision-making.

Let's begin with understanding Electronic Medical Records (EMRs): these systems are used by doctors to prescribe treatments and manage patient records. EMRs contain a patient's medical history, including diagnoses, prescriptions, lab results, vitals, and treatment plans. They help store digital medical records for every patient and are especially useful for chronic patients or post-surgery cases, enabling doctors to monitor progress effectively.

Patient Health Records (PHRs), on the other hand, are digital repositories containing a patient's medical history, diagnoses, prescriptions, lab results and vitals.

EMRs enable seamless communication among healthcare providers, reduce errors and enhance the quality of care. However, traditional EMRs have faced challenges in adoption due to high administrative workloads, inefficient data management and a lack of interoperability across systems. Integrating AI into EMRs has significantly elevated their capabilities, solving these problems and increasing adoption among doctors.

Al-powered EMR systems have significantly transformed the healthcare provider experience by introducing advanced features that revolutionise healthcare delivery:

Al-driven voice recognition and Natural Language Processing (NLP) assist doctors and healthcare professionals in capturing patient data efficiently. By converting doctor-patient conversations into structured medical notes, Al eliminates manual documentation errors, saves time and enhances accuracy in medical records. The depth of data available now is

Al-integrated EMRs act as decision-support tools by analyzing patient histories, medical guidelines and real-time data to provide evidence-based treatment recommendations based on multiple protocols provided by different authorities. They also flag drug interactions, suggest diagnostic tests and guide physicians in making more informed clinical decisions.

By analysing vast amounts of patient data, Al can detect early signs of diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, and cancer. Al-powered EMRs alert doctors about high-risk patients, enabling early intervention and personalised treatment plans, thereby improving patient outcomes.

One of the key challenges in India's healthcare system is the fragmentation of patient data across different hospitals, clinics, and laboratories. With the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), Al-integrated EMRs facilitate interoperability by standardizing data formats, allowing seamless exchange of medical records among healthcare providers, pharmacies and insurance firms

Al-driven EMRs leverage machine learning algorithms to analyze a patient's medical history, travel history, parental medical history, vitals, symptoms and lifestyle factors. This enables the creation of highly personalised treatment plans, improving the effectiveness of therapies.

In a country like India, where many patients reside in remote



locations and doctors are concentrated in metropolitan areas, telehealth is the only solution to provide healthcare services. Alintegrated EMRs make it easier for doctors to prescribe treatments with features like document access via ABDM, language translation, and remote patient monitoring through IoT-enabled medical equipment. This allows doctors to track

patient health remotely and provide timely interventions. The Government of India is the largest health insurance provider. Al-powered EMRs help detect anomalies in billing, insurance claims and treatment patterns, reducing fraudulent activities in the healthcare system. With high accuracy confidence, these systems can expedite hospital reimbursements from the government. Additionally, Al-driven cost analysis helps hospitals optimise resource allocation and reduce operational expenses, making healthcare more affordable and efficient.

Despite the numerous advantages, implementing Alpowered EMRs in India presents several challenges similar

The use of AI in healthcare raises concerns about privacy and cybersecurity among providers. Some companies address this issue by implementing robust encryption, data anonymisation, and strict compliance with regulations such as the Digital Personal Data Protection Act.

Many healthcare professionals, especially in rural areas, lack familiarity with digital tools. Government-led training programs and workshops must focus on enhancing digital literacy and equipping healthcare workers with the skills to use Alintegrated EMRs effectively.

Many healthcare facilities, especially in remote areas, lack the necessary IT infrastructure, such as high-speed internet and power backup, to support Al-driven EMRs. Investments in digital health infrastructure and improved connectivity are crucial for successful implementation.

The absence of standardised data structures, such as FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources) and uniform data formats across various EMR platforms creates barriers to interoperability. The government must introduce nationwide standards and guidelines to ensure seamless data exchange among different healthcare providers and institutions.

Deploying Al-powered EMRs involves significant financial investments in software, training and SaaS fees. Public-

private partnerships and government subsidies can help healthcare facilities, particularly smaller clinics and rural hospitals, adopt these advanced systems without

The Indian government is actively promoting the adoption of Al in healthcare through initiatives such as the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM). The future of Al-integrated EMRs & PHRs under Ayushman Bharat looks promising, with several key developments on the horizon:

Al chatbots and virtual assistants will enhance patient engagement by personalising their experience in booking appointments, receiving health advice, managing medications and accessing medical records conveniently through mobile

The ABDM data security framework ensures that health data is secured and encourages healthcare providers to adopt technology with confidence.

By analysing vast amounts of anonymized patient data, Al can identify public health trends, predict disease outbreaks and assist policymakers in designing effective healthcare programs at national and state levels.

Al-integrated EMRs will continue to evolve by incorporating data from wearable health devices, allowing real-time tracking of vital signs and proactive management of chronic diseases. To conclude, Al-integrated EMRs & PHR systems are set to revolutionize healthcare delivery under Ayushman Bharat by personalizing the patient experience, reducing costs, enhancing efficiency, improving decision-making, and ensuring better health outcomes. However, successful implementation requires a catalyst similar to UPI adoption during demonetisation or the COVID-19 crisis.

With continued public-private partnerships, technological advancements and strategic investments in digital healthcare infrastructure, Al-powered EMRs will play a transformative role in making quality healthcare accessible, efficient and affordable for all Indians. As India moves towards a digital-first healthcare ecosystem, Al will be at the forefront of this revolution, paving the way for a more connected, data-driven and patient-centric healthcare system.

(The author, Deepak Tuli, is the co-founder & COO

PIONEERING THE BRAIN GAIN IN RURAL INDIA'S HEALTHCARE

In the vast stretches of rural India, Motivated to change this paradigm, Dr excellence meets a purpose-driven ▲ historically lagged behind urban centers, one visionary is rewriting the narrative-Dr Vikram Pratap Singh. Committed to reversing the long-standing 'brain drain' of medical talent from rural regions to cities and abroad, he is leading a powerful 'brain gain' movementbringing skilled medical professionals back to the heart of India's most

THE URGENCY OF RURAL **HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMATION**

With nearly 70% of India's population residing in rural areas, the stark gap in healthcare accessibility is both troubling and urgent. Many towns and villages in modern India continue to suffer from a severe lack of healthcare services, plagued by a shortage of specialist doctors, underqualified staff and crumbling infrastructure. This imbalance is only worsened by the mass migration of trained professionals to urban hubs in pursuit of better opportunities and living standards.

He saw this divide early in his career and chose a different path. Determined to bridge this widening gap, he harnessed his expertise and leadership to defy the tide of intellectual and infrastructural drain, shifting focus back to the communities that need it the

A VISION FORGED BY EXPERIENCE

A superspecialised radiologist with a distinguished career, he had every reason to build a life abroad. After spending seven years at one of India's top hospitals and completing a superspecialisation musculoskeletal imaging from Harvard University, he came to a realisation that changed his life: the sophisticated medical infrastructure and expertise he had acquired were only benefitting a small, already well-served segment of the population.

He recognised that while only 25% of the population resides in urban areas, the majority of healthcare infrastructure, skilled professionals and financial resources are concentrated there. Most specialists follow a well-worn pathurban practice in high-end hospitals, serving the same limited patient base. This trend has silently perpetuated the drain of critical healthcare capacity from rural India.

where healthcare infrastructure has Singh launched a mission to bring mission. Based in Haryana, Tirupati advanced. precision-driven diagnostic care to tier 3 and tier 4 cities—areas that had long been overlooked.

BUILDING BHARAT'S HEALTH BACKBONE: TIRUPATI DIAGNOSTICS India may be on its way to becoming the

third-largest economy globally, but its human development indicators remain underwhelming. Despite its vast roadways, expanding airports, and rapid digital infrastructure growth, the country still ranks 66th in the Global Health Security Index. Rural India bears the brunt of this deficit—housing nearly 75% of the population but accessing only 25% of the nation's healthcare resources.

This is where social entrepreneurship fills the gap. His Tirupati Diagnostics and Labs stands as a case study in how impactful change is possible when professional Diagnostics has made high-end, superspecialised diagnostic care accessible in some of the state's most underserved regions—Palwal and

These areas, previously devoid of quality diagnostic infrastructure, now host advanced technologies such as MRI, Fibroscan and over 100 new diagnostic tests-many of which were previously unavailable in this part of the state. The facility has also introduced a comprehensive maternal and fetal medicine unit to combat high maternal and infant mortality rates. This includes fetal echocardiography, anomaly scans, Doppler studies, and Obs-Gynec MRIs. Drawing from his advanced training, he has set up dedicated imaging suites for

liver, gut and musculoskeletal systems targeting regional health concerns like viral and alcoholic liver diseases, gut infections and trauma or sports-related iniuries.

Strategically located near public transportation hubs, Tirupati Diagnostics has improved access drastically. Today, 35% of patients come from within 5 km, while 65% travel from distances of up to 40 km-distances that were once a deterrent for timely care. By optimising operational costs and providing services at affordable rates, Tirupati has shown that rural healthcare delivery can be both effective and sustainable.

CONCLUSION

India's journey toward becoming an economic superpower must be matched by an equally ambitious investment in human development. The work of Dr Vikram Pratap Singh and Tirupati Diagnostics is a powerful reminder that meaningful progress stems not just from GDP growth, but from grassroots

transformation Their success demonstrates that advanced, affordable and inclusive healthcare is achievable—even in regions that have long been sidelined. This is not merely a healthcare initiative it's a blueprint for change, a model for public-private partnership and a call to action for professionals to look beyond

urban centers. As India moves into the Amrit Kaal, it is visionaries like Dr. Singh who will help realize the dream of a truly self-reliant and equitable Bharat—one where no citizen is denied the dignity of health and the promise of a better tomorrow.













HK Hospitals was inaugurated at Lumbini Enclave, Gachibowli. The launch event itself turned into a star-studded spectacle, with numerous Tollywood celebrities and Bigg Boss Telugu stars gracing the occasion, adding a touch of glamour to the celebration.











The city came alive with colour, curiosity, and creativity as 5000+ attendees poured into CHIREC International School for the highly anticipated SPARKZ Mega Art & Science Festival. The one-of-a-kind event brought together students, educators, artists, scientists, parents and curious minds for a day that was nothing short of extraordinary. A vibrant confluence of learning and fun, SPARKZ offered an immersive experience where art & design met science in the most spectacular manner.







The Mega Pet Fest at B2M Vet Care Hospital was a resounding success, with over 40 different breeds of dogs proudly participating in a stylish Pet Fashion

Show. This heartwarming event, organized in collaboration with the Rainbow Vistas Pet Lovers Association (RVPLA), attracted pet lovers from all around. creating an atmosphere of joy, camaraderie, and a shared love for animals





Pune Gas announced the launch of Telangana's first dedicated commercial and industrial LPG and Natural Gas systems—the Pune Gas Experience Centre in Hyderabad. The centre was inaugurated with the esteemed presence of A Babu Rao,

Chairman of Café Niloufer, and Jesal Sampat, Executive Director, Pune Gas, among the others





Mad Over Donuts (MOD) announced its latest expansion with a brand-new flagship store in Sarath City Mall. Known for its handcrafted, 100% eggless donuts and vibrant, fun ambiance, MOD is bringing its 'circle of happiness' to the City of Pearls.



Euler Motors has made a significant leap in India's electric mobility landscape with the launch of its StormEV, marking the company's entry into the four-wheeler commercial electric vehicle segment. Designed for heavy-duty logistics, the StormEV offers a 1.25-ton payload, a range of up to 200 km, and fast-charging capabilities.

ARCHIE













CROSSWORD



GARFIELD











SPEED BUMP CUT IT OUT! I WAS SAVING THAT FOOD FOR LATER!

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IF DOGS HAD BRACES

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boiled slowly

17 Meat and vegetables

18 Drink made from grapes

10 One hundred years

8 This colour plus red

- 1 Mountains 2 A parent 4 A law
- 19 Happening every twelve



5 The one bought most

11 A puzzle with many pieces

grows in shady places

6 Sleep in this room

12 A newspaper boss

14 A plant with fronds that

recently

9 Try

15 Absent



RANA DAGGUBATI BECOMES FIRST INDIAN CELEBRITY T



A ctor Rana Daggubati has added another milestone to his career — and this time, it's outside the realm of cinema. The Baahubali star became the first Indian celebrity to make an official appearance at WWE's biggest annual event, WrestleMania 41, marking a unique crossover between Indian cinema and global sports entertainment.

Held in Las Vegas, WrestleMania 41 streamed live on Netflix and welcomed Rana as a special guest, placing him in the front row among some of the world's most iconic wrestling legends and fans. His presence didn't go unnoticed — WWE gave him a special on-air shoutout that reached millions of viewers across the globe.

Netflix celebrated the moment on Instagram by posting exclusive videos and pictures of Rana from the event with the caption: "Heels. Faces. Familiar faces @ranadaggubati is at WrestleMania. Jo line cross kiya, woh gaya. #RanaNaidu."

For Rana Daggubati, the experience was deeply personal. "Being at WrestleMania 41 is a surreal experience — WWE has been a part of all our childhoods," the actor shared. "Now, to witness it live and to be able to represent India on a global stage, especially with both WWE and Rana Naidu streaming on Netflix, feels like a full-circle moment."

Back in India, Netflix and WWE hosted a spe-Back in India, Netflix and WWE hosted a special watch party in Mumbai to commemorate the occasion, bringing together fans and celebrities for a live viewing of WrestleMania 41. The event celebrated the growing popularity of WWE in India and highlighted the shared global love for storytelling — whether in the ring or on screen.

Rana Daggubati is gearing up for the release of *Rana Naidu Season 2*, which is slated to premiere on Netflix in 2025. The crime drama also stars Venkatesh Daggubati and Surveen Chawla. The first season of the gritty, action-packed show dropped on March 10, 2023 and received widespread attention for its bold storytelling and powerful performances.





ctor Ajith Kumar continues to make waves not just in Indian cinema but also on the international motorsport circuit. His team, Ajith Kumar Racing, secured a remarkable second-place podium finish at the prestigious Spa Francorchamps Circuit in Belgium, adding another laurel to their

impressive racing journey.
Taking to X (formerly Twitter),
the official handle of Ajith Kumar Racing shared the exciting news,

"A proud moment for Indian motorsport! #AjithKumar and his team secure a remarkable P2 podium finish at the prestigious Spa

Francorchamps circuit in Belgium. A testament to passion, precision, and perseverance on the global racing stage."

This marks yet another international achievement for the actorturned-racer, who has been con-

turned-racer, who has been consistently representing India on the global racing platform.

A significant number of fans gathered in Belgium to support and celebrate Ajith and his team. A video shared by Ajith Kumar Racing captured the electric atmosphere, with fans cheering as Ajith celebrated on the podium alongside his tempmates. alongside his teammates.

"The crowd swells, and so does

the love! People of Belgium form a beeline to meet their idol! In cinema and sports, #AK continues to spread positivity wherever he goes! A true global icon," the caption read.

This latest achievement follows a series of commendable performances by Ajith Kumar Racing. The team had earlier secured third place in the 991 category of the 24H Dubai 2025 race and another third-place finish at the 12H Mugello event in Italy. With this second-place podium at Spa, the team has now bagged three international podium finishes within just four months.

Ajith Kumar is not only an

active participant but also the owner of Ajith Kumar Racing. He races alongside professional drivers Mathieu Detry, Fabian Duffieux and Cameron McLeod. The team has partnered with Bas Koeten Racing for technical and logistical support, ensuring a professional and competitive setup.

Ajith's passion for motorsport and his steady rise in international racing circuits continue to inspire fans and sports enthusiasts back home. As his team keeps pushing limits on the track, they're not just winning races — they're putting Indian motorsport on the

Jr NTR and Prashanth Neel kick off

NTR31 with serious seaside prep

fter wrapping up his Bollywood debut with *War 2* alongside Hrithik Roshan, Jr NTR is now gearing up for his next high-octane project, NTR31, helmed by KGF and Salaar director Prashanth Neel. As anticipation builds around the collaboration, a new picture shared by the makers has sent fans into a frenzy.

The photo, posted by the official handle of NTRNeel, captures Jr NTR and Prashanth Neel in an intense discussion by the seashore. Captioned, "Two MASS ENGINES ready to wreck it all from tomorrow," the post hints at the explosive cinematic experience the duo is set to deliver. While Neel appears focused and composed, what truly caught fans' attention was Jr NTR's dramatic physical transformation. Dressed casually, the actor appeared significantly leaner and more chiseled than before—fueling widespread speculation online.

Rumours began circulating that the Devara star might have used Ozempic, a drug often associated with rapid weight loss. However, Jr NTR's team was quick to dismiss the claims, clarifying that the actor has adopted a strict new fitness routine, which includes consuming just one meal a

This upcoming film, NTR31, marks one of the most eagerly awaited pan-Indian collaborations, blending Jr NTR's mass appeal with Neel's larger-than-life action storytelling. Backed by Mythri Movie Makers, NTR Arts, and T-Series, the film promises to be a game-changer in Indian cinema.



Romantic drama Sumathi Shatakam

launched with a traditional

ceremony in Amaravati

Allu Arjun and Atlee kickstart AA22xA6 with look test in Mumbai; shoot begins June 2025

A llu Arjun is gearing up for an exciting cinematic collaboration with block-buster filmmaker Atlee for a highoctane project tentatively titled AA22xA6. The buzz around this upcoming film has intensified after reports confirmed that a look test and concept photoshoot were conducted in Mumbai.

Sources reveal that both Allu Arjun and Atlee were spotted in the city experimenting with multiple looks for the film, hinting at diverse styles and appearances for the actor. The visual test further cemented speculations that the film will be an ambitious venture involving layered characters and unique styling choices.

Set to go on floors in June 2025, *AA22xA6* is being mounted on a grand scale and is touted to be a never-before-seen cinematic experience. The project is said to revolve around a "parallel universe" concept — a first-of-its-kind for Indian cinema — and will involve

extensive use of VFX. Multiple international studios are expected to collaborate on the film's visual effects, further pushing the boundaries of storytelling and

Reports also suggest that both Allu Arjun and Atlee are being paid record-breaking fees for their work on the film, underlining the scale and expectations riding on the project.

While the official announcement had already been made ear-lier by the makers, this latest development around the look test adds fresh excitement among fans eagerly awaiting more details. With Allu Árjun's star power and Atlee's track record of mass entertainers, AA22xA6 promises to be one of the most anticipated films in the coming

SAMANTHA RUTH PRABHU'S INSTAGRAM **'LIKE' IGNITES DEBATE ON ABANDONING SICK PARTNERS**

ctor Samantha Ruth Prabhu recently drew attention on social media after she 'liked' a powerful Instagram post discussing the troubling phenomenon of men abandoning their partners during illness. The post, which delved into gender-based disparities in caregiving within relationships, quickly gained traction with over 60,000 likes, sparking debate across platforms. The post, shared by the page Successverse, featured a clip from the popular YouTube podcast Diary Of A CEO. Titled "Why Men Leave Sick Partners: The Cold Truth Behind Relationship Abandonment", the video explored a disturbing statistic — men are reportedly 624% more likely to leave their partners if they become terminally ill, whereas women overwhelmingly choose to stay and provide care for their ailing spouses.

Experts in the video cited social conditioning, rigid gender roles, and emotional immaturity as contributing factors behind this gendered pattern of abandonment. Samantha's quiet acknowledgment of the post via a 'like' has reignited public conversation around gender dynamics in relationships, especially under the strain of illness.

The timing of Samantha's engagement with the post adds context, considering her own public battle with myositis, a rare autoimmune disease. Diagnosed in 2022, she has openly spoken about the debilitating impact the illness has had on her daily life, from muscle weakness to chronic pain. The revelation came a year after her divorce from Telugu actor Naga Chaitanya, whom she married in 2017 after dating since 2015. Their separation became the subject of intense speculation, particularly after Samantha dropped the 'Akkineni' surname from her social media in 2020. While neither party linked the split to her health, fans have frequently drawn connections between her personal and

public struggles. While Samantha hasn't commented publicly on the post she liked, her action has been interpreted by many as a subtle nod to the emotional and physical toll illness can take—not just on the patient, but on relationships as

Tiision Movie Makers, known for their suc-cessful debut with Mandira featuring Sunny Leone, is back with a fresh and exciting project — Sumathi Shatakam. The and produced Kommalapati Sudhakar, marks the directorial debut of M. M.

was held at the Vykuntapuram Village Temple in Amaravati, where the cast and crew were joined by special guests to celebrate the occasion. The event was marked with Pedakurapadu MLA Bhashyam Praveen giving the first clap, while Venna Sambasiva Reddy switched on the camera. Following the ceremony, the team commenced regu-

lar shooting for the film.

Sumathi Shatakam promises to be a youthful and engaging romantic entertainer. Written by Bandaru Naidu, the film's music is composed by Subhash Anand, while the cinematography is handled by Halsewami. Suresh Vinnakota takes charge of the editing, ensuring a visually appealing and well-paced narrative.

The film features a talented ensemble cast, with Amardeep Chowdary, Sayli Chaudhari and Tasty Teja in pivotal roles. With a fresh concept, a dynamic cast and an energetic team, Sumathi Shatakam is set to be a delightful addition to the romantic drama genre, and fans can expect an exciting ride with this new project from Viision Movie Makers.

Dhanush confirms two new films: AR Rahman on boards *D56*, Vignesh Raja directing next

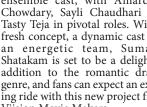
Dhanush fans, the actor has **L** announced not one but two highly anticipated projects. The updates came during the pre-release event of Sumo, where producer Ishari K. Ganesh revealed the dynamic slate ahead for the star.

The first announcement is the official confirmation of D56, a film that sees Dhanush reuniting with acclaimed director Mari Selvaraj. What makes this collaboration even more special is that music legend A.R. Rahman will be composing the soundtrack. Their previous deliver bold, high-quality cinema. musical partnerships — *Maryan*, Raanjhanaa and Atrangi Re - have delivered chart-topping hits and expectations are sky-high for their next

'n an exciting turn of events for However, before *D56* takes off, Dhanush will begin work on another film — this one to be helmed by Por Thozhil director Vignesh Raja. This yet-untitled project is set to go on floors ahead of D56 and promises a gripping narrative, given Raja's reputation for crafting intense thrillers. While both films are in early stages of production, fans are already abuzz with excitement. With Dhanush juggling genres and collaborating with some of the most sought-after talents in the industry, his upcoming lineup reflects a clear intent: to

> As more details unfold in the coming weeks, cinephiles can gear up for a powerful blend of storytelling, performance and music - all headlined







IPL: Delhi Capitals take on LSG

elhi Capitals (DC) will expect a more productive effort from their openers when they visit the 'City of Nawabs' to face an increasingly confident Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in an IPL match here on Tuesday. The Capitals' opening has been a bit of roulette so far this season with Faf du Plessis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Abhishek Porel and the latest entrant Karun Nair coming in at the pole position.

In fact, in the last five matches they had three different opening combinations between those four batters, producing partnerships of 23, 34 0, 9, 0.

It also had to do with the injury of Du Plessis, and the South African's fitness will be closely watched ahead of this match.

Thus far, it looked like a minor glitch because the Capitals have won five of their seven matches and the middle-order under the aegis of KL Rahul too worked like a well-oiled machine.

But Lucknow's competent bowling unit of Digvesh Rathi, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan and Shardul Thakur, though he is a bit expensive, has choked the opposition without much fanfare.

The way Avesh excelled in the 18th and 20th over against Rajasthan Royals in LSG's two-run win is an example of that.

It might have also doubled the confidence of the Super Giants that they can pull off wins from any situation.

Therefore, the Capitals will not like to leave the task of building the innings to



Rahul and his middle-order colleagues as they have been doing so often this time.

Instead, the DC management will like to see their middle-order driving in the early advantage given to them by the top two. In contrast, the Lucknow outfit has a solid top three with Mitchell Marsh, Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram firing more often than not and it has given them an edge over opponents in the Power

It's ironic that the personal form of DC and LSG skippers is going in exactly the

Nigam and Mukesh Kumar. opposite direction of their teams' fortunes.
Both DC and LSG have 10 points and But much like LSG, the Delhi side too will have some concerns about their skip-

per — Axar Patel. Axar has led well and made 140 runs at a strike-rate of 159, but those improvements have masked his diminishing returns as a bowler — just a solitary wicket from seven matches at an It seems that the added responsibility of

captaining the side and the demands batting higher up in the order have forced Axar to neglect his primary skills.

The DC management might want him to address this disparity at the earliest so that they can have more variety in their

Teams

Lucknow Super Giants: Rishabh Pant (wk/captain), Aiden Markram, Mitchell Marsh, Nicholas Pooran, Ayush Badoni, Abdul Samad, David Miller, Shardul Thakur, Avesh Khan, Akash Deep, Digvesh Singh Rathi, Ravi Bishnoi, Prince Yadav, Shahbaz Ahmed, Matthew Breetzke, Himmat Singh, Shamar Joseph, Manimaran Siddharth, Aryan Juyal, RS Hangargekar, Yuvraj Chaudhary, Akash Maharaj Singh, Mayank Yadav, Arshin

Delhi Capitals: Axar Patel (c), Jake Fraser-McGurk, Abishek Porel, Karun Nair, KL Rahul(w), Tristan Stubbs, Ashutosh Sharma, Vipraj Nigam, Mitchell Starc, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohit Sharma, Mukesh Kumar, Sameer Rizvi, Darshan Nalkande, Donovan Ferreira, Tripurana Vijay, Dushmantha Chameera, Faf du Plessis, T Natarajan, Ajay Jadav Mandal, Manvanth Kumar L, Madhav Tiwari.

If you doubt yourself, you put pressure on yourself: Rohit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

¬ tar batter Rohit Sharma asserted that he never doubted his abilities amidst a prolonged lean patch, and termed the glorious fifty against Chennai Super Kings (CSK) as a validation of the faith he has in his skill sets.

'Player of the Match' Rohit slammed four boundaries and six maximums in his unbeaten 45-ball 76 to guide Mumbai Indians to a nine-wicket win over the Super Kings. It was Rohit's first fifty of this IPL season after scores of 0, 8. 13, 17, 18, and 26 in the previous matches.

"After being here for a long time, it's easy to start doubting yourself and start doing different things. It was important for me to practice well, hit the ball well. When you are clear in your mind, things

like this can happen," said Rohit.

The former MI skipper said pressure would mount if a player began to doubt his own abilities.

"It has been a while (getting a big score) but if you doubt yourself, you put pressure on yourself. It is important to balance how you want to play. Today I wanted to hit the ball but it was also important to hold the shape and extend

"And then if the ball is in the arc, I want to try what i always do. It has not been happening consistently but I am not

going to doubt myself," he added.
With one of the stands at the

Wankhede Stadium to be built in his honour, Rohit, who played most of his formative cricket here, said it was a "huge honour" for him.

"Looks pretty far! Huge honour. I used to come here as a kid and watch the game. We were not allowed to come here at some stage. I grew up playing at this ground, now to have that stand, huge honour. "Do not know how I will react when it actually comes up. Satisfying part was to finish the game."

Mumbai Indians have jumped to sixth spot on the table with four wins and Rohit said the team was building up the momentum. "We are peaking at the right time, winning three on the trot. Winning back-to-back is important, we stand in a good position," he said.

MI skipper Hardik Pandya said he was never overly perturbed by Rohit's lack of runs as he knew they would come soon.

"The way Rohit and Suryakumar bat, it is a relief from outside. You don't have to worry about Rohit's form. He's gonna come good like this.

"We knew when he comes good, the opposition will be out. SKY (Surya) complimented him," Hardik said.

"Percentage cricket is high, we are not trying magical stuff and sticking to simple cricket. Knew they (CSK) were behind the game and wanted to keep it tight. The fast bowlers went for runs and we knew 175 was below par," said

Mumbai Indians have encouraged Rohit to bat with aggressive approach: Jayawardene

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

ohit Sharma's aggressive approach with the bat might have drawn Criticism for more misses than hits but Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene said the team has backed the former captain to bat at a similar tempo despite its perils.

Rohit stroked his way to a match-winning 45-ball 76 here on Sunday against Chennai Super Kings to banish an ordinary run of scores so far in this IPL season. "Once he comes off like that, you know that he's going to change the game and the momentum and that's going to filter down to the rest of the boys as well, so pretty happy with the approach," Jayawardene told the media in the postmatch press conference.

"He never changed his approach. The intent was there from day one, even though he was failing, so that was good for us (in the way) that he was trying to play for the team and how he wanted to do it. We just backed him to do that," he added. Jayawardene said showing situational awareness is imperative and Rohit was able to execute his plans well against CSK.

"He's been playing at this tempo for a while and that's something that he understands himself. But at the same time, he will understand the game better in situational awareness as well," he said.

He (Rohit) has been playing at this tempo for a while and that's something that he understands himself

– MAHELA JAYAWARDENE, COACH

"Like today, when Ash (Ravichandran Ashwin) came (on to bowl) as well, he (Rohit) took a little bit of time. He knew that he didn't have to take (on) the long boundary straight away," Jayawardene said. "But those are experienced players making those good decisions out there. He'll still play with that tempo and we've encouraged him to do that because he's a damn good player, we want him to take

"He has got a couple of other guys who are going to follow him, who will bat around him as well (to) take that little bit of onus away from certain situations," he added. Jayawardene said MI built matchup situations in the game for Rohit in training to help him be in the right frame of mind. "Rohit does bat in the nets, but there is a different preparation to how he goes about it. For him, there were a couple of good balls he got and then a couple of times that he tried things that didn't work, so you try to fight through those situations," he said.

higher echelons of the points table ahead

But the lukewarm form of skipper

Rishabh Pant has been a massive issue for

LSG. He has merely 106 runs from eight

games and 63 of those came in a single

match. His strike-rate of 98 is also a tad

Against Delhi, Pant will have to deal

with an excellent bowling unit comprising

Mitchell Starc, Kuldeep Yadav, Vipraj

the jostlers.

"For a guy with that kind of experience, you literally leave them be and have those positive conversations and say that, 'let's do the matchups and then see how he gets going' and keep those positive intent.

That was the very few conversations Polly (Kieron Pollard) had with him, I had with him and he was quite okay about everything. He knows what he needs to do," he added.

Jayawardene said there wasn't much concern around Rohit's string of ordinary scores. "It was just a timing thing that he gets going and then gets through that first three, four overs," he said.

Even if CSK does not qualify, need to get 'secure eleven': Captain MS Dhoni

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

e need to see whether we are playing the right form of cricket," the struggling Chennai Super Kings' skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni said, urging his teammates to do a bit of soul-searching with an eye on the bigger picture of creating a "secure eleven" for the 2026 IPL season.

Dhoni hinted that players "aren't applying themselves" but also said that he is closer to identifying the core for next year.

"With all the games that are in front of us that we are supposed to win, we just take it one game at a time and if we lose a few, what will be important for us is to get the right combination for next year," Dhoni said after his team got trounced by nine wickets at the hands of Mumbai Indians in an IPL game here on Sunday evening. "You do not want too many players getting changed, what will be important is to try and qualify, but if not get a secure 11 for next year and come back

strong," the skipper said. If one talks about core, CSK's class of in the second half and we were in a posi-

2026 will not be a 'Dad's Army' like the tion to exploit the middle overs," Dhoni previous years. A 17-year-old Ayush spoke about lack of cricketing sense Mhatre, 20-year-old Shaikh Rasheed, 21-year-old Dewald Brevis, and 22-yearold Vansh Bedi are expected to form the batting core next year with the 25-year-old Rachin Ravindra, skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad and slogger Shivam Dube.

Having already lost six out of eight

games, the bottom-placed CSK will find extremely difficult to win all their remaining six games to make it to the last four stage which looks like a long shot at the moment. "We are successful because we play good cricket and at the same time, when we are not playing good cricket what is important is not to get too emotional about it and at the same time, you want to be practical," he added.

Dhoni rarely gives his opinion on any issue but he did not mince words in dissecting his team's poor batting. CSK have consistently failed to either chase or put

"I think we were quite below par, because we all knew that dew will come

spoke about lack of cricketing sense among the batters. He wanted his set batters to start slogging slightly earlier.

"I just felt that (Jasprit) Bumrah being one of the best death bowlers in the world right now, once he (Bumrah) started early, that was the time we should have capitalised and started our slog slightly early. "And if even Bumrah also goes for runs,

it's a plus point. I think there were a few overs where we could have got slightly more runs. We needed those runs because 175 with the dew around is not a par score." He was all praise for Mhatre, who smashed everyone out of the park.

"I think as a youngster he batted really well, and that's the kind of approach that is needed where you play your shots and at the same time, you pick your shots that is your strength," the skipper said.

"He went and played his shots and we also have not seen him much. So, it is a good sign for us at the top of the order that if he can keep playing the shots, it will become slightly easier for the middle and

Shubman Gill take bold decisions: Rashid Khan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

Ctar Afghan spinner Rashid Khan Says the pressure of performance in IPL is more than the World Cup and Shubman Gill as the leader of Gujarat Titans has a great opportunity to take bold decisions to prove his credentials as a great captain. Rashid, who plays under Gill at Gujarat Titans, spoke highly of his skipper saying he has all the qualities to be a great leader.

"Shubman has a very bright future as a leader, not just as a batter but in the way he thinks and understands the game," Rashid said on JioHotstar's special series 'Gen Gold'. "He comes with a plan. He's very calm, and when you see him on the ground-the way he manages the team, the bowlers, and the overall environment, he has all the qualities to be a great leader.

"He's captaining in such a big league, and the pressure here is even more than the World Cup. This is the best opportunity for him as a captain to perform under pressure and take bold decisions," said the 26year-old wily leg-spinner.

Talking about his own brief stint with Titans as skipper when Hardik Pandya was indisposed, Rashid said the opportunity during the 2022 season helped him grow as a leader which helped him do national duty even better.

"It was a dream come true. That experience helped me grow, not just in the league but also when I returned to lead Afghanistan. I started thinking differently," he said. "Compared to 4-5 years ago, I had a shift in mindset. That leadership stint helped me and played a part in Afghanistan reaching the semi-finals in 2024 (of the T20 World Cup)."

BCCI central contracts: Rohit, Virat retained in top grade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

ndia's Test and ODI captain Rohit Sharma and batting talisman Virat Kohli retained their place in the top category, while the out-of-favour duo of Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan returned to the fold in lower brackets in a 34-strong list of centrally contracted players released by the BCCI on Monday.

The A+ grade, which commands an annual retainership fee of ₹7 crore, also features Ravindra Jadeja and pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah much like the last few years. India's Champions Trophy hero Iyer has been the notable comeback in the list, inducted in group B which comes with an annual remuneration of ₹3 crore. Iyer was dropped last season for allegedly ignoring domestic cricket for IPL. Wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan. Dropped for the same reason, also made a comeback in category C, which is worth ₹1 crore annually.

Rishabh Pant, who was demoted to



didn't play due to his recovery from a lifethreatening accident, is back in A category in place of the retired Ravichandran Ashwin. Category A comes with a retainership of ₹5 crore annually.

Category C features the maximum

group B during the 2023-24 season as he number of players, 19 in all, with five new entrants in Harshit Rana, Varun Chakravarthy, Abhishek Sharma and Nitish Kumar Reddy and Akash Deep,

who earlier had a fast bowling contract. The only notable name missing in the list is Mumbai all-rounder Shardul Thakur, who last played for India in the 2023 ODI World Cup game against Bangladesh in Pune.

Fast bowler Avesh Khan, keeper-batters Kona Bharat and Jitesh Sharma have also

been excluded from the list. **BCCI central contracts list:**

A+ category: Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja A category: Mohammed Siraj, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Hardik Pandya,

Mohammed Shami, Rishabh Pant B category: Suryakumar Yadav, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Yashasvi Jaiswal,

C category: Rinku Singh, Tilak Verma, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shivam Dube, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Mukesh Kumar, Sanju Samson, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Rajat Patidar, Dhruv Jurel, Sarfaraz Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma,

Akash Deep, Varun Chakaravarthy,

IPL: Ayush Mhatre debut marks shift in CSK's with experience-first philosophy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Mumbai

or a side which has thrived on experienced players for its five IPL titles, it was uncharacteristic of Chennai Super Kings to promote a 17year-old Ayush Mhatre barely days after he joined the camp. It was only last Monday when domestic giants Mumbai's newest batting talent Mhatre joined the CSK ranks for an IPL marred by lack of form and courage from batters, made worse by a season-ending injury to skipstood out," CSK head coach Stephen per Ruturaj Gaikwad.

Mhatre's debut against MI might have come as a surprise for those who have seen CSK taking their own time before putting faith in young players. But his story will now be that point in history when the IPL powerhouse ended its own tradition with a "view to the future".

In a mere 18 minutes in the middle, Mhatre gave a fine account of himself for someone who wants to be purely known as an "aggressive batsman", something that he said after breaking Yashasvi Jaiswal's List A record for being the youngest to score 150 or more. On Sunday, he struck four fours and two sixes

Mhatre's brisk knock didn't last long but it gave CSK the spunk they've been missing in the powerplay most of this IPL, putting him in a very small group of players to watch out for in the future including Rajasthan Royals' Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. It also rightfully earned him a pat on the back from senior pros Rohit Sharma and Suryakumar Yadav.

"We have had a few players through at Fleming told the media after the match.

"It's still very hard when you're in a net situation to get a true gauge of a player, but from a skill set (perspective), he was very impressive and a very composed young man which is often just as impor-

"Both MS (Dhoni) and I were very impressed with the way he held himself together for the trial, and when the opportunity came up — we have obviously got a view to the future — he was a name that was pretty easy to pick," he

Fleming acknowledged CSK's situation of carrying several out-of-form batters



and Mhatre's familiarity with his hometown Mumbai and the Wankhede Stadium spurred them to hand him the

"Probably the position (that) we're in,

and with the injury to Rutu and with form for others, it made it quite an easy decision to get him in there," Fleming

said. "A stage that seems big — but it's (the) one that's familiar — so we banked on him being comfortable with his surroundings and he certainly looked all that. It was an impressive debut," he

From a far away suburb of Virar, Mhatre learnt his cricket in Mumbai taking early morning days into the city and putting in the hard yards.

He rose through the ranks quickly before an unfortunate road accident involving Musheer Khan paved the way for the 17-year-old to be picked, and Mhatre made the most of the opportu-

His maiden century in Ranji Trophy was not merely a ton but a knock long enough to tell that there was plenty of substance in his fledgling career.

Mhatre scored 176 for his maiden First-Class ton which came off 232 balls with 22 fours and four sixes as Mumbai took down Maharashtra by nine wickets. He scored 471 runs in eight matches at 33.64 with two centuries and one fifty in his debut Ranji season.

In the premier 50-overs domestic competition Vijay Hazare Trophy,

Mhatre's successful run persisted as he scored 458 runs in seven matches at 65.42 with two centuries and a fifty to finish eighth in the overall list of highest runscorers. Mhatre is not alone, 20-year-old Shaikh Rasheed, 21-year-old Dewald Brevis, and 22-year-old Vansh Bedi are also expected to form CSK's batting core next year. "Is it sustainable in tricky conditions? I don't know. Is the subtlety of the game going to keep growing? I'm concerned. But in terms of what they're bringing and how they're playing their first games, it is certainly impressive," Floeming said of the younger crop. Mumbai Indians' head coach Maĥela Jayawardene said the exposure to rigorous domestic cricket is instilling qualities of intent and confidence, but also warned about the longer run."As long as we see the talent, as long as they see the intent and the confidence, then you will back that talent," he said. "It's refreshing to see all these young guys coming every year and doing that. But the key is to be consistent over a period of time and they's something that we need to wait that's something that we need to wait and see," he added.