HYDERABAD

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LUCKNOW

BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR

SPICE MEETS

FORGOTTEN FLAVOURS OF ANDHRA BACK ON TABLE

RANCHI

CHANDIGARH

Mahesh Babu's Nephew Jayakrishna

DIRECTION

to Debut Under Ajay Bhupathi's

*LATE CITY VOL. 7 ISSUE 187 I *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

DEHRADUN

language. The CM seems to be ignoring you, thinking that you are talking due to disappointment, as you did not get the post you wanted.

- T. Jagga Reddy, TPCC Working President

QUOTE OF THE DAY

wanted in the BJP, and so he is

will answer in the same

But we will not

leave you

The Pioneer

Eatala Rajender didn't get the post he

behaving like a psycho. Eatala should ask questions in decent language. Then Congress leaders will answer him. If you use offensive language, we

'BrahMos is a message of

our armed forces

6 types of services for new rice cards

A total of six services have been made available for the issuance of new rice cards. So far, 72,519 people have availed themselves of these services. From 15 May, these services can also be accessed from home through WhatsApp Governance by sending "Hello" to 95523 00009. Addressing the media on Sunday, Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar said that from 8 May, six services have been offered issuance of new rice cards, card division, change of address, addition of members, deletion of members..



'Nehru convened special session'

Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Sunday reminded the Union government of the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru convening a special session of Parliament during the war with China following a request by Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Singh wondered whether India had accepted a third-party mediation as he questioned the "silence" of PM Narendra Modi over the understanding reached between India and Pakistan after four days missile strikes...

India, EU to hold FTA talks from today

India and the European Union (EU) chief negotiators will begin the next round of talks on the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) here from Monday, with an aim to conclude the first phase of according to an official. The two sides have agreed to conclude the agreement in two phases on account of the uncertain global trade environment, particularly due to the US tariff actions under President Donald Trump. "The EU team will be here for the 11th round of...



India wins Women's **Tri-Nation ODI series**

India displayed absolute dominance to crush Sri Lanka by 97 runs and earn a well-deserved title triumph in the Women's Tri-Nation ODI series after vice-captain Smriti Mandhana's sublime century and the bowlers' collective effort in the title clash here on Sunday. After Mandhana rose to the occasion to power India to a commanding 342 for seven, the bowlers completed the task by bundling out Sri Lanka for 245, with Sneh Rana (4/38) and Amanjot Kaur (3/54) doing the bulk of the damage..

'If Pak attacks, we will retaliate harder'



India inflicted heavy losses on Pak military: Armed Forces

India on Sunday said it inflicted tremendous losses to the Pakistan military, including downing its fighter jets featuring latest technologies and damaging key military installations close to even capital Islamabad, during the three-day confrontation between the two sides.

Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai said 35-40 Pakistani military personnel were killed in the combat and New Delhi achieved its desired objectives and that Pakistan will have to pay a very heavy price if it

resorts to any misadventure. At a media briefing, senior mil-

itary officials of the Army, Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy provided details of Operation Sindoor, including how India repelled Pakistani attempts to target Indian military installations and civilian areas. To a question, Air Marshal AK Bharti said India definitely downed a few Pakistani planes but refused to hazard a guess on the numbers.

"Their planes were prevented from coming inside our border. So we do not have the wreckage with us but definitely we have downed a few planes," he said.

Modi instructs Armed Forces that response should be more forceful: Govt sources

PNS NFW DFI HI

There is a new normal in India's response to cross-border terrorism, with Prime Minister Naredra Modi instructing the armed forces that the country's response to every action by Pakistan should be more forceful, government sources said on Sunday. Following

Has the govt accepted **US** mediation on **Kashmir? asks Cong**

The Congress on Sunday demanded answers from the government on whether it has accepted third party mediation on Kashmir after the US made announcements on behalf of India and Pakistan, and slammed attempt to "internationalise" the issue. Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters, Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot said the "ceasefire" statement was a surprise to all as this was the first time a third country had made announcements on behalf of the India and Pakistan and questioned the US' bid to "hyphenate"

Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister rorism while expecting coopera-Modi told the armed forces that bullets must be responded to by artillery (Wahan se goli chalegi, toh yahan se gola chalega), the sources said. They said Operation Sindoor is not concluded and there is a new normal

response to cross-border terrorism. The cost of cross-border terrorism will be raised, and Pakistan can't continue with ter-

PNS ■ NEW YORK/WASHINGTON

tion in areas of its choosing. They also said that India will never accept mediation in the Kashmir issue and the only matter to discuss is Pakistan returning

the territory which is under its illegal occupation Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Saturday evening announced that India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect, after four days of intense cross-border

drone and missile strikes.



implementation of ceasefire: Foreign Office

PNS ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Sunday said it was "committed" to faithful implementation of the ceasefire with India, asserting that its forces are handling the situation with

"responsibility and restraint". India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect. Hours later, the arrangement came under severe pressure with New Delhi blaming Islamabad for breaching it.

In a media briefing close to midnight, India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri called upon Pakistan to take "appropriate steps" to address these violations and deal with the situation with "seriousness and

Tearful farewell to fallen Agniveer Naik

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh attended the funeral of Agniveer Veerjawaan Murali Naik, who sacrificed his life for the nation during Operation Sindoor. ier hailed Kalitanda village in Gorantla mandal of Sri Sathya Sai dis-

Minister Lokesh visited Murali Naik's residence to offer his final respects, laying a floral tribute and giving a solemn salute at the martyr's mortal remains. He consoled the grieving parents and interacted with relatives and friends, reviewing WhatsApp chats exchanged between Murali and his cousin Rajasekhar shortly before his deployment-messages that left the minister visibly moved.

Slogans of "Jai Veerjawaan Murali Naik," "Bharat Mata Ki Jai," and "Vande Mataram" echoed across the village as large crowds gathered to honour the fallen soldier. The funeral procession saw an outpouring of emotion, with many locals joining in a show of national pride and collective mourning.

In a gesture of deep respect, Minister Lokesh personally carried the martyr's mortal remains during the procession. The final rites were conducted with full state honours their families.



his family, along with five acres of agricultural land and a 300-squarefather will be offered a government job. A memorial will be built at the funeral site, and a bronze statue will be erected at the district headquarters in honour of his sacrifice.

The government has

announced financial

support of Rs 50 lakh to

on the family's agricultural land. From early morning, Lokesh oversaw the arrangements, coordinating with officials and personally inspecting the site to ensure all was in

Speaking at a press conference following the funeral, Minister Lokesh assured that both the central and state governments would fully support Murali Naik's family. He praised the Indian armed forces for their decisive retaliation in destroying terrorist bases across the border, and stressed the importance of recognising the sacrifices made by soldiers like Murali, who serve the nation far from

Murali Naik, the only son in the family, had long dreamt of joining the armed forces and had expressed his wish to be draped in the Indian flag upon his death. Brought up by his grandparents, his loss is

family. The government has announced financial support of Rs 50 lakh to his family, along with five acres of agricultural land and a 300square-yard residential plot. His father will be offered a government job. A memorial will be built at the funeral site. and a bronze statue will be erected at the district headquarters in honour of his sac-

particularly poignant for the

Pawan slams Pak for ceasefire violation

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan visited Kalitanda village in Gorantla mandal on Saturday to pay homage to Agniveer Murali Naik, who was martyred during Operation Sindoor. "It is deeply painful that a young soldier, who rejected a railway job to serve the nation, had to lose his life at just 23. His sacrifice reflects the far-reaching consequences of terrorism and border conflict across the country," he said, extending condolences to Murali's parents, Jyothi Bai and Sriram

Condemning Pakistan's breach of ceasefire merely three hours after agreeing to a truce, Pawan Kalyan termed it a betrayal. He warned the nation not to trust Pakistan's 'ceasefire theatrics".

Speaking to the media after paying his respects, the Deputy CM said, "India has never desired war, nor initiated one against any neighbour. But to protect ourselves, we are left with no other option.

350 AP students safely reach Delhi from J & K

Amid rising tensions in the border regions, Andhra Pradesh Bhavan in New Delhi has successfully coordinated the safe return of 350 students from the state who were studying in Jammu & Kashmir.

Trump praises 'strong, powerful'

leadership of India, Pakistan

US President Donald Trump on Sunday praised the "strong and

unwaveringly powerful" leadership of India and Pakistan for reach-

ing a "ceasefire" and offered to work with them for a "solution"

on the Kashmir issue. India has always maintained that the

Kashmir issue is a bilateral matter and there is no space for

any third party. India asserts that the Union Territory of Jammu

& Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh are and always

will be integral and inalienable parts of it. Continued on Page 2

As of Sunday evening, an additional 100 students had reached the national capital,

bringing the total number of returnees to 350. Of these, 90 have already departed for their respective hometowns across Andhra Pradesh. The remaining 260 students are currently being accommodated at Andhra Pradesh Bhavan, where they are receiving free lodging, nutritious meals, and

confirmed train ticket bookings and providing local transport to ensure a smooth onward journey for the students to their native places. In response to the escalating

situation along the border, a 24x7 Control Room has been set up at the Bhavan to assist residents of Andhra Pradesh who are living in or The Bhavan is also arranging through the border states.

Hearty Congratulations

Dr. G. Viswanathan

Founder & Chancellor - VIT

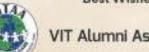
on being conferred Honorary Doctor of Pedagogy by the prestigious

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Rochester, New York State, USA



This momentous occasion of being conferred with your Honorary Doctorate marks a remarkable milestone, underscoring your unwavering dedication, profound impact on countless lives through selfless service and significant effort in nation building.

We salute your transformative work and inspiring journey.



Best Wishes from

VIT Alumni Association (VITAA)

AP govt fills key posts of boards, corpns

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has announced a fresh round of appointments to several key nominated posts across various boards, development authorities, and welfare corporations. The appointments reflect the ruling Telugu Desam Party's (TDP) efforts to accommodate not only its members but also those from allied parties and civil society groups, including the Jana Sena Party (JSP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the Amaravati Joint Action Committee (JAC).

Among those appointed are Dr Z Shiva Prasad from Nellore City to the AP Inland Waterways Authority Board and S Rajashekar from Kuppam to the AP Education & Welfare Infrastructure Development Corporation. Former MLA Sugunamma from Tirupati has been nominated to the AP Greening & Beautification Corporation, while (SC), will chair the AP State SC

Venkata Sivudu Yadav from Guntakal will serve on the AP Labour Welfare

Valavala Babji from Tadepalligudem has been appointed to the AP Buildings & Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board, and Burugupalli Sesha Rao from Nidadavolu to the AP Skill Development Corporation. Pithala Sujatha from Bhimavaram will head the AP Women's Cooperative Finance Corporation. Divakar Reddy of Tirupati has been placed in the Tirupati Urban Development Authority, and Vani Venkata Shiva Prasad Pennuboyina from Eluru in the Eluru Urban

Development Authority. Dr Ravi Vemuru of Tenali will lead the AP Non-Resident Telugu Society, while Malepati Subba Naidu from Kavali has been appointed to the AP Agro Industries Development Corporation Ltd. KS Jawahar, representing Kovvur



Rayapati Sailaja named chief of AP Women's Commission

Alapati Suresh made Chairman of AP

Press Academy

Commission. The AP Fishermen Cooperative Societies Federation will be headed by Peddiraju Kollu from Narasapuram.

Perepi Eeshwar of Vijayawada East has been selected for the AP Kummari Shalivahana Welfare & Development Corporation, and Mallela Eshwara Rao from Guntur West for the AP Vaddera Welfare & Development Corporation. Akasapu Swamy from Tadepalligudem governance.

will serve in the AP Tailors Development Cooperative Federation.

From the Jana Sena Party, Leelakrishna of Mandapeta has been appointed to the AP Irrigation Development Cooperative Corporation (APSIDC), Riyaz from Ongole to the AP Livestock Development Agency, and Dr Pasupuleti Hari Prasad of Tirupati to the AP Handicrafts Development Corporation.

From the BJP, S Bojji Reddy from Rampachodavaram will head the AP Scheduled Tribes Commission. Dr Rayapati Sailaja, representing the Amaravati JAC has been appointed to the AP Women's Commission, and Alapati Suresh, also from the Amaravati JAC, will lead the AP Press Academy.

These appointments signal the government's attempt to ensure broadbased political participation and to bring diverse voices into institutional

Monday Mirchi

SHUKLA STEPS IN AS AMRAPALI

HEADS TO MUSSOORIE With Amrapali Kata heading to the hills of Mussoorie for the prestigious Phase-III Mid-Career Training Programme at LBSNAA, the Andhra Pradesh government has handed over the tourism baton — and more — to a familiar and capable face. Himanshu Shukla, currently serving as Director and Ex-officio Joint Secretary (I&PR), has been entrusted with full additional charge as Managing Director of APTDC. But that's not all. Shukla will also be steering three other key roles: CEO of APTA, CEO of BITC, and Commissioner of Archaeology & Museums. It's a hefty administrative bouquet, but those who've worked with him aren't surprised. Known for his composed leadership and ability to juggle multiple assignments without missing a beat, Shukla is often described as the go-to officer for stabilising transitions and getting things done quietly but effectively. With summer tourism picking up and multiple portfolios now under his care, all eyes will be on how Shukla handles the additional responsibilities. For now, the government seems confident and rightly so.

BUREAUCRATS EYE KEY POSTINGS AS RESHUFFLE LOOMS

With the reshuffle of district collectors expected soon, lobbying has intensified behind the scenes. While Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medchal, Sangareddy, and Warangal remain the top-tier picks, their limited availability has pushed many aspirants to recalibrate their sights. One officer from the energy department is said to be actively pursuing a posting in North Telangana, with whispers pointing towards Karimnagar. Though not traditionally in the top bracket, it has gained traction as a viable alternative among those looking for visibility and scope. As the file movement picks up pace, hopefuls are working their contacts and playing it safe — aiming for a district with enough weight, if not the spotlight.

CMO RESHUFFLE BUZZ—MORE **OFFICERS IN THE WAITING ROOM**

The Secretariat corridors are once again thick with chatter. While only one officer has been recently inducted into the Chief Minister's Office, three have already made their exit. That arithmetic isn't sitting well with many in the administrative circuit, who are now anxiously eyeing their phones and files. Sheshadri continues to hold a bulky portfolio with more than a dozen subjects under his command. In contrast, the others in the CMO are managing a modest half a dozen each. The imbalance in distribution is fuelling speculation that more officers may soon be brought in to ease the load and sharpen the government's grip on execution. Those aspiring for a CMO spot haven't lost hope. With movement already visible and an obvious vacancy count, the belief is that the next round of appointments might be around the corner. For now, it's a waiting game — and everyone's playing it carefully.

COLLECTOR IN NAME, CITY GIRL IN PRACTICE?

A 2016 batch IAS officer, currently post-

Tearful farewell to

Additionally, fulfilling the

villagers' request, the govern-

village as "Murali Naik Tanda"

as a tribute to the braveheart

sent at the ceremony, includ-

ing Ministers Anagani Satya

Savitha, Satya Kumar Yadav,

ministers Palle Raghunatha

and MLAs Palle Sindhura

Reddy, MS Raju and JC

Prabhakar Reddy.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Krishna Paksha Pratipada:

Nakshatram:

Vishaka:

Rahukalam:

Varjyam:

Temp: 40°°

Humidity: 54%

Sunrise: 5:38 AM

Sunset: 6:30 PM

MP BK Parthasarathi, former

Reddy and Kalava Srinivasulu,

Sukla Paksha

May 11 08:02 PM to May 12 10:25 PM

May 12 10:25 PM to May 14 12:36 AM

May 11 03:15 AM to May 12 06:17 AM May 12 06:17 AM to May 13 09:09 AM

7:24 AM to 9:00 AM 10:36 AM to 12:12 PM

12:33 PM to 02:20 PM

11:18 PM to 01:05 AM

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

Updated: May 11, 2025 5:00 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly Sunny

1:48 PM to 3:24 PM

Prasad, Vangalapudi Anitha, S

Several dignitaries were pre-

and in solidarity with the

armed forces.

ment will rename Kalitanda

fallen Agniveer...

Continued from Page 1

Hyderabad, has stirred quiet disapproval at the top. Whispers in the corridors suggest that she's spending more time in the city than in her own jurisdiction — and it hasn't gone unnoticed. Top bosses in government are said to have pulled her up recently for not acting like the administrative head of the district. Her frequent presence in Hyderabad has raised eyebrows. For a posting that demands round-the-clock attention and presence, the absence is becoming too visible. While some brush it off as a phase, others believe it's a pattern. Either way, the message from above is clear — a district can't run

FROM LOOPLINE TO LIFELINE — DISASTER MANAGEMENT GETS ITS MOMENT

Who would've thought disaster management would become one of the most watched portfolios in the state? When Arvind Kumar was handed the charge, many in the bureaucracy dismissed it as a loopline post — more ceremonial than central. But this year has flipped that perception. Floods gripped state. The SLBC tunnel collapse brought irrigation and emergency coordination to the spotlight. A full-scale mock drill was conducted — something the state hadn't seen since 1971. And now, with the heatwave turning brutal, the government has stepped in to revise compensation norms. Suddenly, the so-called sleepy department is dealing with action. The murmurs in the Secretariat are hard to miss. Disaster management quickly becoming a command post. And some say Nature itself is giving signals — making it clear that this portfolio can no longer be treated as an afterthought.

SAJJANAR SALUTES SCRIBES AMIDST CEASEFIRE BUZZ

While the entire nation stood in solidarity with the Indian Army during the brief but intense cross-border tensions with Pakistan, one post on X (formerly Twitter) left journalists doing a double take — and smiling. Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) Managing Director VC Sajjanar took a detour from the routine political drumbeat and surprised everyone by saluting not just the soldiers, but the journalists on the ground. In a post that's now circulating widely among media circles, Sajjanar wrote, "A salute to the journalists on the ground—reporting with integrity, courage, and responsibility amidst chaos. Your commitment to truth and public service, often at great personal risk, keeps the nation informed. Thank you for doing what matters". While everyone found fault with media, Sajjanar's message was like a gust of fresh air in the smoke of war content. Someone from the bureaucracy had paused to recognise their high-risk hustle. Several Telugu journalists, braving the risks, had made it to the borders to capture the situation live — only to pack up and return after both India and Pakistan agreed to an immediate ceasefire, thanks to some classic Trump-style diplomacy.

Pawan slams Pak for.

Continued from Page 1

Pakistan alone bears

responsibility for this situ-

He accused the Pakistani

Army of actively fuelling

terrorism against India.

The Pakistani Army Chief

himself provoked terrorists.

Within a week of his incite-

ment, the Pahalgam terror

attack on 22 April claimed

26 innocent lives. In

response, India struck back

and neutralised terror

Recalling Pakistan's his-

tory of hostility, Pawan

Kalyan noted, "Since parti-

tion in 1947, Pakistan has

waged four wars, har-

boured terrorism and

caused the deaths of count-

less civilians. From the

attacks in Delhi and

Mumbai to the blasts in

Coimbatore, Jama Masjid,

Gokul Chat and Lumbini

Park, Pakistan-sponsored

terrorism has haunted

India for decades. This

He said that under Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's

leadership, the Indian gov-

must end."

camps across the border."

—Yours truly

the will of the people," he

threats, he urged citizens to stay alert. "Terrorists are

planning further attacks. A

ceasefire is not peace — it

is merely a strategic ploy by

Pakistan. Breaking it with-

in three hours exposes their

Pawan Kalyan also

shared that Murali Naik

was a devoted fan of his,

making the loss deeply per-

sonal. "He loved his coun-

try more than anything

else. Losing such a patriotic young man is heart-breaking. We stand with his

The event was attended

by several dignitaries,

including Ministers Nara

Anitha, Satyakumar Yadav

and S Savitha; MPs

Parthasarathi; MLAs Arava

Sridhar, D Prasad, Palle

Sindhura Reddy and MS Raju; HUDA Chairman

TC Varun; and TDP lead-

ers Ch Madhusudhan

Vangalapudi

Tatamshetty

Bhavani

family in their grief."

Lokesh,

Reddy,

ernment should deliver a Chandrashekhar, Ishwar

decisive response. "This is and Kumar, among others.

Nagendra,

Ravikumar,

Warning of continued

declared.

real motives."

Jagan to visit Kalli Thanda tomorrow

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will visit Kalli Thanda village in the Penukonda constituency of Sri Sathya Sai district on Tuesday, 13 May, to personally console the family of martyred soldier Murali

At 11:30 a.m., Jagan will arrive at the residence of Veera Jawan Murali Naik in Kalli Thanda, Gorantla mandal, to meet and offer condolences to the bereaved family. He will spend time with them, paying tribute to the soldier's supreme sacrifice and expressing solidarity. The former chief minister is scheduled to depart at 12:30

YS Jagan had earlier conveyed his deep sorrow over Murali Naik's passing and had spoken to the family over the phone, offering words of comfort and support.

100% rise in booze-linked liver diseases during YSRCP rule

PNS AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh has registered a staggering 100 per cent increase in the cases of alcohol-related liver diseases during the tenure of Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP in 2019-2024 as compared to 2014-19, according to a report by

an expert panel.

The 3-member panel, which the Chandrababu Naidu government constituted to analyse the disease burden in Andhra, used the official health data from Arogyasri, a flagship scheme to provide quality healthcare services to the poor.

Expressing concern over the panel's finding, Special Chief Secretary in the state's health department, Krishna Babu, said: 'We find a startling increase in the number of liver and neurological patients in 2019-24 compared to 2014-19. We are quite concerned and analysing the data for further action." He also said the state government is in the process of setting up an advisory board, comprising national and international health experts, to further analyse the data to take preventive action.

According to the panel report, as against 14026 cases of alcoholrelated liver ailments in 2014-19, the number increased by 100 percent to 29369 during 2019-24



We find a startling increase in liver and neurological patients in 2019-24 compared to 2014-19. We are quite concerned and analysing the data for further action.

when YSRCP was in power. The cases of alcohol-related neurological disorders also registered a drastic increase of 892 percent in 2019-24 at 12663 as compared to 2014-19, when there were only

1276 cases. Asked why the expert panel was set up, Babu said: "It was to analyse the disease burden in the state." It was found that four diseases pertaining to the liver, kidney, mental health and neurological disorders registered an abnormal increase during 2019-24. Earlier this week, the

Enforcement Directorate filed a money laundering case to investigate an alleged liquor scam that took place in Andhra Pradesh during the previous YSRCP regime. The federal probe agency has filed an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) under sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act

(PMLA) to probe alleged irregularities in the sale of liquor in the state, official sources said.

The ED case stems from a September 2024 FIR of the economic offences CID of the state police, they said. Sources said the agency will

investigate liquor agents, vendors, among others. ED will also examine the possible involvement of government officials in this case. The ED has also been probing irregularities in the liquor trade

in Chhattisgarh and Bihar. The Chandrababu Naidu gov ernment has already constituted Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the alleged Rs 3,200 crore liquor scam during the former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's tenure. The SIT has also arrested the main accused in the alleged

liquor scam, Raj Kasireďdy,

of liquor from distilleries for sale through government retail outlets was allegedly manipulated, nationally reputed brands were removed, and orders were placed on new brands way beyond the prescribed caps.

Kickbacks of Rs 150 per case

In its report, the SIT has alleged that the automated system

of placing orders for procurement

of cheaper brands, Rs 200 for mid-range brands, and Rs 600 per case for high-end brands were collected, it alleged.

According to sources, the action of replacing nationally reputed brands with cheaper options under the guise of liquor policy reforms by the Jagan government could be one of the reasons for the spurt in cases of liver and kidney dis-

The SIT also said that even though stocks of the popular brands were available in the depots, they were not supplied to the GROs, and new orders for supply (OFSs) were not issued to those brands.

National reputed brands were removed, and affiliates of the YSRCP party started manufacturing local brands like Andhra Gold Whisky, Good Friends Whisky, Dare House Brandy, Champion Special Whisky, and Hearts Desire Whisky.

AU-affiliated B.Ed colleges under fire for malpractice and inefficiency

Allegations emerge over certificate sales, faculty shortages, and lax oversight in Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Several B.Ed. colleges affiliated with Andhra University (AU) in Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram districts are facing serious allegations of academic malpractice and administrative inefficiency, raising red flags about the quality of teacher training in the region.

Reports suggest that among the nearly 70 B.Ed. Colleges under AU's jurisdiction, many institutions are issuing course completion certificates to students who neither attend class-

es nor participate in academic activities, provided they pay the requisite fees. Despite repeated complaints, AU authorities have allegedly failed to take effective corrective measures.

As per AU regulations, affiliated B.Ed. colleges are required to maintain minimum standards—adequate infrastructure, qualified faculty, and periodic academic reviews. However, multiple colleges reportedly fall short of these basic requirements. Shockingly, some institutions are even operating under false or misleading addresses, a discrepancy that insiders claim is well-known to university officials yet remains unaddressed.

The credibility crisis is worsened by a persistent shortage of qualified teaching staff. Attempts by whistleblowers and concerned stakeholders to alert higher authorities have reportedly gone unanswered, allowing substandard practices to flourish unchecked.

Approximately 5,000 students enroll annually in these programs, but less than 2,000 are said to attend classes regu-

larly. A large number of students are believed to be employed elsewhere, enrolling primarily to secure degrees and appear for exams. This trend has led to institutions functioning more as fee-collecting agencies than genuine

centres of learning. A senior educationist, requesting anonymity, remarked, "The lack of regular inspections has enabled these practices to continue, reducing institutions to commercial ventures that undermine the essence of teacher education."

Calls for reform are growing louder. Stakeholders are demanding immediate intervention from the AU and regulatory authorities to restore the legitimacy and academic rigour of B.Ed. programs in the

Immediate action is needed to ensure that teacher training remains rigorous and of high quality," said another veteran educator. The mounting concerns are now putting the spotlight on AU to enforce standards and rebuild trust in

If Pak attacks, we will retaliate...

Continued from Page 1

The development was first announced by US President Donald Trump, who claimed that the two countries had agreed to a "full and immediate ceasefire" after US medi-

In a statement, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he was "pleased to announce the Governments of India and Pakistan have agreed to an immediate ceasefire and to start talks on a broad set of issues at a neutral site".

The only matter related to Kashmir to discuss is Pakistan returning territory under its illegal occupation, Government sources asserted on Sunday.

They made it clear that the Indus Waters Treaty will be in abeyance as long as terrorism sponsored by Pakistan against India continues.

Only talks with Pakistan will be through the Director General of Military Operations (DGMOs). There is no other issue to discuss, the

sources said. India's position after the May 7 strikes on terror infrastructure was that if Pakistan fires, India will respond more forcefully, they said, adding it was the Pakistani DGMO who reached out to the Indian DGMO on May 10

to de-escalate situation After the Pahalgam attack, India had told countries that reached out to New Delhi it would hit terror infrastructure in Pakistan territories.

After the May 7 strikes, every Pakistani action was dealt with very firmly, the sources said.

India inflicted heavy...

Continued from Page 1

Asked about reports in the foreign media of losses of Indian fighter jets, Air Marshal Bharati said, "We are in a combat situation and losses are part of combat.'

'All I can say is that we have achieved our objectives that we selected and all our pilots are back home," he said. DGMO Lt Gen Ghai also paid tribute to five Indian fallen heroes

and civilians who "tragically lost their lives" during Operation 'We have thus far exercised immense restraint and our actions

have been focused, measured and non-escalatory. However, any threat to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and safety of our citizens will be met with decisive force," he said. On losses to the Pakistani military, the DGMO said there are

reports of 35-40 fatalities. The DGMO said it was his Pakistani counterpart who made a call to him last afternoon, requesting a way out to stop the hostilities.

The two DGMOs on Saturday afternoon agreed to stop all firing and military action on land and in the air and sea with effect

from 1700 hours Indian Standard Time. The Indian military suggested that the Pakistani DGMO's call

came after Indian Armed Forces launched a fierce counter-attack on several Pakistani military installations including Rafiqui, Murid, Chaklala, Rahim Yar Khan, Sukkur and Chunian on Saturday morning. The strikes were launched after the Pakistan military attempted to target major Indian military installations on the night of May 9-10.

Lt Gen Ghai said over 100 terrorists, including high-value targets such as Yusuf Azhar, Abdul Malik Rauf and Mudasir Ahmed, who were involved in the hijacking of IC 814 and the Pulwama blast, were eliminated during Operation Sindoor on May 7.

Nine terror targets were identified after careful deliberations and they were hit using precision weapons, he said.

Operation Sindoor was launched on early May 7 to destroy nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack. All subsequent retaliations to Pakistani offensives were carried out under Operation

Has the govt accepted....

Continued from Page 1

He said the government must accept the opposition's demand for another all-party meeting chaired by the prime minister and a special session of Parliament to discuss these issues in the current circumstances. Noting that events have changed swiftly in the last 24 hours, he said, "We were all surprised after the announcement of ceasefire was made by the

US President through social media." "An attempt was made to internationalise the issues between India and Pakistan. This is for the first time this has happened," he said, asserting that the government must clarify while taking the nation and all parties into confidence.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Saturday announced that India and Pakistan had reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea with immediate effect.

"On what conditions the ceasefire has been declared and what is the guarantee that such things would not be repeated, as there is no credibility left after yesterday's events (violations). How can we believe them and what is the guarantee that such developments will not happen again," Pilot

The Congress leader said one must also pay heed to what US President Donald Trump wrote on his social media posts, where he made statements on Kashmir, on which the government should spell out its side. "Kashmir is a bilateral issue and the attempt

to internationalise it, I feel, is not proper. In 1994, the Congress leader said, Parliament had passed a unanimous resolution to take back Pakistanoccupied Kashmir (PoK).

"It is time to repeat it," he said, adding that a mes-

sage that the entire country is united should go across

Trump praises 'strong...

Continued from Page 1

"I will work with you both to see if, after a "thousand years," a solution can be arrived at concerning Kashmir. God Bless the leadership of India and Pakistan on a job well done!!!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social. His comments came hours after India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect. "I am very proud of the strong and

unwaveringly powerful leadership of India and Pakistan for having the strength, wisdom, and fortitude to fully know and understand that it was time to stop the current aggression that could have lead (led) to the death and destruction of so many, and so much," Trump said. "Millions of good and innocent people could have died! Your legacy is greatly enhanced by your brave actions. I am proud that the USA was able to help you arrive at this historic and heroic decision," Trump said. He went on to say that even though this has

not been discussed, he is going to "increase trade substantially with both of these great Nations." In Islamabad, Pakistan's Foreign Office Sunday said it appreciates President Trump's "willingness to support efforts aimed at the resolution of the ammu and Kashmir dispute".

Trump on Saturday announced that India and Pakistan have agreed to a "full and immediate ceasefire" after a "long night" of talks. Soon after Trump's announcement, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said that the directors general of military operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan have agreed to stop all firings and military action on land, air and sea with effect from 5 pm (IST) on Saturday.

Pakistan 'committed' to faithful...

Continued from Page 1

"Pakistan remains committed to faithful implementation of the ceasefire between Pakistan and India," the Foreign Office spokesperson here said in a statement while responding to the media queries regarding the statement made by Misri.

Pakistan's "forces are handling the situation with responsibility and restraint," the spokesperson claimed. "We believe that any issues in smooth implementation of the ceasefire should be addressed through communication at appropriate levels. The troops on ground should also exercise restraint," he added.

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared after the Indian Armed Forces hit terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) last week in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

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DEATH THREAT, ATTACK ON HOME

Former MP Kesineni Nani files police complaint

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Member Former Parliament Kesineni Srinivas (Nani) has complained with the Vijayawada City Police Commissioner, alleging a death threat from one Chakravarthy Kadiyala and a separate attack on his residence, Kesineni Nilayam, following his recent complaint to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) regarding alleged financial irregularities in the Andhra Pradesh liquor trade.

In his letter dated 11 May 2025, Nani claimed that shortly after publicly disclosing his submission to the EDreportedly naming a sitting MP in connection with the liquor scam-he received a threatening call from mobile number 8008969677. The caller, identifying himself as Chakravarthy Kadiyala,



allegedly used abusive language and issued a direct death threat, demanding that Nani withdraw his complaint.

"This threat amounts to criminal intimidation of the most serious nature and cannot be taken lightly," Nani

The former MP also linked the threat to an incident of

vandalism at around 1:00 AM on 10 May, when an unidentified person reportedly damaged property at his resi-

CCTV footage showed the intruder removing policeplaced traffic barriers and damaging plants near the eastern pond area of Kesineni Nilayam. The intruder also

allegedly threatened a security guard before fleeing the scene. Patamata Police were alerted, and Assistant Sub-Inspector Kiran Kumar conducted a preliminary inspec-

Nani has sought immediate registration of a criminal case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, including criminal intimidation, conspiracy, and mischief causing damage. He demanded inter-rogation of Chakravarthy Kadiyala, analysis of call records, and thorough examination of CCTV footage to identify the culprits.

"These incidents are clear attempts to intimidate and silence me for pursuing a lawful complaint before the Enforcement Directorate," he stated, urging swift police action in the interest of justice and public accountability.

Durga Temple offers silk robes to Venkateswara **Swamy**

PNS VIJAYAWADA

On the occasion of the annual Brahmotsavams of Lord Venkateswara at Dwaraka Tirumala, famously known as Chinna Tirupati, the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam of Indrakeeladri, Vijayawada, presented silk robes (pattu vastrams) to the deity on Sunday.

The offering was made in the evening by the temple's Executive Officer and Deputy Collector VK Seena Naik along with his spouse, accompanied by Vedic scholars.
They offered the robes to the deity as a traditional mark of reverence and goodwill

between major temples.

Dwaraka Tirumala temple Executive Officer NVSN Murthy welcomed the visiting officials and honoured them with temple protocol. Chief Priest Lingambotla Durga Prasad, Assistant Chief Priest Shankara Shandilya and other Vedic scholars and priests were present.

Fire safety awareness: Mock drill today

Public urged to attend and observe the exercise to understand emergency response protocols

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In a bid to raise public awareness on how to respond effectively during fire accidents and natural disasters, a mock drill will be conducted at the District Collectorate on Monday, announced Collector Dr G Lakshmisha in an official statement on Sunday

The mock drill, organised under the supervision of the Fire Department, will take place from 8.30 AM to 9 AM. Officials from various departments including Revenue, Police, and Transport at the district level will participate in the drill. The public is encouraged to attend and observe the exercise to understand emergency response protocols.

Dr Lakshmisha highlighted the importance of knowing how to protect oneself during emergencies like fire accidents,



building collapses during earthquakes or floods due to heavy rainfall. "In crisis situations, timely and smart responses can save precious lives," he noted. The Collector added that mock drills play a vital role in enhancing preparedness and reviewing emergency response strategies as part of Disaster Management efforts. "The ini-

tiative aims to educate the public on how to act swiftly and responsibly during disasters. It is crucial for both authorities and citizens to be well-prepared." "The event serves as a practical demonstration of coordination among departments and helps in assessing the readiness to deal with real-life emergencies," he said.

Visakhapatnam faces new drug threat

Alarming rise in injectable drug abuse calls for urgent, united action

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Once hailed as the City of Destiny, Visakhapatnam now grapples with a deepening drug crisis, as officials raise red flags over a sharp rise in the abuse of narcotic injections—a trend that marks a dangerous new phase in the city's battle against substance

While the use of marijuana and other illegal drugs has been on the rise over the past five years, recent seizures of over 760 injectable narcotics have spotlighted an especial-

ly alarming development.

These drugs—originally meant for clinical pain relief—are now being traf-ficked primarily from West Bengal and Odisha and mis-used for their prolonged psychoactive effects.

en Rs 200 and Rs 500

on the black market," officials noted, describing the trade as both lucrative and highly dangerous. Young users, lured by the potent high that can last up to eight hours, are putting themselves at severe

issued urgent warnings. "These injections are not designed for recreational use," said Dr. Sudhir Reddy, a neurologist. "Continued abuse may lead to irreversible neurological damage, severe infections, and even death due to overdose." Adding to the problem is the widespread availability of cheaper intoxicants such as sedative pills and chemical whiteners—often serving as gateway substances for adolescents

and young adults. Law enforcement sources "Each injection, once estimate that 5 to 10 individpriced at Rs 50, now fetches uals manage the city's core

However, the actual user base is believed to be far larger and deeply concealed. "We are not just dealing with drug use, but a well-organised network that preys on vulnerable youth," said a senior Narcotics Control Bureau Medical professionals have

In response, healthcare professionals, police authorities, and educators are calling for a coordinated strate-Mental health experts advocate a balanced approach—combining strict law enforcement with community engagement, early education, and accessible rehabilitation.

"Punitive action alone won't resolve this crisis," stressed Dr. Prathima Suresh,

a psychiatrist.
"We need preventive education in schools, family-based interventions, and robust support systems for



Mothers have a vital role in nation-building: **AMC Principal**

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Emphasising the pivotal role of mothers in shaping the future of the nation, K.V.S.M. Sandhyadevi, Principal of Andhra Medical College, said that it is their responsibility to nurture and guide children into becoming responsible and ideal citizens. She was addressing a gathering at a Mother's Day celebration held at Nature Cure Hospital on Beach Road here on Sunday.

The programme was jointly organised by Sri Gayatri Welfare Cultural Youth Academy, Rupakula Vishalakshi Charitable Trust, and Prakriti Chikitsalayam. The event saw the participation of 97-year-old Chilukuri Shantamma, retired professor of Andhra University and a revered academician, as a guest of honour. Both Dr. Sandhvadevi and Prof. Shantamma paid floral tributes to the portrait of freedom fighter Rupakula Vishalakshi, in whose memory the event was organised.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sandhyadevi lauded mothers as the torchbearers of values and wisdom in society. She described Prof. Shantamma as a living embodiment of Saraswati, the goddess of learning, and noted that she continues to

mentor young scholars with unwavering dedication. Under Prof. Shantamma's guidance, 20 students have earned their doctoral degrees. Hailing her as a distinguished physicist and a philanthropist, Dr. Sandh yadevi said Prof. Shantamma epitomises the qualities of a karma yogi and spiritually

devoted guide.
Prof. Shantamma, in her address, urged the younger generation to strive for excellence in both academics and sports and contribute meaningfully to the nation's progress. Others present at the event included Dr. S. Lakshminarayana, S. Srilak shmi, AVN College Vice-Principal Singaraju Krish nakumari, and BJP leader

Rupakula Ravikumar.

Applications invited for admissions into **TTD** junior colleges PNS TIRUPATI

Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanams has invited online applications from eligible students for admissions in its Sri Padmavathi Mahila Junior College and Sri Venkateswara Junior College in Tirupati for the academic year 2025-26.

Devasthanams Education Officer T Venkata Suneel, in a statement on Sunday, said that all online applications in English shall be made available from May 15-31. The user manual and the prospectus of the respective colleges have been uploaded in Telugu and English on the

The candidates can apply by visiting the official website, admission.tirumala.org, and select the groups in the two Junior colleges under TTD. The students should upload the correct information online before the deadline. Corrections are not

allowed after the deadline. The TTD has requested the students to carefully read the student user manual and college prospectus thoroughly and apply

online carefully.
Students can clear their technical queries like various groups in the courses, hostels, regulations etc. through the helpline while filling the application provided on the website.

Vizag leads State in SHG loan monitoring app rollout

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a bid to curb financial irregularities among Self-Help Groups (SHGs), the Andhra Pradesh government is preparing to launch a mobile application to streamline loan repayments, with Visakhapatnam district taking the lead in its implementation.

The app, currently undergoing field-level testing, is expected to be launched across the State within the

designed to benefit nearly five lakh women linked to 45,000 SHGs operating under the Society for Rural Empowerment (SRE), Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC), and MEPMA schemes in the joint Visakhapatnam district.

The initiative follows a surge in complaints regarding misuse of loan instalments by SHG leaders and Village Organisation Presidents

(VOPs), who were reportedly diverting funds or delaying deposits. "This app will remove middlemen, ensure timely payments, and bring accountability," a government official said.

Modelled on popular digital wallet interfaces, the app will send SMS alerts for each transaction and link all repayments to a unique SHG ID. Biometric authentication will be mandatory, helping to prevent identity fraud.

Beneficiaries can access loans from Rs 10,000 to Rs 1 lakh, repayable in 24 to 38 instalments over two to three years.
Though a few members

have used private platforms like Paytm, challenges in access and digital literacy have limited adoption. The State's app aims to offer a secure and SHG-focused alternative.

Visakhapatnam's successful pilot has laid the groundwork for wider deployment. In neighbouring Anakapalle district, Rs 152 crore has already been sanctioned out of a Rs 221.84-crore target. Notably, loans are being disbursed without processing or documentation fees, reducing financial strain on women borrowers. District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) Project Director Sari Devi described the app as a "game-changer," offering members complete financial visibility and eliminating misuse.

Send 'delusional' Veerraju to Trump: CPI State secy

Ramakrishna flays Indian Govt's acceptance of US mediation in India-Pakistan issues

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Communist Party of India (CPI) State secretary K Ramakrishna has come down heavily on BJP MLC and senior leader Somu Veerraju remarks against his party's national secretary Dr K Narayana. In a strongly statement. Ramakrishna said Veerraju's comments reflect a loss of mental balance and mockingly suggested that he be sent to live with US President

Donald Trump. 'Dr K Narayana only echoed public sentiment when he said that global nations must unite against terrorism, and that war may become necessary if compelled. Veerraju's suggestion to send Narayana to Pakistan is outrageous and condemnable," Ramakrishna said.

He questioned Veerraju's apparent admiration for Trump, pointing out that India allegedly halted mili-

tary action following Trump's intervention. "Does this mean India listens to Trump more than its own people? Should Somu Veerraju resign as MLC and live with his 'guru' Trump in the US," he

Ramakrishna also criticised the Indian government's acceptance of US mediation in India-Pakistan issues, calling it a violation of the Simla Agreement, which mandates bilateral resolution of conflicts. He expressed concern that such foreign involvement risks internationalising the Kashmir issue.

He urged both India and Pakistan to uphold the ceasefire and resume bilateral dialogue based on the aspirations of their people. The CPI also demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi clarify to the public the extent of American involvement and convene a special session of Parliament to dis-

cuss the issue.

Sailajanath slams CM over law and order

Condemns police behaviour towards Vidadala Rajini and Kalpana

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Senior YSRCP leader and former minister Sake Sailajanath has launched a scathing attack on Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, accusing his government of failing to uphold law and order and otect women Speaking to the media on Sunday, Sailajanath criticised the TDP-led coalition for allegedly using the police force as a political tool and silencing dissent through intimida-

He condemned the police's behaviour towards former minister Vidadala Rajini and the midnight arrest of Dalit MPTC member Kalpana, who was taken from her home in a nightgown.

These actions are unconstitutional and deeply disrespectful," he said, also citing the illegal arrests of social media activists Peddireddy Sudharani and Paleti Krishnaveni.

Sailajanath said the government's first year has been marred by political vendettas

rather than welfare or development. He accused the administration of manipulating the media and suppressing oppo-sition voices, demanding answers for rising violence and police misconduct.

"The Home Minister must act, and the CM must take Reaffirming the YSRCP's commitment to justice, he said the party would continue to fight for the rights of women and marginalised communities. The people of Andhra Pradesh deserve better," he declared.

Meanwhile, YSRCP NTR district president Devineni Avinash strongly condemned the police action against former minister and senior YSRCP leader Vidadala Rajani, calling it inhumane and politically motivated.

Avinash criticised the State government, stating that while the nation faces rising external tensions, the Andhra Pradesh coalition government is focused on suppressing opposition voices and settling political scores. "Instead of ensuring law and order, the police are acting like street rowdies. Their treatment of women, particularly a former minister. reflects the complete breakdown of governance and public safety," he said.

accused Chandrababu Naidu and to deliver on any of their promises since assuming power. "They are running the government using a 'Red Book' dictatorship, not the Constitution," Avinash alleged.

Highlighting the incident involving Rajani, Avinash stressed that the police did not hesitate to act with brutality against a woman and a former minister. "Their actions have exposed how far law enforcement has fallen in the State. What kind of administration disregards basic human rights so openly?"

He further warned that power is not permanent, stating, "Time is never on one side forever. Those responsible will eventually be held accountable and pay the price before the

Collector pushes for caravan tourism development

Suggests expanding home stay options in tribal villages

PNS PADERU

District Collector A.S. Dinesh Kumar has called upon officials to fast-track the implementation of caravan tourism and identify suitable land for the project. This directive came during a recent video conference where key strategies to enhance tourism in the district were discussed. The Collector pinpointed

several ideal locations for the caravan tourism initiative, including Kothapalli Waterfall in G. Madugula mandal, Sujanakota, Rampachodavaram, and Maredumilli Munchangiputtu mandal. Other potential sites include

Anjoda in Dumbriguda man-

dal and Cheruvulavenam in

Chintapalli mandal. A total of

one acre of land is to be

acquired across these areas for

In addition to caravan tourism, the Collector stressed the need for expanding home stay options in tribal villages, with the aim of completing these facilities by September to accommodate the increasing demand from tourists.

Further proposals discussed during the meeting include the establishment of Araku coffee stalls at the Horticulture Centre Training Kothavalasa and at the Madagada Sunrise Point in Araku Valley mandal.

The Collector also suggested the formation of a Tribal Tourism Council, a tribal development fund, and the creation of an art centre to celebrate the rich cultural

heritage of the region. To support the growth of

home stays, financial assistance will be provided — Rs 5 lakh for new constructions and Rs 3 lakh for renovation. Training programmes will also be organised for home stay managers, focusing on preparing traditional tribal dishes to offer visitors a truly immersive cultural experi-

Addressing environmental concerns, the Collector urged panchayat officials to enforce the plastic ban in tourist areas and impose fines for violations, in a bid to promote sustainable tourism practices.

The meeting, which saw the participation of Joint Colle ctor Dr. MJ. Abhishek Gowda and District Tourism Officer G. Dasu, focused on actionable steps to implement these initiatives and uplift tourism in the district.

Build memorial stupa to honour Amaravati farmers: Poet Nagna Muni PNS VIJAYAWADA

Renowned Digambara poet Nagna Muni has appealed to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu to construct a memorial stupa in recognition of the farmers who selflessly donated their lands for the development of Amaravati as the State capital. He proposed that the names of these farmers be inscribed on a commemorative plaque at the site as a mark of gratitude and remembrance.

Speaking at a poetry book release event held in Vijayawada on Sunday, Nagna Muni also suggested renaming the State to Andhra or Navyandhra to reflect its evolving identity and aspirations. The event saw the launch of two poetry collections, Bhumi Navvadam Chusanu by Amulya Chandu and Life Drama by Radhakrishna Karri. Presided over by noted writer and columnist Mukkamala Chakradhar, the function was attended by a wide circle of poets and literature enthusiasts





6 types of services introduced for issuance of new rice cards

A total of six services have been made available for the issuance of new rice cards. So far, 72,519 people have availed themselves of these services. From 15 May, these services can also be accessed from home through WhatsApp Governance by sending "Hello" to 95523

Addressing the media on Sunday, Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar said that from 8 May, six services have been offered — issuance of new rice cards, card division, change of address, addition of members, deletion of members, and surrender of cards.

These services can be accessed at the nearest village and ward secretariats. From 15 May, citizens can also register these services via June, smart rice cards will be



issued free of cost to all eligible beneficiaries," the Minister stated. He noted that the Election Commission of India had directed the suspension of new card issuance in March WhatsApp Governance. In last year due to the 2024 elecdance with the Supreme Court's directive making e-KYC registration mandatory, new card issuance had not been possible, he added.

The Minister clarified that the delay in issuing new rice

process. However, with 95 percent of the e-KYC process now completed, issuance has become feasible.

'There are currently 1,46,21,223 ration cards in the State, covering approximately 4,24,59,028 individuals. Due to exemptions from e-KYC for children below five years and those above 80 years of age, around 6,45,765 people have not completed e-KYC," he said.

Manohar reiterated that from

8 May, all six services, including registration for new rice cards, are being offered at village and ward secretariats. From 15 May, the same services can be accessed from home through WhatsApp Governance by sending a message saying "Hello" to 9552300009.

As part of this reform, smart ration cards will be issued free of charge to all who complete the e-KYC process, the

Ganni Veeranjaneyulu appointed Chairman of APCOB & DCCB

The State government on Sunday issued orders appointing Telugu Desam Party (TDP) district president and former Unguturu MLA, Ganni Veeranjaneyulu, as the chairman of the Andhra Pradesh State Cooperative Bank (APCOB) and the District Co-operative Central Bank (DCCB).

A large number of his followers and supporters celebrated the announcement by bursting crackers and distributing sweets at his office in Bhimadole. Speaking on the occasion, Veeranjaneyulu expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for entrusting him with a key responsibility. He also thanked TDP national general secretary Nara Lokesh and state president Palla Srinivasa Rao, and assured that he would strive to uphold the responsibilities of the post.

In a related development, the Government also appoint-



ed Chaganti Murali Krishna as chairman of the District Cooperative Marketing Society (DCMS). Murali Krishna, a native of Narasapuram, is the State General Secretary of the Jana Sena Party and has been

associated with the party since its formation in 2014. Jana Sena chief K. Pawan Kalyan personally handed over the appointment letter to Murali

3,61,299 students apply for AP EAP CET

Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University, Kakinada (JNTUK) Vice-Chancellor and Chairman of AP EAP CET-2025, Prof CSRK Prasad, has announced that a total of 3,61,299 students have applied for the AP EAP CET online examination as of Sunday.

He stated that 2,79,538 students had registered for the Engineering stream, 80,849 for the Agriculture and Pharmacy stream, and 912 for both streams. The Vice-Chancellor also informed that applicants could download their hall tickets from 12 May

onwards.

The AP EAP CET-2025 hall tickets can be downloaded from the website https://cets.apsche.ap.gov.in and also via the Mana Mitra WhatsApp governance number 9552300009. A Google Map link is provided on the last page of the hall ticket to help candidates locate their exami-

Tarigonda Vengamamba Jayanti celebrated in Tirumala



PNS TIRUMALA

The 295th birth anniversary of Tarigonda Vengamamba was observed on Sunday evening at the Narayanagiri Gardens in

Lord Malayappa Swamy, along with His consorts, arrived at the venue, where

from Annamacharya Project and SV College of Music and Dance rendered devotional compositions penned by the saint-poetess Vengamamba.

Suvidyendra Teertha Swamy, pontiff of the Raghavendra Mutt in Bengaluru, delivered a spiritual discourse, describing Vengamamba as a divine soul who attained spiritual enlightenment without the guidance of a formal Guru.

TTD officials, descendants of Vengamamba, and devotees took part in the celebrations. Earlier in the day, floral tributes were offered at the Tarigonda Brindavanam in



Anti-social elements counselled by police

PNS NANDYALA

The police on Sunday counselled rowdy-sheeters and antisocial elements at various police stations across the district. Acting on the instructions of Superintendent of Police Adhiraj Singh Rana, officers summoned individuals with criminal backgrounds to their respective police stations. The officials counselled them, warning of stringent action should they persist in unlawful activi-

Police authorities stated that a strict vigil is being maintained on these individuals, who are under constant surveillance. "If you continue with criminal behaviour, bind-over cases will be registered, and stern action will follow. This is a chance for you to change your mindset and refrain from crime," the officers reportedly told them.

The police further added that photographs of anti-social elements will be displayed at the police stations and uploaded onto the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS). They were also instructed to steer clear of criminal activities going forward.

Vijaya Yatra taken out in support of Indian Army

PNS BHIMAVARAM

Jana Sena Party (JSP) activists, led by Tadepalligudem MLA Bolishetti Srinivas, organised a Vijaya Yatra in Tadepalligudem on Sunday.

The Yatra was held to

express solidarity with the Indian Army. Speaking on the occasion, MLA Srinivas said the initiative aimed to support the armed forces and convey wishes for the continued safety and strength of the nation's

He condemned Pakistan for sponsoring and encouraging terrorism, stating that such violence has claimed many innocent lives.

"Pakistan continues to fund, abet, and shelter terrorists on its soil," the MLA alleged. MLA Srinivas announced that JSP MLAs and women

leaders would soon visit six

renowned temples in Tamil Nadu to offer prayers for national peace and to seek divine strength for Indian sol-

"We firmly believe that India will overcome terror-

ism without resorting to war," he stated.

He further remarked that the international community must hold Pakistan accountable for any terror-related incidents occurring within India.



Three killed as car collides with lorry

PNS ANANTAPUR

Three persons were killed and one critically injured when the car in which they were travelling collided with a lorry at Pedda Yellampalli village in Nallacheruvu mandal on National Highway 205 in Sri Satya Sai district on Sunday.

According to the police, the victims had travelled to Anantapur to attend the last rites of Venugopal's brother. While returning to their

rammed into a lorry. The deceased were identified as Jayachandra, a retired Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police; Chalapathi, also a retired ASI; and Nagendra, a retired lecturer. All three died on the spot.

hometown, Kadiri, their car

The injured person was shifted to the Government Hospital in Kadiri for treatment. Police have registered a case and sent the bodies to the Government General Hospital for post-mortem.

Jagga Reddy warns Eatela Rajender

PNS HYDERABAD

TPCC Working President T. Jagga Reddy warned the BJP's Malkajgiri MP, Eatala Rajender, that if he uses offensive language against Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, then Congress leaders would hit back with the same coin. He also asked Eatala to stop engaging in dirty poli-

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Sunday, Jagga Reddy said, "Eatala didn't get the posts he wanted in the BJP, and so he is behaving like a psycho. Eatala should ask questions in decent language. Then we will answer in the same language. If you use offensive language, we will answer appropriately. The CM seems to be ignoring you, thinking that you are talking offensively due to disappointment. But we will not leave you like

3 Bengaluru devotees donate 4 giant silver lamps to TTD

PNS TIRUPATI

Four giant silver lamps were donated to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), the official custodian of Lord Venkateswara Swamy temple, here on Saturday, said an official press release.

Three devotees - Radha Krishna, Shyam Sundar Sharma and Shashidhar – from Bengaluru donated these lamps. "Four giant silver lamps were donated to TTD on Saturday evening," said the press release. The donors presented the lamps to temple official Ramakrishna at Mahadwaram (grand entrance), said the press release.

Earlier, TTD chairman BR Naidu distributed 555 helmets to the temple body employees for their safe commute between Tirumala and



J Raghuram and Naveen from a helmet company in Delhi donated the helmets worth Rs 5 lakh. Naidu promised that another 500 nelmets are expected to be donated within 15 days. "If these are found satisfac-

tory in quality and usage. another 5,000 helmets will be provided," added Naidu. The Tirupati temple is the

world's richest Hindu shrine, which attracts between 70,000 and one lakh devotees per day, who offer up to over Rs 3 crore on an average.

Man dies after cobra hidden in clothes bag bites him

Relatives blame medical negligence for death

PNS CHITTOOR

In a bizarre and tragic incident, a man died after being bitten by a cobra that had crawled into his bag at Palasamudram village on

According to sources, the deceased, Devanandam (49), had placed a bag containing his clothes on a table before going for a bath. Upon returning, he unknowingly inserted his hand into the bag, where the snake was hiding, and was bitten.

He rushed outside and informed his neighbours, who immediately shifted him to the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Palasamudram. However, relatives told the media that no doctors were available at

the hospital. An Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) on duty administered only a tetanus (TT) injection instead of the necessary antivenom.

The ANM reportedly told the family that only a doctor is authorised to administer the antivenom injection. She then advised them to shift Devanandam to the GGH in Chittoor. Unfortunately, he died in the ambulance while being taken there.

Angry relatives staged a protest in front of the Palasamudram hospital with the body, alleging that medical negligence led to his death. They held the hospital staff accountable for failing to provide timely and appropriate treatment.

Citizens' group seeks change in ration card rules in Andhra

PNS KAKINADA

Citizens Initiative, a local organisation, has urged the Andhra Pradesh government to revise the procedure for issuing ration cards, saying the current method does not reflect present-day family structures. The system is still based on the 2016 Praja Sadhikara Survey, which no longer matches ground realities, they said.

Duvvuri Subrahmanyam, secretary of Citizens Initiative, along with other members, met Joint Collector Rahul Meena and submitted a representation. They asked that it be forwarded to Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar and the Civil Supplies Commissioner.

Subrahmanyam pointed out that many eligible families are



Duvvuri Subrahmanyam, secretary of Citizens Initiative, pointed out that many eligible families are missing out on ration cards due to outdated procedures. He explained that family dynamics have changed significantly over time. Many joint families have split into nuclear ones, with children moving out to live independently. Some couples live separately due to personal differences, but still need separate ration cards.

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separate ration cards. However, the current system

does not recognise these realities. Couples living apart are required to appear together at the local Grama Sachivalayam to provide thumb impressions, which is often not possible. As a result, they are issued only one card. Similarly, children who have moved out are still shown as part of their parents' households and are not able to get separate cards.

Subrahmanyam said this confusion is mainly because the government does not allow families to split based on an affidavit. He requested that the state government make this option available.

He also urged the government to raise the income limit for ration card eligibility from the current Rs 1.10 lakh to Rs 1.60 lakh.

Vasanthotsavam begins at Padmavati temple

PNS TIRUPATI

Vasanthotsavam began on a grand and devotional note at the Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Temple in Tiruchanoor on Sunday. The Snapana Tirumanjanam (sacred bath) was performed to the utsava murti (processional deity) of Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru in the Friday Gardens between 2.30 pm and 3.30 pm. As part of the festivities, Swarna Rathotsavam (golden chariot procession) will be held on the second day at 9.45 am. Temple staff and

part in the celebra-

tions



ACROSS THE STATES



Conclave to commemorate 50 yrs of Sikkim's statehood

he Press Club of Sikkim in association with the state government will organise a conclave to commemorate 50 years of Sikkim's statehood, officials said on Sunday. The stage is set for 'Sikkim@50: Golden Jubilee Conclave 1975–2025' at Adampool here, which will be organised by the Information and Public Relations Department (IPR) and the press club, they said. The conclave will feature a host of distinguished personalities, who will reflect on Sikkim's journey over the past 50 years and offer perspectives on its future, Press Club of Sikkim president Bhim Rawat told reporters. He highlighted that the discussions will showcase the state's key achievements and explore emerging investment opportunities. Senior District Information Officer (Gangtok), Sarojini Subba, said the conclave is an initiative of the state government to showcase the development of the fourth pillar of democracy, marking the 50th year of Sikkim's statehood. This event comes at a crucial time, given the growing significance of geopolitics and Sikkim's strategic location, Subba added.



J-K Police raids 20 locations in UAPA case

he Jammu and Kashmir Police's State Investigation Agency (SIA) on Sunday conducted searches at 20 locations in the Valley and detained multiple suspects in connection with a UAPA case. "The SIA conducted searches at around 20 locations across all districts of South Kashmir in connection with the investigation of a case registered under UAPA," officials said. The officials said that substantial incriminating materials have been seized during the raids, and the suspects have been rounded up for further questioning. "Preliminary investigation has clearly brought out that these entities are actively engaged in terrorist conspiracy, propagating and furthering anti-India narratives aimed not only at challenging the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India but also at inciting disaffection, public disorder, and communal hatred," they said. The officials said J&K police is keeping surveillance on the terror associates and overground workers (OGW) working in Kashmir.



Bengal govt directs DMs, **SPs to remain alert**

est Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Pant on Sunday directed When district magistrates and SPS to remain and state. In check on any attempt to disrupt law and order in the state. In the district magistrates and SPs to remain alert and keep a the meeting, the district administrations were also ordered to stockpile essential food items for the next three months till August, a senior official said. Chairing a meeting at the state secretariat, Pant directed the DMs and SPs to maintain proper coordination, especially in the districts that have international or interstate borders. Speaking to PTI, Pant said the meeting was held to direct the DMs and SPs to remain alert in the backdrop of the India-Pakistan military conflict. India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect, after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. However, hours later, New Delhi accused Islamabad of breaching it. "The DMs, SPs and senior police officers have been asked to remain alert so that an evolving situation can be addressed," Pant said. "The ICs (inspectors in-charge of police stations), civil defence bodies, and other officers were instructed to maintain proper coordination at this juncture," he added.

'BrahMos is a message of our armed forces' strength'

BrahMos is not just a weapon but a "message of strength" of India's armed forces, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Sunday at the inauguration of the largest integration and testing facility of the supersonic cruise missile system.

"India is now one of the most powerful nations in the world. We are constantly increasing our strength, and I believe that the facility centre that is being inaugurated today will help in further strengthening India's power," he said while virtually addressing the event from Delhi.

"BrahMos is one of the world's fastest, supersonic cruise missiles. BrahMos is not just a weapon, but it is a message in itself. A message of the strength of our armed forces. A message of our deterrence towards the enemy. A message of our commitment to safeguarding our borders," Singh said.

The country's largest BrahMos integration and testing facility centre in Lucknow will strengthen India's efforts towards self-reliance in the defence sector, the Defence



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Minister said, addressing the inaugural ceremony at the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor in his Lok Sabha constituency.

"A good thing is that in this defence corridor, we are seeing very important participation of

both public and private sectors," he said.

On the private sector, he noted that PTC Industries Limited is starting Titanium and super-alloy material plants. "Apart from this, the foundation of seven additional criti-

cal projects is also being laid. This will certainly accelerate the pace of India's self-reliance in the defence sector," the defence minister said.

Major investments have been made in aircraft manufacturing, UAVs, drones, ammunition, composite and critical materials, small arms, textiles and parachutes, he said.

"When our government moved forward with the vision of a defence corridor in Uttar Pradesh... one of our objectives was that we should once again develop Uttar Pradesh as the production centre of the country.

India follows its defence, diplomatic strategy: Joshi

PNS ■ BENGALURU/HUBBALLI

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Sunday said that India, its defence, and diplomacy follow their strategy, and that the government, after discussions with the armed forces, reached an understanding with Pakistan to stop all firing and

But this time, on the very first day, our soldiers attacked about nine terror bases or launch pads in Pakistan. A large number of terrorists were killed. So, I don't want to respond to those criticising the ceasefire announcement," Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public



military action.

However, before reaching this understanding, the Government decided that India would treat any future act of terror on its soil as an "act of war" and respond accordingly, he said.

'India has its strength. Earlier, even after major terror attacks, our response was mild. Distribution, said in response to a question.

Speaking to reporters in Hubballi, Joshi said that ever since Narendra Modi became Prime Minister, terrorist activities, which earlier occurred across the country, have been restricted to the border areas and even there, the government is taking serious action.

India Space Congress to discuss emerging trends



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 1,000 policymakers and experts from more than 30 nations will gather in Delhi in June for the three-day India Space Congress to deliberate on the new opportunities in the country's space sector.

India's space sector regulator Pawan Kumar Goenka and industry leaders will deliberate on issues such as satellite communications, geospatial applications, deep-space exploration, emerging technologies, Earth observation and strategic trade corridors.

The fourth India Space Congress,

organised by the Satcom Industry Association-India (SIA-India), will be held in the national capital from June 25-27 under the theme 'Pioneering Innovations in

S p a c e Technology: India's Journey Towards Global Partnership". "Country sessions will also bring delegations

from Europe, Asia-Pacific, North America, and the Middle East, highlighting opportunities for bilateral cooperation in capacity-building, joint missions and industrial co-development," SIA-India said in a statement.

OPERATION **SINDOOR**

Woman booked for

objectionable social media status

PNS MUMBAI

40-year-old beautician from Malwani in Mumbai was booked for her allegedly objectionable social media status on Operation Sindoor launched by Indian armed forces, police said on

An FIR was registered under the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), and a notice was served to the woman, who runs a beauty parlour, for joining the investigation. "When governments make reckless decisions,

it's the innocent on both sides who pay the price, not the ones in power", the woman stated on her WhatsApp status while suffixing a slang term to dismiss Operation Sindoor.

Indian armed forces launched "Operation Sindoor" on the intervening night of May 7 and 8, hitting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, from where terrorist attacks against India had been planned

India gifts 15 electric vehicles to Nepal for mountain dialogue



PNS ■ KATHMANDU

India gifted 15 electric vehicles to Nepal on Sunday to facilitate the organisation of Sagarmatha Sambad' (mountain dialogue). The Nepal government is hosting

Sagarmatha Sambad in Kathmandu from May 16-18 on the theme 'Climate Change, Mountains and the Future of Humanity. Indian Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava presented 15 electric vehicles to

Nepal's Foreign Minister Arzu Rana Deuba at a function held at Foreign Affairs Ministry, according to a press release issued by the ministry. The vehicles will be used to facilitate the movement of guests and officials attending the event, which aims to highlight the impact of climate change on mountain regions.

'Nehru had convened

Mann: BJP, BBMB to blame if something untoward happens

Tripathi was allegedly locked

Punjab and Haryana are at

inside Nangal Dam's guest

house by AAP workers.

PNS CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Sunday warned that the BJP and the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) will be held responsible if "violence" or something untoward happens as they continue to send officials to the Nangal Dam. He also called out farmers' unions for their "silence" on the issue.

Mann headed to the Nangal dam in Rupnagar district after he came to know that the BBMB officials had reached there again to release water to Haryana. AAP workers and some local villagers led by Punjab Cabinet minister Harjot Singh Bains held a protest against the officials for their attempt to release water to the neighbouring state. This came four days after

BBMB Chairman Manoj

loggerheads over the distribu-

tion of water. The AAP-led

government in Punjab has refused to share the water from Bhakra dam saying Haryana has already utilized its share. Mann also took potshots at the farmer unions for their

"silence" on protecting the

hand, Punjab is on high vigil and bravely confronting the enemy at the international border and on the other hand the BJP government at the Centre was playing "dirty games" and resorting to tantrums to deprive the state

Addressing the media at

the Nangal dam, Mann said it

is unfortunate that on one

Congress leader Digvijaya

PNS ■ GUNA (MP)

Singh on Sunday reminded the Union government of the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru convening a special session of Parliament during the war with China following a request by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Singh wondered whether India had accepted a thirdparty mediation as he questioned the "silence" of PM Narendra Modi over the understanding reached between India and Pakistan after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. Singh demanded that Modi

attend all-party meetings and the government convene a special session of Parliament, given the latest developmentsthe Pahalgam terror attack, Operation Sindoor, and an understanding reached between India and Pakistan amid the cross-border military confrontation.

Referring to the "ceasefire"



He questioned the reliability of Trump's statements.
"When and what he (Trump) will say cannot be guaranteed. But the silence of the Prime Minister has annoyed us. The PM also



announced by US President Donald Trump on Saturday in the midst of growing military confrontation between India and Pakistan, Singh said it is a stated position of India that it will never accept a third-party intervention (on cross-border

meetings," the former Madhya Pradesh chief minister told reporters.

During the 1962 war with China, the then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru had convened a (Parliamentary) session on the demand of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, he said.

Half of 2020-born could face climate extremes: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Over half the children born in 2020 could face an unprecedented exposure to heatwaves, compared to 16 per cent of those born in 1960, even if global warming were limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius, a new study has found.

Analysing demographic data and projections of climate extremes around the world, researchers calculated the fraction of each generation born between 1960 and 2020, who could face an unprecedented exposure in their lifetime.

The younger a person, the higher their chances of experiencing unprecedented climate



extremes, including heatwaves,

the worst burden, the team river floods and droughts -- said. Its findings were pub-children in the tropics will bear lished in the journal 'Nature'.

unprecedented life means that without climate change, one would have less than a 1-in-10,000 chance of experiencing that many climate extremes across one's lifetime," lead author Luke Grant, a climate scientist at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, said.

"This is a stringent threshold that identifies populations fac-ing climate extremes far beyond what could be expected without man-made climate change," Grant said.

The authors wrote, "Under a 1.5 degrees Celsius pathway, 52 per cent of people born in 2020 will experience unprecedented lifetime exposure to heatwaves."

3.5 degrees Celsius warming, "over 90 per cent will endure such exposure throughout their lives," Grant said.

"The same picture emerges for other climate extremes examined, though with slightly lower affected fractions of the population. Yet the same unfair generational differences in unprecedented exposure is observed," the author said.

In a 2021 study, the team had found that children -- especially in low-income countries -could see a disproportionate increase in exposure to extreme weather events.

Now, we examined where the cumulative exposure to lifetime will far exceed that which would have been experienced in a pre-industrial climate," senior author Wim Thiery, professor of climate science at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium, said.

The team's findings also highlight the social injustice of climate change and its impacts.

Under current climate policies, almost all of the most socio-economically vulnerable children born in 2020 -- 95 per cent -- will endure an unprecedented exposure to heatwaves in their lifetime, compared to 78 per cent for the least vulnerable group, the authors said.

Akhilesh: Politicians should not use armed forces for 'self-display'

PNS LUCKNOW

Amid the recently concluded military confrontation with Pakistan and prevailing "uneasy" calm at the LoC, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday appealed to political leaders to refrain from using defencerelated backdrops as photo opportunities, urging them instead to show solidarity with

the armed forces. "In the current highly sensitive environment, 'defencesecurity' has become an even more serious issue. Politicians are requested to please not make it a photo background or



selfie point. This is a time to stand with the armed forces, not alone for self-display," Yadav said in a post in Hindi on X. While Yadav did not name

anyone directly, his comment is seen targeting Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who posed alongside a BrahMos missile or its model, in Lucknow at an event.





The ceasefire and aftermath

The ceasefire after four days of intense hostilities is welcome as escalation is in nobody's interest

fter four days of intense military confrontation involving drones and missile strikes across the India-Pakistan border, both nations agreed on Saturday to an immediate and full ceasefire—a move that has brought a temporary sigh of relief across the subcontinent, despite worrying signs of ongoing tension. The announcement, surprisingly first made by former US President Donald Trump on social media, followed an all-night negotiation reportedly mediated by the United States. Following a prolonged night of negotiations, former US President Donald Trump announced on Social media that India and Pakistan had reached an agreement on a full and immediate ceasefire. He praised both nations for what he described as their use of common sense and intelligence in resolving the crisis. Soon after, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri confirmed the truce in a formal statement

But the optimism was short-lived. Within hours of the ceasefire declaration, the ground realities painted a far more complex picture. Drone sightings and explosions were reported across Jammu and Kashmir, and Indian forces activated air defence systems in response. In a late-night briefing, Misri accused Pakistan of violating the truce, noting that the Indian military had provided an "adequate and appropriate response.

Blackout protocols, which had been lifted earlier on Saturday, were swiftly reimposed in several districts across Punjab, Gujarat, and Rajasthan as precautionary measures. Amritsar remained on red alert, with authorities urging citizens to remain indoors. Similar alerts were issued in Gujarat's Kutch district and Rajasthan's border towns

Meanwhile, Islamabad accused India of ceasefire violations and claimed its own forces were acting with "responsibility and restraint." The conflicting narratives have only underscored the fragile nature of the truce. The volatility of this episode highlights a deeper and more alarming truth: war between India and Pakistan is not just undesirable-it is unthinkable. Both nations are nucleararmed, and any escalation carries the risk of catastrophic consequences, not just for the region but for global stability. The existence of nuclear arsenals on both sides elevates every border skirmish into a potential existential threat.

A full-blown war, in this context, would likely move beyond conventional warfare into a realm where control is quickly lost and the price is paid in millions of lives. Even limited military engagements have a staggering human, economic, and environmental cost. In densely populated regions like Punjab and Kashmir, the impact on civilian life is immediate and devastating. Blackouts, evacuations, and psychological trauma become the new normal for border residents. Infrastructure collapses, economic activity grinds to a halt, and societies are thrust into fear and uncertainty. Furthermore, global powers are watching. Any miscalculation or miscommunication could draw in international stakeholders and lead to regional destabilisation. The Indo-Pak rivalry is not isolated; its aftershocks reverberate through global markets, diplomatic corridors, and multilateral

This latest round of hostility underscores the ever-present danger that hovers over South Asia: the threat of war between two nuclear-armed nations. With both India and Pakistan possessing sizable nuclear arsenals, any escalation beyond conventional warfare carries catastrophic implications not just for the subcontinent, but for global stability. History offers sobering lessons. The Kargil conflict of 1999, waged under the shadow of nuclear deterrence, highlighted how quickly limited skirmishes can spiral into larger confrontations. In the current age marked by advanced drone warfare, cyber operations, and misinformation-the risks have only multiplied. Escalating military conflict would lead to devastating human loss, economic paralysis, and the potential for irreversible damage to bilateral and regional relations. Furthermore, any such escalation would likely draw in global powers, complicating the crisis and potentially turning a regional war into a broader geopolitical conflict.

While political leaders on both sides have often used national security to galvanise domestic support, this is a moment for restraint, not rhetoric. As recent events in Kashmir valley has shown, provocations and reactive posturing only deepen mistrust. Constructive diplomacy, backchannel negotiations, and sus-

tained dialogue must replace the current cycle of provocation and retaliation. The ceasefire, however shaky, must be reinforced through verification mecha-

nisms, confidence-building measures, and international oversight if necessary. The current calm, though punctuated by drone sightings and ceasefire violations, is still a welcome pause from the brinkmanship of the past week. But without a genuine commitment to peace and dialogue, this fragile silence risks being shattered again. India and Pakistan cannot afford another escalation. Not because they lack the means to fight, but because they now hold in their arsenals the means to destroy.

<u> Leaderspeak</u>

Sabeer Bhatia's misguided critiques

Sabeer Bhatia's criticism India is far removed from the reality. He is entitled to his opinions, but he should be careful not to present them as gospel truths. Criticism without context or understanding does more harm than good

abeer Bhatia, best known as the cofounder of Hotmail and a successful Indian-American entrepreneur, has in recent times taken to offering sweeping, and often puzzling, criticisms of India. His recent public appearances and podcasts have included a string of statements about what he perceives as the systemic flaws in India's technological, economic, and educational systems. While healthy criticism is always welcome in a democracy, Bhatia's recent views seem less about constructive feedback and more like a misplaced attempt to juxtapose India unfavourably with the United States - his adopted homeland.

Bhatia, who moved to the US in 1988 for higher education and later sold Hotmail to Microsoft for an impressive \$400 million in 1997, has mostly remained under the public radar. However, since the resurgence of Trumpism in American politics, his admiration for the US model has become more vocal - and more problematic. One cannot ignore the possibility that his new public positioning may align with certain business interests; after all, he runs Showreel, an AI-based learning platform, and Netagram, a social networking app - both based in the US. Aligning with the dominant ideological forces of the time can be a strategic move for entrepreneurs with transnational ambitions.

One of Bhatia's earliest post-2020 public commentaries came during the NASSCOM Technology and Leadership Summit in 2023, where he lamented the "lack of innovation" in Indian startups. Ironically, this statement flew in the face of data that shows India as the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world, behind only the US and China. From just 500 recognised startups in 2016, the country now boasts over 1.6 lakh officially recognised startups as of January 2025. Of these, 118 have achieved unicorn status - with valuations exceeding \$1 billion. Such growth is impossible without significant innovation and entrepreneurship. Innovation doesn't only mean breakthroughs in AI or biotechnology; it also means creating scalable solutions tailored to unique local needs, which Indian startups have done in abundance.

Yet Bhatia's criticisms only intensified. In a February 2025 podcast, he described India's Aadhaar program as "\$1.3 billion ill spent," claiming that those who built it had never written a line of code. According to him, a superior system could have been built for \$20 million using voice and video recognition. This viewpoint is not just dismissive - it is dangerously reductive. Aadhaar is not a Silicon Valley-style app targeting tech-savvy users; it is a national-scale infrastructure project that has to serve over a billion people across rural and urban geographies, many of whom have



limited exposure to digital technology.

Aadhaar's strength lies in its scalability, reliability, and adaptability - it has enabled financial inclusion for millions, streamlined government subsidy delivery, and reduced corruption by linking benefits directly to recipients. To define such a project by lines of code alone betrays a startling lack of understanding about systems design for developing economies. Ćoding is a vital part of tech, no doubt, but governance, usability, security, pri-

vacy, and logistical feasibility are equally - if not more - important, especially in a country of India's scale and complexity.

Perhaps the most

curious of Bhatia's recent pronouncements was his critique of how India calculates its Gross Domestic

Product (GDP). In an April 2025 appearance, he argued that India's GDP "is all wrong" and accused the current system of overvaluing financial transactions instead of productive labor. His example? If two people exchange Rs1,000 back and forth and are taxed 18 per cent each time, he claimed it adds Rs 2,000 to GDP - a complete misunderstanding of how GDP is measured. GDP is a globally accepted metric based on the System of National Accounts (SNA), developed and followed by international organisations like the UN, IMF, World Bank, OECD, and Eurostat. Like all compliant nations, India calculates GDP using value addition at each stage of production, not simply the movement of money. His

BHATTACHARJEE

statement that GDP inflates economic value through repeated transactions with no real work is economically inaccurate. GST, like any tax, is added to the market value of goods and services and is incorporated into GDP calculations only insofar as it affects actual value creation. Yes, GDP has its shortcomings. It does not measure income inequality, environmental degradation, or the qualitative aspects of human development. But these limitations are not India-specific - they exist for all countries, including the US. Moreover, countries use supplementary indices like the Human Development Index (HDI), Gini coefficient, and Green GDP to address these gaps. But no viable alternative has yet replaced GDP.

Bhatia's romanticisation of the American work culture - where he claims people report hourly work and taxes are based on that, supposedly leading to more 'real' GDP - is equal ly problematic. The U.S. economy, too, measures GDP through the same SNA framework If anything, India faces challenges in accurately capturing GDP due to the sheer size of its informal economy, not due to faulty methodology. Statistical estimates are needed when large portions of the population are unregistered or self-employed - a challenge of scale and data access, not conceptual error.

His views on Indian work culture are similarly myopic. He criticises Indian engineers for moving into management roles instead of continuing in engineering roles, implying that only hands-on technical labor adds value. This dismisses the essential roles that managers, planners, and strategists play in any functional organisation. Without people to coordinate efforts, oversee execution, manage supply chains, and provide leadership, technical

operations cannot succeed - regardless of how skilled the individual engineer may be.

However, it was his May 2025 comments on Indian education that finally warrant a more thorough rebuttal. In a podcast, he described the Indian school system as one that builds an "army of useless kids" trained only to obey orders, incapable of original thought. He contrasted this with American schools, where, he claims, students are allowed to write freely and creatively, even if their work is full of spelling errors - because "thought" is more important than "correctness." This is a deeply flawed generalisation. While rote learning and pressure to perform in exams are genuine problems in parts of the Indian education system, sweeping it aside as a factory for unthinking children is unfair. India has produced some of the world's best minds across disciplines - from Nobel laureates to tech entrepreneurs. A 2024 Gallup poll found that 71 per cent of American adults believe humans were either created in their present form or evolved only under divine guidance - hardly a testament to the success of rational, scientific education. Mr. Bhatia is entitled to his opinions, but he should be careful not to present them as gospel truths. India has countless challenges, and we welcome constructive criticism from anyone - including those who have left the country. But criticism without context, nuance, or understanding does more harm than good. We appreciate Mr. Bhatia's interest in Indian affairs. Perhaps it's time he focuses on the issues in his adopted homeland.

(The writer is a former Director General, Office of the Comptroller and Auditor general of India, and currently a Professor, Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management. Views are personal)

Rethinking parenting and education in a changing world



n today's fiercely competitive and fast-changing world, education is often considered the foundation of a child's future. Across India-and indeed globally-academic achievement is frequently regarded as the most reliable indicator of success. Parents go to great lengths to ensure their children excel, investing in private tutoring, enrolling them in competitive exams, and tracking every grade with meticulous attention. While such efforts are driven by love and ambition, this narrow focus on academics can be limiting.

A child is not a container to be filled with facts, but a unique individual whose personality, emotional well-being, and character must be nurtured. As the saying goes, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Parenting, therefore, extends far beyond report cards. It is a long-term responsibility that encompasses emotional support, value-building, and preparing children to navigate life's inevitable ups and downs.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed many cracks in our educational and parenting frameworks. With schools closed and routines disrupted, parents had to assume multiple roles: educators, emotional anchors, and constant companions. In India, this challenge was compounded by the digital divide-many children, particularly in rural or economically disadvantaged communities, lacked access to online education. This dual burden-academic continuity and mental well-being-brought into sharp focus the need for a more holistic and inclusive approach they obey.

Today, the world values more than just academic knowledge. Employers and institutions are increasingly seeking individuals who exhibit creativity, emotional intelligence, adaptability, and critical thinking. India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognises this evolution, promoting a well-rounded educational model. But policies alone cannot drive change. It is parents who must embrace and embody these principles at home, encouraging children to explore their interests-be it music, sports, art, or entrepreneurship-and helping

them build a strong sense of self-worth and purpose. Mental health, once a hush-hush topic, is finally being acknowledged in mainstream parenting conversations. Studies reveal that India has among the highest rates of anxiety and depression among adolescents. Much of this stems from intense academic pressure, limited family communication, and a lack of emotional validation. In the age of social media, children are constantly exposed to unrealistic standards and comparisons, further increasing their stress levels. Here, the parent's role is critical. Being a patient listener, fostering open dialogue, and normalising failure as part of growth can transform a child's outlook. Character development and values are another crucial aspect of parenting. Schools can only do so much in instilling ethics and good behavior. It is at home that children learn about honesty, kindness, respect, and empathy-by observing their parents. In a world often defined by polarisation and division, these qualities are not just desirable, but essential. Parents must lead by example, because children imitate far more than

digital era, guiding children's online behavior has also become a core responsibility. With learning and leisure now deeply intertwined with technology, parents need to ensure their children develop responsible digital habits. Teaching them to identify reliable information, engage respectfully online, and set boundaries on screen time is vital-especially in a country like India, where digital literacy often lags behind digital access.

Cultivating social skills such as teamwork, empathy, and communication at home helps children thrive in real-world situations. In an unpredictable world shaped by climate change, economic instability, and shifting job markets, resilience and adaptability are key life skills. These cannot be learned solely from textbooks. Parents must encourage independent thinking, creative problem-solving, and the ability to bounce back from setbacks. Life doesn't always go as planned-and children need to understand that failure is not a dead-end, but an invitation to grow stronger.

In many Indian households, especially among the middle class, academic success is still viewed as the primary path to a secure future. While this belief has merit, it should not come at the cost of creativity, curiosity, or emotional well-being. Around the world, parenting models are evolving-Scandinavian approaches emphasise child-led learning, while American systems increasingly integrate mental health and inclusivity. Indian parents, too, must embrace a balanced path that combines timeless values with modern insights.

(The author is an educator. Views are personal)

After a long night of talks... I am pleased to announce that India and Pakistan have agreed to a FULL AND IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE. Trump posted on Truth Social. Congratulations to both Countries on using Common Sense and Great Intelligence. DONALD TRUMP, PRESIDENT USA



Letters to the Editor

Digital battlefield: war of information

Madam — In today's era, war is no longer confined to borders or battlefields. The modern battlefield includes cyberspace, where the fight for control over information is just as critical as the physical conflict.

In times of war, the need for reliable, in-depth information increases manifold. However, paradoxically, credibility often becomes the first casualty. With 24/7 news channels vying for attention, unregulated social media, and the alarming rise of deepfake technology, information becomes easily distorted.

This contamination misguides not only citizens but also influences enemy perception. During crises, people seek the truth, but instead, a flood of half-truths, rumors, and misinformation overwhelms them.

This chaotic environment blurs facts and fabricates narratives, compromising national interest. The responsibility to combat this misinformation doesn't rest solely with the government or the media; it falls upon every citizen.

As seen in the 1990 Gulf War, embedded journalism created an era of strategic narrative control. Even in recent India-Pakistan tensions, the information war proved harder to navigate than the conflict itself.

We are all digital soldiers now. Verifying facts, resisting the spread of fake news, and thinking critically are no longer optional. It is our national duty to uphold truth and integrity in this

war of words and images DATTAPRASAD SHIRODKAR | MUMBAI

Ceasefire or Deception?

Madam — The recent ceasefire between India and Pakistan, brokered by the United States, may appear as a diplomatic breakthrough on the surface. However, its sustainability is questionable. The true challenge lies not in signing agreements but in ensuring their faithful execution. Pakistan's consistent violation of previous ceasefires, often within hours of agreement, makes any new promise hollow.

The country has repeatedly allowed its territory to be used for cross-border terrorism, violating not only bilateral trust but also international law. Despite statements from leaders like External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and even U.S. President Donald Trump hailing the ceasefire, the ground reality remains grim. Hours after the ceasefire was announced, Pakistan resumed firing.

How can there be lasting peace when one party continues to harbor and support terrorist camps? Until Pakistan demonstrates genuine intent to dismantle these camps and dismantle extremist ideologies, no ceasefire can be deemed permanent. India must not allow international pressures to cloud its judgment. The pursuit of short-term peace should not come at the cost of long-term security. Unfortunately, with this ceasefire, India has been denied the full measure of justice it deserves due to foreign mediation that places strategic balance over moral clarity.

BHAGWAN THADANI J MUMBAI

A New Chapter in the Vatican

Madam — The elevation of Cardinal Robert Prevost as Pope Leo XIV has ushered in a wave of hope and renewed energy within the global Catholic community.

As the first American to assume the papacy, his rise marks a symbolic and strategic shift for the Church, echoing the reformist and inclusive spirit of his predecessor, Pope Francis. The selection of the name "Leo" is seen as a nod to past leaders known for reconciliation, suggesting Pope

Leo XIV's focus will also be on unity and dialogue. However, his papacy begins amid daunting challenges. The Church faces a crisis of relevance, with declining numbers in baptisms and a noticeable exodus from organized religion in traditionally Christian regions.

Europe, long considered the Church's stronghold, is grappling with an aging population, a declining birth rate, and rising immigration, leading to fears of cultural and demographic transformation. Furthermore, unresolved issues of sexual misconduct, especially in Western nations, continue to erode public trust.

Pope Leo XIV must navigate these turbulent waters with wisdom and moral clarity. Strengthening the role of faith in national identity, promoting accountability within Church ranks, and reinforcing the spiritual and moral foundation of Christianity will be essential for meaningful revival.

MANOJ PARASHAR | GHAZIABAD

HONOURING THE HEART OF HEALTHCARE: THE NURSES DAY

very day, nurses walk into hospitals. clinics, and community health ceniters with unmatched resilience, compassion, and expertise.

They are the backbone of the healthcare system — comforting the suffering, administering critical care, and serving as the emotional anchor for patients and families alike. To acknowledge their unparalleled contribution, International Nurses Day is observed each year on May 12.

In 2025, the theme, "Our Nurses, Our **Future: Caring for Nurses Strengthens** Economies," rightfully underscores that nurse well-being is directly linked to the strength and efficiency of global healthcare systems. This year also marks the 205th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, a pioneer who redefined modern nursing. Despite their critical role, nurses often work under immense pressure, facing physical exhaustion, emotion al burnout, and resource shortages. Key issues such as nursing education, interna tional migration, ethical dilemmas, and

lack of leadership opportunities need urgent redressal. Since its official recognition in 1974. International Nurses Day has reminded us not only of their technical expertise but also of the humanity they bring into patient care. Hospitals must support nurses with ongoing training NS emotional resilience programs.

They are more than caregivers — they are healers, educators, and the first line of defense in public health. As we commemorate International Nurses Day, let us move beyond symbolic gestures and commit to systemic change that honors the true value of nursing. The challenges nurses face are not just professional hurdles they are reflections of broader societal and policy failures that demand urgent attention. Strengthening nursing is is a strategic imperative for building resilient healthcare systems. Let us ensure that those who care for us are, in turn, cared for - with dignity, respect, and the resources they need to thrive.

BURRA M REDDY I KARIMNAGAR

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



From terror to climate: Act before crisis hits

India's preparedness continues to fall short of international benchmarks. With summer already showing signs of strain and systemic failure, the urgent need for a proactive, coordinated, and accountable disaster management strategy has never been clearer



ndia because of its varied geography, location, geological and climatic conditions coupled with its 'reactive approach' in dealing with things is prone to natural and other disasters. Time and again the national disaster response has not been at all commensurate with the desired level of preparedness as well as, technology and swift action. Our administrative system takes action and rises from slumber only when disasters happen. Every year time and again seasonal disasters occur and several lives are lost as also huge loss of property and life-sustaining resources.

The governance for disaster management during the last few years has improved after the creation of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) but it falls short of the level of international standards. Take for example the recent Pahalgaon terrorist attack on 22nd April 2025 in which 26 innocent Hindu lives were brutally killed by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists by first asking about their religion. It was an attack on the soul of India but the administration there miserably failed to plan to prevent such attacks on tourist spots in Kashmir, even as in major tourist spots elsewhere in the country security arrangements are made to oversee law and order and all who matter in running security apparatus in Jammu and Kashmir know full well that Kashmir is always on the radar of Pakistan sponsored terrorists. It was a well-known fact that last year more than 2.35 crore tourists visited Kashmir and the government opened all tourist places without making any arrangements for the security of people.

Whatever, the political rhetoric about peace returning in Kashmir after the aftermath of abrogating Article 370, all Indians were sure that terrorists have been striking at will in Kashmir and Jammu as several cases of civilian killings were witnessed now and then. There was no coordination between the state and central intelligence agencies though intelligence inputs were indicating terrorist strike. In an era of modern technological innovation, there should not be collateral human loss of our armed forces during search operations to tackle the terrorists. We have a very professional Army no doubt but we need to learn a lesson or two from the Israeli Army and their leadership even though they too have a divided coalition polity. The state and central agencies failed to apprehend the local support to terrorists and Islamists not only in Kashmir but all over as the ecosystem that supports anti-national forces is yet to be given a fatal blow as they gleefully carry out their operations.

There have been talks of hunting down the perpetrators and their supporters for the last 35 years but with minimal lasting success as Pakistan keeps blackmailing about the use of their clandestinely achieved nuclear power status. This is so far about



the threat to our national security. A solid standard operating procedure along with accountability and well-defined coordinated responsibility must be



The government also committed hara-kiri by opting for an early election as terrorist sympathisers also won and boosted their morale. The government should have told all who matter in clear terms not to have a 'holier than thou' approach on national security matters when the direction to hold elections and delimitation was carried out. Unless total annihilation of terrorism is

carried out all such political activities should be suspended as politicians tend to confuse the issue for selfish electoral gains.

Let us discuss the other disasters looming large in the coming months. The coming summer is showing its fangs. Only a well-planned strategy can help prevent life and property losses. But what



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Delhi-NCR saw on 2nd May 2025 a severe thunderstorm, gusty winds, hails and rains that choked the roads with fallen trees and water logging killing 6 people in Delhi proves that no lesson has been learnt. The roadside trees fell as a pack of cards because for the last many years, the environmentalists have been arguing against the concretisation of soil around trees and pavements which dries up moisture, and trees become weak as their roots cannot spread and do not get water.

The weather pattern and westerly winds coupled with rising temperatures due to climate change are making flying challenging as has been noticed for many days in the last 15 days. A concerted pinpointed strategy is the need of the hour. India's summer and monsoon seasons in 2025 are poised to aggravate challenges due to climate change, population pressures, poor planning, and systemic inefficiencies.

The issues needing attention are heatwaves, water scarcity, flooding, agricultural disruptions, and health risks as their intensity and frequency are increasing every year. While some measures are in place, India's response remains inadequate, and at best policies are reactive, inadequate investment, and

bureaucratic inertia with a lack of accountability. The second important issue which need to be addressed is how to deal with Heat Island effects and Heat strokes. It is music to hear to notice that the Delhi Chief Minister had the other day proposed a 3 3-hour break from 12 PM to 3 PM for the labourers working on roads and construction works. Last year during 2024 the country experienced a severe heatwave, resulting in more than 700 reported heatstroke deaths across 17 states, according to the "Heat Watch 2024" report. It also identified around 40,000 cases of heatstroke. What this report misses is the actual data which is several times more as the reporting mechanism does not cover all such deaths in rural areas.

There are instances of heat island effects in cities mainly due to factors like reduced vegetation, impervious surfaces concrete pavement, and building materials that store and release heat. In this regard, the Metropolitan cities need to emulate the urban landscape management of Agartala city by the Tripura government where roads and pavements all over have been aesthetically redesigned with vegetation. The civic authorities must plan for at least 20 heat waves this season for each city and proper water management and availability in both urban and rural areas.

The heat-related mortality may increase in slums and rural hinterlands. A new building code be prepared by the civic bodies under the supervision of IDMA which should have provisions on how to deal with heat island effects and how greenery should be used to tackle it.

To deal with seasonal diseases like gastroenteritis and other viral diseases must have a plan of action. Yet another issue is managing the water resources in urban areas.

As more than 60 per cent of our districts in the country are water stressed. Cities like Bengaluru and Chennai may face "Day Zero" scenarios, where water supplies run dry, as seen in Cape Town in 2018. There is a complete absence of water use planning at the household level. We must prepare for rainwater harvesting and water harvesting at the landscape level in both urban and rural areas, especially in forestlands.

Tamil Nadu's success in reviving water bodies should be replicated all over India so all other successful stories. The National Disaster Management Authority must be reformed and be given the role of policy planning and monitoring of disaster preparedness for the entire country and only qualified experts should be posted in it rather than making it a post-retirement sinecure for lobbyists.

(The author is the Chairman of the Centre for Resource Management and Environment. Views are personal)

Rediscovering our eternal spiritual identity

In an age marked by division and conflict, where labels of nationality, race, and religion deepen the chasms between us, it is easy to forget the truth that lies beyond the surface. Just as cats and dogs instinctively clash, human beings have allowed superficial differences to fuel endless guarrels

n today's sharply divided world, conflicts over nationality, religion, and identity have driven humanity into bitter rivalries. Much like cats and dogs, who instinctively clash, humans too find themselves trapped in endless disputes, driven by superficial bodily identifications. In the process, we often forget a simple, yet profound truth: beneath these external coverings, we are eternal spirit souls.

Each of us is a spiritual spark - part and parcel of the Supreme Being, Lord Sri Krishna - temporarily encased in a material body. Instead of valuing the sanctity of life in every form, people remain divided by superficial labels, ignoring the universal fact that we all belong to a single, divine family

The ancient wisdom of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, taught by Lord Krishna and echoed in the Vedic tradition, beautifully expresses this truth. It reminds us that the entire world is one family - not just in sentiment, but in spiritual reality. Only by embracing this understanding can true peace, compassion, and mutual respect be restored among all living beings.

His Divine Grace AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada, the Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

(ISKCON), dedicated his life to spreading this universal vision. Honoured recently as "Vishwa Guru" by the Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad at the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj (February 2025), Srila Prabhupada consistently reminded us of life's higher purpose. In one of his lectures, he remarked, "Human beings are not meant to quarrel like cats and dogs. They must be intelligent enough to recognise the true value of human life and refuse to live like ordinary animals."

Srila Prabhupada placed special emphasis on the teachings of Bhagavad-Gita. As It Is, where Lord Krishna reveals that the first step in self-realisation is understanding that we are not these temporary bodies, but eternal spirit souls. Without this awareness, it's impossible to transcend death and achieve the eternal spiritual world beyond this fleeting material existence.

Unfortunately, in our modern world, distinctions based on birth, race, and species persist. People continue to treat others differently based solely on appearances, much like a dog instinctively views a cat as its rival. But the Bhagavad Gita clarifies that the body is merely a temporary covering, while the soul continues, changing forms like one changes clothes. As stated the soul discards worn-out bodies just as we discard old garments

The Vedic scriptures further explain that there are 8.4 million species, and the soul journeys through various forms according to karma, under divine supervision. If humanity truly grasped this eternal nature of the soul and the interconnectedness of all life, countless wars, killings, and violence - against both humans and





- could be prevented. Such awareness would cultivate compassion, peace, and God-consciousness, steering society away from a life of sense gratification that reduces human beings to animalistic behaviour merely eating, sleeping, defending, and mating.

In a prophetic 1976 interview with Bhavan's Journal, Srila Prabhupada predicted of this age of quarrel, known

the moral decline of this age of quarrel, known as Kali-yuga. He remarked: "Essential human qualities such as religion, truthfulness, cleanliness, compassion, longevity, bodily strength, and memory are gradually deteriorating."

These qualities, he stressed, are what elevate humans above animals. Without religion and higher knowledge, human life descends into an



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animal-like existence. Srila Prabhupada would often say, "A dog has no concern for religion. Though it's a living being, it has no interest in the Bhagavad-Gita." This interest in higher knowledge is what truly separates humans from animals."

Modern society, however, misguides people into chasing after materialistic pleasures and superficial ideals, neglecting the pursuit of God and authentic spirituality. In the Vedic worldview, progress isn't measured by technology or wealth, but by spiritual advancement - realising one's true self and relationship with the Supreme

self and relationship with the Supreme.

Today, society glorifies endless labour for material gain, measuring success by possessions like big houses, cars, and fleeting comforts - while ignoring what genuinely satisfies the soul. Increasingly driven by lust, greed, and anger, the world has witnessed horrific outcomes: violence, rape, genocide, and conflict over trivial disputes. Even those in power often govern with self-ish motives, lacking the wisdom of saintly kings,

and indifferent to people's welfare.

Personal relationships have also grown fragile, whether among celebrities or common people. Love often lacks depth, driven by personal gain and temporary pleasure, while family ties steadily weaken. Social media and superficial trends now dominate everyday life, weakening meaningful human connections.

Even more troubling is how young people today fall prey to intoxicants, gluttony, laziness, and uncontrolled sexuality, mimicking animal instincts. Despite material wealth and opportunity, many silently struggle with inner emptiness - a void no temporary gratification can fill. That missing link is a loving relationship with God, Sri Krishna, the eternal well-wisher of every soul. The soul, by nature, longs to love and serve the Supreme. No amount of external pleasure can satisfy this deep-rooted spiritual hunger.

Human life is rare and precious - a unique opportunity for self-realisation, as the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.9.29) explains. After countless births in various forms, the soul finally attains a human body, capable of higher thinking and spiritual growth

The Bhagavad-Gita, as Srila Prabhupada presented, teaches that the soul's natural state is bliss and eternal joy. However, seeking it through material means is a mistake. Bodily pleasures are temporary and superficial, much like a diseased man tasting sugar as bitter. Only when one transcends bodily identification can the sweetness of spiritual life be experienced. The soul is part of the Supreme, - the embodiment of knowledge, bliss, and eternity.

The very name Krishna means "the greatest pleasure." As minute parts of this Supreme, we naturally share those qualities and eternally hanker for divine love and joy. The Mahabharata beautifully declares that true enjoyment is endless, experienced by yogis who elevate themselves spiritually and find joy in loving devotion to Krishna. Therefore, human life should not be wasted in mere animalistic existence. By cultivating discipline, sincere devotion to Krishna, and absorbing the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad-Gita, one can attain lasting peace, and joy, and fulfil life's true purpose.

To rise above the chaos of our divided world, we must rediscover our true identity as eternal spirit souls—divine sparks of Lord Sri Krishna. Srila Prabhupada's teachings remind us that real peace and happiness lie not in material gain, but in spiritual awakening.

By embracing the wisdom of the Bhagavad-Gita and cultivating God consciousness, we can transcend superficial differences, foster compassion, and fulfill the rare and sacred purpose of human life: loving service to the Supreme.

(The writer is a student of journalism at IIMC.

IN BRIEF



Delhi airport sees around 100 flight cancellations

round 100 flights to and from the Delhi airport were cancelled on Sunday, according to a source. Security measures were enhanced, and at least 32 airports in the northern and western parts of the country were temporarily shut in view of the conflict between India and Pakistan. On Saturday, India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air, and sea with immediate effect. As many as 52 domestic departures and 44 arrivals, and one international departure were cancelled. These cancellations happened between 5.00 am and 4.30 pm, the source said. "Delhi Airport is operating normally. However, due to changes in airspace dynamics and increased security measures, some flight schedules and security checkpoint processing times may be affected," DIAL said in a post on X. Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) operates the national capital's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), which is the busiest airport in the



Adani Power to supply 1,500 MW to UP

dani Power on Saturday said it has won a bid to supply 1,500 MW of electricity to Uttar Pradesh from a Agreenfield ultra-supercritical power plant in the state entailing an investment of USD 2 billion. This is further to the Uttar Pradesh cabinet approving the project earlier this month, a company statement said. The company will now sign a long-term power supply agreement with Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd (UPPCL) under the Letter of Award (LoA) received today, it stated. According to the statement, Adani Power, India's largest private sector thermal power generator, on Saturday said it has won a tightly contested bid to supply 1,500 MW (net) of thermal power to Uttar Pradesh. As part of the contract, the company will supply power at a highly competitive tariff of Rs 5.383 per unit from a greenfield 2x800 MW (1500 MW net) ultra-supercritical power plant to be set up under the design, build, finance, own, and operate (DBF00) model in the state.



Nepali biz body urges higher currency limit for Indian tourists

prominent Nepali business organisation on Sunday urged the government to allow Indian tourists arriving Avia land route to carry up to the equivalent of USD 5,000 in Indian rupees, an increase from the current limit of Rs 25.000, to boost tourism in the country, USD 5.000 equates to approximately Rs 4,25,000. The current provision of allowing Indian tourists entering Nepal via land route to carry only up to Rs 25,000 is insufficient if the country aims to promote Indian tourism, said Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) president Chandra Prasad Dhakal. "When there is a provision to carry USD 5,000 for those who use flights to visit Nepal, why shouldn't the same provision apply to Indian tourists entering Nepal via land?," he asked during a pre-budget interaction between the FNCCI office bearers and Finance Minister Bishnu Paudel here. Dhakal also urged the government to develop better infrastructure along the Nepal-India border to

India, EU to hold next round of FTA talks from today

India and the European Union (EU) chief negotiators will begin the next round of talks on the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) here from Monday, with an aim to conclude the first phase of the pact as early as possible, according to an official.

The two sides have agreed to conclude the agreement in two phases on account of the uncertain global trade environ-ment, particularly due to the US tariff actions under President Donald Trump.

"The EU team will be here for the 11th round of negotiations. It will continue till May 16," the official said.

Issues where there is convergence would be included in the first part of the agreement. They are aiming to conclude the second part by the end of Talks for the previous (tenth)

round focused on areas like market access offers in goods, services, investment and government procurement. India has followed the prac-

tice of negotiating trade pacts in two phases with Australia. It is following a similar approach

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal last month stated



that "if some of the issues which may not be very core to the trade, maybe taking some more time, then it is better to focus on core trade issues. So, we say that first things first...We are also discussing with the EU what can be the early harvest of the first tranche, where we

can do faster". The secretary, on May 10, held a review meeting on the pact with senior officials who are involved in the negotiations. Besides demanding significant duty cuts in automobiles and medical devices, the EU wants tax reduction in products like wines, spirits, meat, poultry and a strong

intellectual property regime. Indian goods' exports to the EU, such as ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, steel, petroleum products, and electrical machinery, can become more competitive if the pact gets concluded successfully.

On May 1, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was in Brussels to discuss progress on the agree-In June 2022, India and the

27-nation EU bloc resumed negotiations after a gap of over eight years. It was stalled in 2013 due to differences over the level of opening up of the markets.

On February 28, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the European Commission President agreed to seal a much-awaited free trade deal by the end of this year.

No duty cuts by India on UK wines

ndia will not provide any duty

concessions on British wines and is offering only limited import duty benefits on UK beer under the free trade agreement (FTA) between the two countries, announced on May 6, according to an official The other sensitive agri products where India will not offer any reduction in the import duty include dairy products, apples, cheese, oats, animals and vegetable oils under the agreement with the United Kingdom. "Wine is on the exclusion list, along with several other agricultural products in the trade pact. We are also offering only a limited duty concession on British beer," the official said. India and the UK on May 6 announced the conclusion of the free trade agreement, which will make British Scotch whiskey and cars cheaper in India, while reducing duties on Indian imports like garments and leather products. As per the agreement, India will reduce duty on UK whiskey and gin from 150 per cent to 75 per cent and further to 40 per cent in the tenth year of the deal

Indian economy likely to grow at 6.5 pc: CII

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's GDP is projected to grow at 6.5 per cent in the current fiscal and the country's economy is resilient enough to overcome the short-term impact of geopolitical issues, CII president Sanjiv Puri has

In an interview with PTI, he asserted that the country must pursue bilateral trade pacts with key trading partners to protect national interests in the backdrop of increasing trade barri-

Highlighting that the private investment is picking up across various sectors like energy, transportation, metals, chemicals and hospitality, Puri said the current geopolitical uncertainties could lead to "some cautiousness" in investment.

On the economic growth projection for India, he said, "We are looking at 6.5 per cent. We believe this number can be achieved fundamentally, because the fact is, we are starting with a reasonably good foundation, robust economic foundation".

Elaborating on the reasons, he said, "In the recent past, interest rates have eased. Inflation is becoming benign. There is this personal income

tax concession taking in from the first of April. Investments picked up in public and private space in the latter half of last

On the high tariffs proposed by US President Donald Trump on several key economies and the trend of rising protection-



ism globally, Puri acknowledged that "more and more barriers to trade are coming in right now", suggesting that India should do bilateral trade agreements which are mutualbeneficial and in the nation-

Therefore, the countries that India is pursuing, and the big ones among them, being the US and EU, are important. We should do whatever we have to do from a national interest perspective, and I think, most important is these bilateral trade agreements".

He also recommended the creation of a three-tier tariff architecture for certain areas to enhance competitiveness.

Aggressive hybrid mutual funds gain traction

Add 3.5 lakh investors in last 1 year

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Aggressive hybrid mutual funds have been gaining traction among investors amid continued volatility in the capital markets, with the asset base of the category surging to Rs 2.26 lakh crore in April 2025, an increase of 12 per cent compared to a year ago.

Also, the investor base expanded significantly, with the number of folios increasing by 3.5 lakh over the past year, to nearly 58 lakh by April 2025, latest data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed.

This trend highlig growing appeal of a balanced investment approach that combines growth and stability.

Aggressive hybrid funds, an investment solution blending equity and debt exposures, delivered robust returns over different timeframes. On average, these funds have delivered returns of nearly 9 per cent over the past year, 20 per cent over two years, 15 per cent over three years, and an impressive 21 per cent over five years, the industry data showed. These funds differ from other

hybrid mutual funds primarily in the equity exposure, as they invest 65-80 per cent in equities higher than the conservative or balanced hybrids that offer better return potential but also higher risk, making them ideal



for investors with a moderate Trivesh D, COO Tradejini, said. Looking ahead, the outlook

for actively managed aggressive funds remains positive. Market movements are increasingly expected to be sector-specific and stock-specific rather than broad-based.

As a result, fund managers with a dynamic and responsive approach will be better positioned to capture emerging

FPIs continue to invest; inject Rs 14,167 cr in equities

PNS NEW DELHI

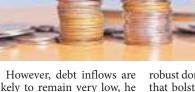
Foreign investors continue to show confidence in the country's equity market, infusing Rs 14,167 crore so far this month, largely driven by favourable global cues and robust domestic fundamentals.

Notably, this inflow has come despite the ongoing military tensions between India and Pakistan. This positive momentum

follows a net investment of Rs 4,223 crore in April, marking the first inflow after three months, data with the depositories showed. Prior to this, foreign portfo-

lio investors (FPIs) had pulled out Rs 3,973 crore in March, Rs a substantial Rs 78,027 crore in Going ahead, global macros

(declining dollar, slowing US and Chinese economy) and domestic macros (high GDP growth and declining inflation and interest rates) will facilitate increasing FPI inflow into the equity, Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments,



likely to remain very low, he added.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors made a net investment of Rs 14,167 crore May 9). The latest flow has helped narrow the outflow to Rs 98,184 crore in 2025 so far.

India's equity markets witnessed a sharp resurgence in FPI activity in April, signalling a marked reversal from the outflow seen earlier this year. The momentum continued in

This renewed momentum was underpinned by a blend of favourable global cues and

robust domestic fundamentals that bolstered investor confidence, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate director - Manager Morningstar Research, Investment, said.

One of the key catalysts hind this trend ha improving outlook for a potential US-India trade agreement. Additionally, the weakening of the US dollar, alongside a strengthening Indian rupee, enhanced the appeal of Indian assets to global investors, he

Furthermore, upbeat quarterly earnings from prominent Indian corporates added to the positive sentiment, he

Info Edge clocks 36% return on startup investments

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Naukri.com parent Info Edge's long-term bets on Indian startups ranging from Zomato to Policybazaar, are yielding blockbuster returns of nearly 10 times and an estimated gross internal rate of return of 36 per cent, according to the firm's FY25 annual letter to shareholders.

The firm, helmed by Sanjeev Bikhchandani -often referred to as India's Warren Buffett invested a total capital of Rs 3,959.16 crore across platforms over the last one and half decade. This investment today stands at the Fair Market Value (FMV) of Rs 36,855 crore.

"Since we started our finanrial investing activity in we have achieved an estimated 36 per cent gross IRR across all vintages put together," founder and vice chairman Sanjeev Bikhchandani wrote in the letter. Info Edge was one of the early backers in homegrown listed companies, including Zomato and Policybazaar. It invested a total of Rs 483.78 crore and Rs 591.40 crore in the two companies, respectively.

Canara Bank mobilises Rs 16k cr deposits in 10 weeks

PNS MUMBAI

Faced with challenges on deposit growth, state-owned Canara Bank asked each of its 82,000-strong staff to go out to garner funds, and mobilised Rs 16,700 crore in ten weeks. a top official has said.

Amid the system-wide challenges of deposit accretion, the bank's top management gave a call to every employee to garner deposits, and the drive began on January 26 this year.

We had given a call to each of the 82,000 staff members to canvas, contacting their relations and whatever there is in



Each one should bring Rs 10 lakh as a deposit either in CASA (current and savings account) or retail term deposit," its managing director and chief executive K Satyanarayana Raju said.

The staff members supported the drive wholeheartedly and are in "sync" with the top leadership, Raju said, underscoring that the management's actions over the last 2-3 years have helped in the drive. "In the last 2-3 years, we

have taken steps to get benefits to the staff members, bringing transparency in promotions, performance recognition, and transfers, which has gone well. When we gave a call, we explained to them properly and we could convince them about the need of the hour," he said, adding that the trade unions also responded

positively.

Raju said the drive yielded positive results, and the staff was able to collect Rs 16,700 crore in deposits, split evenly between CASA and term deposits.

This helped reduce the credit deposit ratio to 73 per cent in the March quarter from the 76 per cent levels in December, he added. He said the bank was on the verge of hitting the 80 per cent threshold on the CD ratio front, especially with the high demand for credit in the last quarter, and the urge to do something on this front led it to fall back on the

Market to monitor Indo-Pak situation, inflation data: Analysts

PNS NEW DELHI

The domestic stock market this week would monitor the geopolitical developments after India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop military actions, analysts said.

Moreover, macroeconomic data announcements, Q4 earnings, trading activity of foreign investors and global market trends are also likely to influence sen-

timents, traders said. India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate

effect after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

This de-escalation removes a key overhang on investor sentiment and is likely to be seen as a major positive development by financial markets. Historically, markets have shown resilience and a tendencv to recover following such geopolitical de-escalations," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd,

All eyes would be on FIIs who turned negative on Friday trading session after being continuous net buyers in the last 2 weeks, he added.

"This week will be pivotal, marked by several key domestic triggers. Geopolitical developments, particularly the ongoing tensions with Pakistan, will continue to remain in focus. On the macroeconomic front, investors will closely monitor the release of key data points including the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Wholesale Price



Index (WPI), and trade figures

for exports and imports. "Additionally, the corporate earnings season will gather pace, with several major companies such as Tata Steel, Bharti Airtel, Gail, Hero MotoCorp, Tata Motors, Lupin and BHEL scheduled to announce their quarterly results," Ajit Mishra -SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Foreign investors continue to show confidence in the country's equity market, infusing Rs 14,167 crore so far this month, largely driven by favourable global cues and robust domestic fundamentals.

Govt to hold pre-emption right over oil, gas in emergency seabed and refined into fuels Government of India shall, at petroleum or petroleum or

PNS NEW DELHI

The government will hold preemption rights over all oil and natural gas produced in the country in any event of national emergency, according to draft rules being framed under a revamped oilfields legislation.

A pre-emption right (or pre-emptive right) is the legal right of a party - often a government or existing shareholder - to purchase or claim a product, asset, or resource before it is offered to others.

The inclusion of such rights over crude oil - extracted from underground or beneath the

like petrol and diesel - as well as natural gas, which is used for power generation, fertilizer production, CNG for vehicles, and piped cooking gas, is intended to help the government prioritize national interests and ensure public welfare during emergencies.

The producer of oil and natural gas will be paid a "fair market price prevailing at the time of pre-emption", the draft rules

Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has invited comments on draft rules after Parliament earlier this year



passed the Oilfields (Regulation Development) Amendment Bill which replaced outdated provisions from the 1948 Act, to boost domestic production, attract

investment, and support the country's energy transition goals. "In the case of a national

emergency in respect of petroleum products or mineral oil,

all times, during such emergency, have the right of preemption of the mineral oils, refined petroleum or petroleum or mineral oil products produced from the crude oil or natural gas extracted from the leased area, or of the crude oil or natural gas where the lessee is permitted to sell, export or dispose of without it being refined within India," the rules

This right will be exercised by providing a "fair market price prevailing at the time of pre-emption to the lessee by Government of India, for the uations - like the one that the country faced in the military standoff with Pakistan - or natural disasters could constitute a national emergency. 'Government of India shall be the sole judge as to what constitutes a national emergency in respect of mineral oils, and its decision in this respect shall be

final," the rules said.

mineral oil products or the

crude oil or natural gas taken

define what would constitute a

national emergency. Industry

sources said war or war-like sit-

The rules however did not

in pre-emption."



After Rane's statement, Sanam **Teri Kasam** directors back Govt's ban on **Pakistan actors**

he debate around artistic collaboration between India and Pakistan has resurfaced following recent developments, as actor Harshvardhan Rane and the directorial duo Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru makers of the 2016 romantic hit Sanam Teri Kasam have taken a firm stand against working with Pakistani talent amid ongoing tensions.

On Saturday, Harshvardhan Rane publicly stated that he would not return for a potential sequel to Sanam Teri Kasam if if there is any possibility of the previous cast being repeated. His remarks came in response to Hocane's criticism of Operation Sindoor, the Indian military offensive launched in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir following the tragic Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 civilian lives. Backing Rane's stance, directors Radhika Rao and Vinay Sapru expressed their disapproval of several Pakistani celebrities—including Mawra Hocane, Fawad Khan, and Mahira Khan—who either condemned the Indian air strikes or remained silent on the issue of cross-border terrorism. In a statement to Hindustan Times, the filmmakers said, "Innocent Indian lives continue to be lost to decades of cross-border terrorism. What's even more disheartening

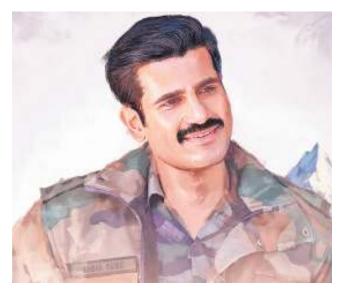
respect, and opportunity."
The director duo further declared their support for the Indian government's decision to bar Pakistani actors from working in India. "We fully agree with our government's decision: Not a single rupee should be paid. Not a single minute of our time as a nation should be offered. Not a single Indian platform should engage with them," they emphasized.

is the silence—or worse, the statements—of Pakistani

actors who have worked in India, receiving love,

Reinforcing their nationalistic sentiment, the directors concluded their statement with a strong message: "What matters most is our nation and the welfare of our people. We stand by our government and fully support its decision. Nation First — Always!"

KARAN TACKER TRANSFORMS INTO CAPT. SAMAR RAINA FOR TANVI: THE GREAT



Tacker, who stole hearts and headlines with his riveting performances on OTT, is now ready to command the big screen with Tanvi The Great — his first feature film, directed by none other than the legendary Anupam Kher. The newly released poster reveals Tacker in a fierce, uniformed avatar as Captain Samar Raina — a character cloaked in intensity, honour, and untold heroism.

Sharing the poster socially Anupam Kher mentioned," Actors of Tanvi The Great: Happy Birthday Karan! When I watched #Neeraj Pandey's 'Special Ops' I was deeply impressed by the presence and performance of #KaranTacker. #Khaki TheBiharChapter was equally impressive! Karan has this unique ability to make his performances look effortless but still carry the weightage of a seasoned actor. The role he plays

⊣he wait is finally over! Karan in #TanviTheGreat had these require- manifested. Playing Capt. Samar Raina ments! He carries the Indian Army uniform and the responsibilities that come along with it with finesse, dignity and majestic grace. You will love him in TTG! Thank you Karan for your love, dedication and Brilliance! Happy Birthday once again my friend. Jai Ho and Jai Hind!

> to showcase his acting chops on the celluloid. Adding another layer of pride to this milestone, Tanvi The Great will be screened at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival 2025, with Karan walking the red carpet and representing Indian cinema

With Tanvi The Great, Tacker is all set

on a global stage.

Karan says, "This moment is incredibly surreal. To debut on the big screen with a film like Tanvi The Great, under the direction of someone I've admired for years — Anupam Kher sir — is not just a professional milestone, it's a dream

challenged me in ways I'd never imagined. Getting the opportunity to represent India at Cannes with this film is humbling beyond words. As an actor, you crave stories that move people, that matter — and Tanvi The Great is exactly that. I'm grateful to Anupam sir and Boman sir for believing in me, for giving me a space where I could fly. I can't put in words the thrill of sharing a glimpse of the world we have created.'

While Tanvi The Great marks his feature film launch, Tacker is not slowing down. He's already neck-deep in another exciting role as Gaurav Tiwari, a paranormal investigator in the upcoming thriller Bhay — promising yet another intense, layered performance. And that's not all — two more big projects are in the pipeline, soon to be announced, each expected to push the envelope further for this rising star.

Sajid Khan says Bollywood has 'Leads, Not Heroes' anymore

ilmmaker Sajid Khan recently shared candid thoughts about the changing face of

Bollywood heroes, suggesting that the golden era of iconic, larger-than-life eyes," he emphasized. heroes is fading. Appearing on Bharti Singh and Haarsh Limbachiyaa's YouTube channel Bharti TV, Khan reflected on how the very definition of a "hero" has transformed in the Hindi film industry.

According to Sajid, today's film landscape is populated by "lead actors" rather than true heroes. "Hero bahut kam bache hain apne paas. There are no heroes in today's time. There are leads," he remarked. He believes the aura and moral compass that once defined a hero have gradually been replaced by performance-focused leads who may not embody the same cinematic gravitas.

He fondly recalled the era of stars like Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra, Vinod Khanna, and Mithun Chakraborty-actors who, despite not having chiselled physiques, commanded the screen with raw intensity and charisma. "Back then, the hero didn't need six-pack abs. Their power came through their eyes, their expressions," Sajid explained. He credited Salman Khan for pioneering the gym-toned look in Bollywood with Maine Pyaar Kiya, which shifted the focus toward physical aesthetics. However, Sajid was quick to clarify that sculpted bodies do not define heroism. "Just muscles raw, "desi" strength made him a believable and impactful action hero.

Sajid also highlighted how the essence of the "hero" still

thrives in South Indian cinema. "In the South, heroes still get grand entries. They still stand for values, for righteousness. They are larger than life, but grounded in principles," he noted. He added that South Indian heroes are still written with strong moral codes and are not shown engaging in behavior that sends the wrong message to audiences. To illustrate his point,

Sajid cited Ranbir Kapoor's performance in Animal, asserting that Kapoor's emotional delivery would have landed just as powerfully even without the added muscle. "It was the pain in his eyes that mattered more than the biceps," he said. He also praised Sunny Deol in Gadar 2, noting that Deol doesn't fit the stereotypical gym body image, yet his

ISHAAN KHATTER OPENS UP ON ACTOR ENTOURAGES:

'No one should burden an entire setup'

ith a witty new series that playfully jabs at the film industry's extravagant tendencies, actor Ishaan Khatter is offering a balanced take on the growing debate around actor entourages. Speaking in the context of his latest Netflix release The Royals, Khatter reflected on the rising costs of support staff and their impact on film production budgets. "I'm neither for nor against it," Ishaan told PTI, addressing whether actors should travel with a large support crew. "It should be a personal choice. But no one person should have enough people to burden an entire setup.'

His comments come as The Royals—a satirical series where he stars opposite Bhumi Pednekar-delivers a tongue-in-cheek look at the trappings of celebrity life, including the sometimes comical presence of oversized entourages on set. "I've had very different experiences," Ishaan added. "On A Perfect Couple, I was literally my own everything. I didn't have anyone with me. And then there are setups where you're used to a lot of help. It can often be funny." The Royals sees Ishaan stepping into the role of Aviraaj Singh, a reluctant royal navigating modernity, while Bhumi Pednekar plays Sophia Shekhar, a self-made start-up CEO. The duo join forces to transform Aviraaj's ancestral haveli into a luxury



Sunita Ahuja warns gossipmongers: 'Don't spread lies about my marriage'



unita Ahuja, the wife of Bollywood veteran Govinda, has finally addressed the swirling rumours surrounding their marriage, firmly denying claims of separation and alleged infidelity. In a latest interview, Sunita dismissed the reports as "baseless gossip" and offered a strong affirmation of her bond with her husband. "These rumours are completely false. Unless something comes from me or Govinda himself, no one should believe it," she stated unequivocally Speculation about the couple's relationship began to surface in early 2025, prompting concern and curiosity among fans. However,

Sunita made it clear that there is no truth to the whispers of a split or extramarital affair. Emphasizing her confidence in their relationship, she said, "I don't think Govinda can live without me. I certainly can't imagine a life without him.

Taking a firm stand, Sunita also addressed the more salacious aspects of the gossip namely, the claims that Govinda was romantically involved with another woman. "He would never leave his family for any stupid person or stupid woman," she said pointedly, dismissing the narrative with disdain. Sunita also criticized the culture of unverified

news and blind speculation. "Why don't people verify facts before spreading such things?" she questioned, highlighting the damage such unfounded claims can cause.

She went on to challenge anyone harboring doubts to confront her directly. "If something serious ever happens, I'll be the first one to talk about it. But don't believe everything you hear," she added.

Her final statement was both emotional and deeply rooted in faith: "Bhagwan mera ghar kabhi nahi todega" — a powerful affirmation of her belief that her family will remain intact, no matter the noise outside.

FUN

ARCHIE







CALVIN AND HOBBES



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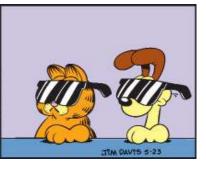




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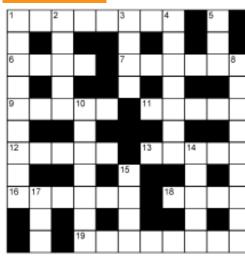








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warning

DOWN

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- 17 A month 16 Hot coals left from a fire
- 18 Meat from a cow 19 Unexpectedly, without

10 Baby cats

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14 Sea



GINGER MEGGS







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Vijayawada

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MONDAY MAY 12, 2025

SPICE MEETS STORYTELLING WITH FORGOTTEN FLAVOURS OF ANDHRA BACK ON TABLE

TEJAL SINHA tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

here's a moment—just before the first morsel touches your lips-when you realise this is not merely a meal. It's an invitation to a land of red soils, handpounded spices, and the rhythmic sounds of stone grinders. At Raen – The Chef's Studio in The Leela Hyderabad, Chef Meera's Echoes of Andhra (running from May 9 to 18) curates not just food, but feeling—a visceral journey through Andhra Pradesh's bold,

blazing, and beautiful culinary map.
From the very first glance, the thali arrives like a well-composed raga—each bowl, a note; each texture, a memory. This

is not a tasting menu; it is an edible chronicle. Kanda Vepudu, the humble elephant yam,

emerges transformed—pan-seared until its edges develop a crisp, caramelised char, its flesh remaining firm and meaty. Coated in dry roasted spices that deliver a gentle burn rather than a fiery hit, it balances heat and restraint, embodying the Andhra art of controlled fire.

Beside it rests a serene counterpoint: Perugu Vada. The urad dal fritter, pillowy and tender, is bathed in tempered curd laced with mustard seeds, curry leaves, and slivers of green chilli. With every mouthful, it soothes the palate—a cooling sigh between the spice-kissed crescendos of the meal.

Then arrive the pachadis, the crown jewels of Andhra homes. The Dosa Avakai, a fiery mango pickle, greets

you with its fermented tang and unapologetic pungency. It's bold, wild, and unrelenting, like a grandmother who doesn't soften her words but leaves a mark vou never forget. Its cousin, the Vellulli Dosakaya Pachadi, made with vel-

low cucumber and raw garlic, is no less commanding. Here, the sharpness of garlic and the watery crunch of cucumber

The vegetables too, are not afterthoughts—they are protagonists in their own right. Vankaya Kothimeera Karam

come together in a flirtatious sting-intense, bracing, and sharply acidic in a way that awakens you from within.

But the softest whisper is also the most poetic: Kobbari Mamidikaya Roti Pachadi, a thick, hand-pounded chutney of grated coconut and raw mango. It tastes like shaded courtyards and monsoon afternoons, its tartness mellowed by the creamy nuttiness of coconut. Every spoonful speaks of quiet rituals—of women gathered in kitchens, grinding memory into flavor on stone.

From soft to sharp, the thali swings like a pendulum of sensation. Enter the Podis—dry, coarse, and deeply aromatic spice powders. The Kandi Podi, made from roasted toor dal, is nutty, smoky, and almost sand-like, begging to be mixed into rice with a dollop of hot ghee. The Palli Podi, its peanut-based sibling, adds an earthy richness with the faintest hint of jaggery, giving it a whisper of sweetness amidst its fiery backbone.

But it is the Oora Mirapakayalu, the sun-dried green chillies fried until blistered and leathery, that gives the thali its dangerous thrill. Just a nibble and your lips tingle, your tongue dances—this is not garnish, this is rebellion in edible form.

And then, there's Appadalu, the Andhra papad. Not just a crunchy side, but a punctuation mark light as air yet assertive. Roasted to perfection, it shatters between vour fingers with a sharp crackle and pairs beau-tifully with rice and ghee, or simply as a crumble atop coconut rice. It's the dish that speaks

when others whisper. Vadiyalu, its sun-dried cousin, adds its own crisp counterpoint—each bite salty, spicy, and addictive.

As the meal builds, the soul of Andhra cuisine reveals itself in its dals. Chinthachiguru Pappu, made with tender tamarind leaves, is as rare as it is soulful. Slightly tangy, deeply vegetal, and lush with ghee, it clings to rice with the intima-

you chase every year and miss when it's gone. Kandi Pappu, on the other hand, is home in a bowl. Tempered with ghee, garlic, green chillies, and mustard seeds, this toor dal dish is elegant in its simplicity—mellow, nurturing, and rem-

cy of comfort and memory. It's a seasonal treasure, the kind

iniscent of weekday lunches and steel tiffin boxes.

brings together slender green brinjals and a paste of freshly ground coriander leaves. Fragrant, vivid, and slightly tangy, it's a green herb symphony anchored by the subtle bitterness of the aubergine. The Bangala Dumpa Ullikaram—potatoes smothered in onion and chilli paste—builds slowly. Its heat doesn't punch; it simmers. Each bite warms your cheeks and makes you reach instinctively for a sip of buttermilk, before you dive back in for more.

And then comes the show-stealer: Dhapalam. A stew of pumpkin, sweet potato, and bottle gourd, it is mellow and comforting, yet layered with spice. The vegetables melt on the tongue, suspended in a thin, slightly sweet broth that binds the plate like memory binds nostalgia.

No Andhra thali is complete without its grains. The puri—an ideal companion for scooping up chutneys and kooras. The Sona Masoori rice, delicate and fluffy, acts as the blank canvas upon which all these flavours dance. But it's the Kobbari Palam Annam, rice infused with coconut milk and mild spices, that turns heads. Its gentle sweetness, paired with toasted cashews and a whiff of cardamom, brings a sense of festivity and indulgence—like a Sunday lunch stretched into the

afternoon. Just as you think it's winding down, the broths arrive: the Pulusus and Charus. Menthi Majjiga, a chilled buttermilk stew tempered with mustard and fenugreek, soothes the fire with its lactic tang

and herbal under-

tone. Inguva Charu,

a thin tamarind broth heady with asafoetida, is the kind of dish you sip with both hands—a spicy, sour elixir that wakes

every nerve in your body.

And then, the final act—the sweets. Sojjapalu, fried pastries stuffed with spiced semolina halwa, arrive golden and glistening. They flake at first bite, giving way to the ghee-soaked warmth within. It's indulgence, wrapped in nostalgia. Alongside is Junnu, a rare custard made from colostrum milk. Its texture is dense yet silken, its flavour a perfect balance of sweetness, spice, and an almost maternal warmth. It's not just dessert—it's a lullaby.

This is what Echoes of Andhra does so well. It doesn't just feed you—it speaks to you, in flavours that are loud, loving, and alive. Under Chef Meera's careful orchestration, every element has a voice. And together, they compose a thali that feels less like a plate and more like a poem.

Come hungry. Leave transformed!

hef Meera, an architect by profession, has spent years nurturing her passion for cooking, particularly focusing on reviving forgotten recipes and rediscovering seasonal ingredients. "While I've always been professionally an architect, cooking has always been my true passion," she shares. Over the years, this passion has evolved into a mission to bring attention to lesser-known aspects of Andhra cuisine, which is often wrongly reduced to "spicy and hot" food. She explains, "What most people don't realize is that Andhra cuisine is incredibly diverse. It's rich in flavors, textures, and history. It goes far beyond just being spicy.

With this pop-up, she aims to showcase this diversity by emphasizing ingredients that are often overlooked, despite their seasonal abundance. "I've developed a deep desire to bring together lost recipes and forgotten ingredients, especially seasonal produce that's readily available but rarely used in everyday cooking. Seasonal produce, like tender tamarind leaves or raw mangoes, are often ignored, and it's these ingredients that I want to highlight. This menu is special because it features some of these forgotten ingredients. For example, we have fresh, tender tamarind leaves, which are only in season for a couple of

weeks, much like raw mangoes. These leaves are incredibly versatile and can be used in dals or even as a tangy base for meat dishes," she says, explaining one of the highlights of the meal. The tamarind leaves make an appearance in a dal preparation, adding a unique depth of flavor.

Another signature ingredient in her menu is gongura, which is synonymous with Andhra cuisine. She explains, "Gongura is a green that is strongly associated with Andhra cuisine, especially in dishes like gongura pickle. It's something many people know about, but it's underutilized in its full

> potential. In today's menu, I've prepared a traditional gongura mamsam, which is a rich meat dish that celebrates this unique green." Her cooking philosophy also includes a commitment to freshness and authenticity. "All the masalas in these dishes are freshly ground in-house, which makes a huge difference in the flavor profile," she reveals. In addition to the thalis, diners are treated to an array of podis, or spice powders, which are a staple in Andhra meals.

> > She feels strongly about how the region's food is often misrepresented in restaurants. "I believe that Andhra cuisine is often oversimplified or misrepresented in most restaurants. Menus are typically templated, offering the same few dishes with limited variety. Vegetables are often just deep-fried, and dals are indistinguishable from each other," she says, expressing her frustration with the lack of depth in how Andhra food is presented outside of home

SERENITY IN THE

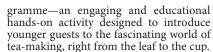
Resplendent Ceylon is proud to announce the launch of its "Private Escape Offer" at Relais & Châteaux Ceylon Tea Trails, inviting families and small groups to indulge in a fully inclusive, private retreat at one of its iconic tea planter bungalows in Sri Lanka's Central Highlands.

Nestled amidst misty mountains, lush emerald tea fields, and serene lake views, Relais & Châteaux Ceylon Tea Trails offers an exceptional escape into the heart of Sri Lanka's storied tea country. This luxurious retreat combines natural beauty, warm hospitality, and rich cultural heritage, delivering a one-of-a-kind experience. Available through December 19th, 2025, the Private Escape Offer allows guests to reserve an entire five-bedroom bungalow at a rate of USD 4,835 per night for up to six guests, including all meals and drinks, the services of a private chef and personal butler, a complimentary tour of the Dunkeld Tea Factory, and a scenic one-way seaplane transfer to the resort for a seamless and breathtaking arrival experience.

For groups larger than six, additional guests are welcome at a rate of USD 303 per adult and USD 120 per child per night, ensuring extended families and friends can enjoy the experience together.

Adding a delightful touch for families, the stay also includes the Junior Tea Planter pro-





Relais & Châteaux Ceylon Tea Trails is the world's first tea bungalow resort, located on the working estates of Sri Lanka's premier tea producer and a UNESCO World Heritage site. It offers guests a rare chance to connect with the island's tea legacy while enjoying Resplendent Ceylon's renowned service and hospitality. "We restored these historic tea planter bungalows to offer guests a blend of old-world charm and modern luxury," said Malik Fernando, Chair of Resplendent Ceylon and son of Merril J. Fernando, founder of Dilmah, Sri Lanka's most iconic tea brand. "Our aim is to provide an authentic and intimate experience that celebrates the beauty and heritage of Sri Lanka's tea country."

Whether celebrating a milestone occasion or seeking a secluded holiday with loved ones, the Resplendent Ceylon team is dedicated to crafting personalised experiences—from curated gourmet dining to bespoke excursions—ensuring each stay is truly memorable.





Revolutionizing IVF success & lowering miscarriage risks

reimplantation Genetic Testing healthy under the micro-(PGT) is a new addition in the scope but contain chromosoarmamentarium of IVF Experts. In a time when IVF is becoming more prevalent, PGT is a groundbreaking advance in protecting generational ing) comes into play. health. Presented in 1990 as a preventive mea- Aneuploid embryos — extra sure over prenatal testing, PGT allows embry- or missing chromosomes onic screening for chromosomal and genetic defects prior to implantation. To families implantation, miscarriage, or with hereditary disease or recurrent pregnan- conditions such as Down cy loss histories, PGT is far from luxury; for syndrome. PGT-A maximizes many, it is a vital lifeline.

GENETIC SHIELDING

The most important use of PGT is in preventing the passing on of severe monogenic disorders — single-gene conditions — to children. Referred to as PGT-M, this technique tests embryos for certain inherited diseases like Marfan syndrome, neurofibromatosis type 1, cystic fibrosis, or sickle cell anemia. In X-linked diseases such as Fragile X syndrome, in which the woman unknowingly carries a gene mutation that can have a severe impact on male offspring, PGT-M prevents couples from playing a genetic lottery. This type of screening is not only improving reproductive agency; it eliminates intergenerational trauma. For families living with chronic illness, the psychic, emotional, and economic cost is unquantifiable. PGT-M offers an ethically acceptable way to decrease disease burden without subjecting oneself to the pain of termination after conception — a decision many couples once had to live with. Transferring genetic diagnosis to preimplantation, PGT honors life without diminishing its quality.

EMBRYO VIABILITY

Dr Sheetal Jindal, Senior consultant and medical director, directorMedical Genetics program, at Jindal Ivf Chandigarh shares, "Although conventional IVF is largely based on visual grading of embryos, appearances may be misleading. Embryos can appear

mal defects that go unseen by the naked eye. This is where PGT-A (aneuploidy screenare a major reason for failed



embryo choice by detecting those with best chromosomal health, raising the possibility of a successful pregnancy and healthy delivery. Especially in recurrent miscarriage, unexplained IVF failure, or advanced age, PGT-A brings certainty in uncertainty."

Though not a certainty, it considerably improves the chances. Likewise, PGT-SR aids couples with one partner having structural rearrangements in chromosomes, for instance, translocations or inversions, eliminating the risk of passing on embryos with duplications or deletions leading to miscarriage or major congenital abnormalities.

ETHICAL EMPOWERMENT

The future of family planning is knowledge, not assumption. PGT equips couples datadriven advice that enables reproductive **decisions consistent with medical reality** • Public education to dispel myths and fosrather than social imperatives. Moving ter informed discourse beyond sensationalism.

beyond reductive narratives of gender preference, the real strength of PGT is its versatility. It provides **HLA** matching for families who require a genetic match for a sick sibling, minimizes recurrent emotional and physical burden of IVF failure, and provides reassurance where

previously only uncertainty prevailed. To achieve its full potential, however, systemic reform is required:

- Greater accessibility of PGT for high-risk groups through insurance coverage and pol-
- Improved genetic counseling to guarantee patients comprehend implications, benefits, and limitations.
- Strong ethical regulation to guard against abuse without impeding patient autonomy.
- Ongoing research and development to increase more accuracy and affordability.

India wins Women's Tri-Nation ODI series

ndia displayed absolute dominance to crush Sri Lanka by 97 runs and earn a well-deserved title triumph in the Women's Tri-Nation ODI series after vice-captain Smriti Mandhana's sublime century and the bowlers' collective effort in the title clash here on Sunday.

After Mandhana rose to the occasion to power India to a commanding 342 for seven, the bowlers completed the task by bundling out Sri Lanka for 245, with Sneh Rana (4/38) and Amanjot Kaur (3/54)

doing the bulk of the damage.
Skipper Chamari Athapaththu (51 off 66 balls) and Nilakshika Ŝilva (48 off 58) were the chief contributors for the hosts.

Earlier, battling cramps in humid conditions, elegant left-hander Mandhana, who had returned to form with a fifty in India's last match against South Africa, struck a majestic 116 off 101 balls to lay the foundation for India's imposing total after skipper Harmanpreet Kaur opted to bat. Her knock was laced with 15 fours and two sixes, including four successive boundaries off Athapaththu to bring up her 11th ODI hundred in style.

After the early dismissal of Pratika Rawal for 30, Mandhana shifted gears Sri Lanka pay for dropping her on 21 as for the second with Harleen Deol.



was involved in two big partnerships - 70 smoothly. The stylish Mandhana made for the first wicket with Pratika and 120

She brought up her 32nd ODI fifty with a stylish sweep behind square.

balls with Harleen (47 off 56; 4x4) for the second wicket to steady the innings The left-hander added 120 runs in 106 before falling while attempting a lofted

cover drive. But her dismissal set the stage for a strong finish as Jemimah Rodrigues, coming off a career-best 123 against South Africa, smashed a quickfire 44 off 29 balls (4x4), while Harmanpreet contributed a brisk 41 off 30 (4x4, 1x6) as India piled on 90 runs in the last 10 overs.

There was a brief phase where India looked to have lost steam in the final overs, but cameos from Deepti Sharma (20 not out off 14) and Amanjot Kaur (18 off 12) helped them surge past 340.

For Sri Lanka, Sugandika Kumari was the pick of their bowlers with 2/59, while Dewmi Vihanga (2/69) and Malki Madara (2/74) also picked two wickets each. Set a formidable target, the home team needed a strong start, but instead, they lost Hasini Perera to Amanjot in only the third ball of the Sri Lankan innings. Attempting to play through mid-off, Perera ended up playing down the wrong line as the ball crashed onto the off-stump. Sri Lanka were one down without a run on the board and an onerous task awaited the duo of captain Athapaththu and Vishmi Gunaratne (36 off 41 balls). They seemed to be succeeding, as Athapaththu and Vishmi put Sri Lanka's chase back on track after the early blow. The pair negated the difficult phase well before opening up to hit boundaries. However, Deepti's intro-

duction put the brakes on Lankan scoring as the senior off-spinner bowled three economical overs on the trot before Amanjot gave India their second breakthrough by bowling Vishmi around her legs after the batter had shuffled a long way across. India could have had another wicket but wicketkeeper Richa Ghosh, standing up to debutant pacer Kranti Goud, could not hold to an edge from Athapaththu when she was on 25.

Kranti then missed a catch off her own bowling after Nilakshi's leading edge off slower delivery.

However, soon after getting to her fifty, Athapaththu was bowled by Rana, who dropped the batter off her own bowling in her previous over.

With the required run rate mounting, the match was as good as over after Nilakshika's dismissal to Rana.

For Sri Lanka, captain Chamari Athapaththu (51) and Nilakshika Silva (48) were the highest run-getters. Both vere dismissed by Rana.

Brief Scores: India 342/7 in 50 overs (Smriti Mandhana 116, Harleen Deol 47, lemimah Rodrigues 44, Harmanpreet Kaur 41; Sugandika Kumari 2/59, Dewmi /ihanga 2/69, Malki Madara 2/74).

Sri Lanka 245 all out in 48.2 overs (Vishmi Gunaratne 36, Chamari Athapaththu 51, Nilakshika Silva 48; Amanjot Kaur 3/54, Sneh Rana 4/38).

IPL to resume on May 16 or 17

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

uspended due to the India-Pakistan military conflict, the Indian Premier League (IPL) is set to resume either on May 16 or 17 with the possibility of the final being moved out of Kolkata. The announcement of ceasefire on Saturday paved the way for resumption of the league that was suspended on May 9 for one week.

The IPL Governing Council members and the BCCI officials discussed the resumption plan on Sunday. BCCI vicepresident Rajeev Shukla said the board is still working on creating a suitable schedule. "As of now there is no decision on IPL. BCCI officials are working out on the solutions. BCCI secretary, IPL Chairman are in talks with franchises and everyone, so very soon we will know about the decision, efforts are being made to resume the tournament early," said Shukla. An IPL source said the league will resume with the match between Lucknow Super Giants and Royal Challengers Bengaluru in Lucknow — the game which was supposed to be played on May 9. "All the teams have been asked to call back their players, the tournament will resume either on May 16 or 17 in Lucknow. The final schedule will be shared tomorrow (Monday)," a source said to media.

'Most likely the matches will be held at four venues and Delhi and Dharamsala won't get to host more matches. All the on their home games.

equipment has already been removed from these venues," added the source.

The source also said that there won't be any change in the venue for Qualifier I and Eliminator that Hyderabad was supposed to host but Kolkata may miss out on hosting the final, most likely on June 1, due to rain forecast on that day in the city. "As of now there is no change in venues for the play-off stage but it seems rain can affect the final in Kolkata. In that case the final could be played in Ahmedabad," said the source. Speaking to media, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia added, "In the next few days, we will begin consultations with the franchises, broadcasters, sponsors and the state associations slated to host the remaining matches before crystallisating to a decision on the league's resumption.

The abandoned game between PBKS and DC

It is possible that the two teams will be awarded a point each. Punjab Kings had raced to 122 for 1 in 10.1 overs when the game in Dharamsala had to be stopped due to heightened tension between India and Pakistan.

The players were ferried in bus to Jalandhar in Punjab from where they travelled to Delhi by train. If only four venues are chosen to host the remaining 16 games then Delhi Capitals, Rajasthan Royals and Mumbai Indians will miss out

Deepika, Salunkhe win bronze at Archery World Cup Stage 2

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Shanghai

ndia's most decorated archer, Deepika Kumari, salvaged her pride with a hard-Learned bronze medal after a semifinal heartbreak, while Parth Salunkhe also finished on the podium for the first time as India wrapped up their campaign at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 with seven medals, here Sunday.

A day after compound archers put up a dominating show with five medals, Deepika and Salunkhe added two more from the recurve section to end India's campaign on a high.

Exactly a year after the 21-year-old reigning Olympic champion Lim Sihyeon had knocked Deepika out at the same stage of the Yecheon World Cup, the Indian was undone again by the Korean in the semifinal, losing 1-7 in a largely one-sided women's recurve individual contest.

The 30-year-old four-time Olympian, though, bounced back strongly to defeat another Korean, Kang Chae Young, 7-3 in the bronze medal playoff and return with a consolation podium finish.

Deepika's win took India's overall medal tally to six at the event, with five coming from the compound section on Saturday that included a remarkable triple-medal haul by comeback archer Madhura

In the bronze medal playoff, Deepika showed greater composure and tactical



clarity than her defeat to Lim in the semis. The opening set ended in a 27-all tie, but Deepika edged ahead with a solid 28 in the second to take a 3-1 lead. Kang, a former world champion who

had beaten Deepika in the Berlin World Cup quarterfinals back in 2017, fought back in the third, scoring a flawless 30 to Deepika's 27 to make it three-all.

The Indian responded with her best shooting under pressure, firing three perfect arrows for 30 in the fourth set to again take a 5-3 lead. Needing just a draw in the final set to secure victory, Deepika delivered once more, shooting 29 to Kang's 28, to bag the bronze. Earlier, Deepika began nervously in the semifi-

nal, losing the first set 26-27 despite hit-

ting two 9s. The second set saw both archers shoot 28, but Lim held steady to force a split and deny Deepika any rhythm. The world No 1 then shifted into top gear, drilling in a perfect 30 in the third set while Deepika managed 28. With momentum fully on her side, Lim wrapped up the match in the fourth with a 29, as Deepika managed a 28.

It was a repeat of their 2023 clash, though Deepika had managed to take two set points back then. In the men's section, 21-year-old Salunkhe, who qualified lowly at 60th place, impressed with his resilience after a 1-7 loss to top seed and Korean legend Kim Woojin in the semifinals. After taking just one point off multiple Olympic medallist and reigning champion Woojin in his semifinal loss, Salunkhe bounced back impressively to beat higher-seeded French archer Baptiste Addis 6-4 in a tense five-settter to earn his maiden World Cup medal.

Salunkhe began in style with a flawless 30, including an X, to take the opening set. He slipped in the second, hitting an 8 that led to a 28-all tie. The third set was a scrappy affair, both archers managing just 25. Addis then raised his level with a perfect 30 to level the match 4-4.

But the young Indian held his nerves in the decider, shooting two 10s, one of them an X, and a 9 to edge out Addis by

Marseille and Monaco seal Champions League spots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Paris

arseille and Monaco sealed spots in next season's Champions League while Ligue 1 champion Paris Saint-Germain beat last-placed Montpellier 4-1 with a Goncalo Ramos hat trick. On the penultimate matchday of the season, Mason Greenwood's 19th league goal in the 85th minute put second-placed Marseille back in the lead at struggling Le Havre. Amine Gouiri scored twice and Marseille won away 3-1.

Lagging one point behind Marseille, Monaco sealed its 18th win — 2-0 over Lyon — with goals from Takumi Minamino and Denis Zakaria and was also guaranteed to finish among the three best teams. The top three qualify for the group stage of the Champions League, and the fourth team grabs a spot in the qualifying rounds.

Gouiri scored Marseille's opener after halftime and the match was stopped soon after because of crowd trouble. Pressing to remain in the top flight next season, Le Havre pushed hard for an equalizer and got it when Issa Soumaré beat goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli from Josue Casimir's assist. Greenwood's superb curled strike from outside the box put the visitors back on track and Gouiri gave more luster to the win in added time on the break.

"At the start of the season, we had trouble playing at the Velodrome, the ball was



hot and we were shaking a bit," Marseille coach Roberto De Zerbi said. "We talked about it. The aim was to stay together, united, without putting football first. We put other things first. We spent some time together. We worked a lot on uniting the team and that showed on the pitch. We saw a family and with that we have a better chance of winning." After getting past Arsenal midweek to reach the Champions League final, PSG coach Luis Enrique rested seven players: Gianluigi Donnarumma, Achraf Hakimi, Marquinhos, Nuno Mendes, Willian Pacho, Fabian Ruiz and Vitinha.

Senny Mayulu, an 18-year-old midfield-

er, was given a start and did not disappoint to put PSG ahead before halftime with a powerful strike. Ramos made it 2-0 off a deflection, and added another goal from

Having won the league with six games to spare, PSG is hoping for its first ever treble. In addition to the Champions League final against Inter Milan on May 31, Enrique's team will have another shot at more silverware against Reims the week before in the French Cup final.

Behind Marseille and Monaco, three teams were level on points; Nice, Lille and Strasbourg, which all lost on Saturday. Seventh-placed Lyon can still aim for the fourth spot but will need to win against Angers hoping that the trio of teams all lose.

"There's a lot of regret, anger and disappointment," Lyon striker Alexandre Lacazette said. "We feel sorry for all the fans who believed in us. We've made mistakes all season, but also tonight."

SAINT-ETIENNE STILL ALIVE

At the bottom of the standings, last-placed Montpellier was already demoted. There was still a glimmer of hope for Saint-Etienne, which won at Reims 2-0. Saint-Etienne remained in the relegation zone but just one point behind 16th-placed Le Havre, which was in the relegation play-

Pranavi finishes tied 40th, Diksha tied 52nd in Aramco Korea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Seoul

ndia's Pranavi Urs faced problems on the front nine for the second straight ▲ day as she carded 2-over 74 to finish tied 40th in the Aramco Korea Championship here on Sunday.

Her compatriot Diksha Dagar had an up-and-down round for a 3-over 75 and a tied 52nd place on the leaderboard. As Pranavi totalled 5-over 221, Diksha aggregated 6-over 222.

Home favourite Hyo Joo Kim produced a steady final round to defend her title and land a second victory of the year. Heading into the final day one shot clear at New Korea Country Korea, the South Korean carded a 69 (-3) to withstand Chiara Tamburlini's (68) valiant chase and win by two shots on seven-under par. Kim totalled 7-under 209 and Tamburlini was 5-undder 211 to be second.

Pranavi had three bogeys on the front — the same as the second day — when she played the stretch as her second nine. On the back nine on the final day, she had

two birdies against one bogey for a 74. Diksha had three bogeys and just one birdie on the front and then landed an eagle on the Par-5 13th, but dropped shots on 11th, 15th and the 18th for her 75.

The victory marks Kim's 25th career

win, third on the Ladies European Tour (LET), and second of 2025 after she won the Ford Championship on the LPGA. A year ago Kim won Aramco Team Series — Korea by three shots. Two groups ahead, LET Order of Merit winner Tamburlini started to pile on the pressure. The Swiss star rebounded from a bogey at the par-4 first to card five birdies at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 7th and 9th to take the outright lead on five-

Diksha had three bogeys and just one birdie on the front and then landed an eagle on the Par-5 13th, but dropped shots on 11th, 15th and the 18th for her 75

In solo third on four-under par was South Korean amateur Seojin Park. A member of the country's national team, Park fired the round of the week 65 (-7) to shoot up the leaderboard on the final day. Four players finished fourth on three-under par, including France's Perrine Delacour, South Africa's Lee-Anne Pace, Norway's Dorthea Forbrigd and Austria's Emma Spitz.

Sorloth scores four goals, fastest La Liga hat trick as Atletico blasts Real Sociedad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Barcelona

tletico Madrid striker Alexander Sorloth scored four goals in the first Half hour and set a record for the fastest hat trick in La Liga history to fuel a 4-0 rout of Real Sociedad.

The Norway striker had a hat trick from scoring in the seventh, 10th and 11th minutes to the delight of the fans at Metropolitan Stadium in Madrid.

His treble was the fastest ever in La Liga, according to Opta Statistics, which said the previous best was in 1941 of three goals in the first 15 minutes by Edmundo Suárez de Trabanco. "I just had one of those days the ball just seemed to drop at my feet," Sorloth said. "Everything went in and they were good balls from my teammates."

Looking back on his first season with Diego Simeone's club, Sorloth said he was



satisfied that he was getting more starts after mostly being a substitute for Julián

to look, just cross it." lvarez earlier. Sorloth got going when he volleyed in a cross from Pablo Barrios. He made it two

in the box," he said. "They don't even have

with an angled shot just inside the far post, and Sociedad was left groggy when Jon Martín's clearance hit teammate Aritz Elustondo and fell for Sorloth to smash

home. Sorloth waited until the half-hour mark before he used one touch to control a pass by Samuel Lino before beating goalkeeper Alex Remiro to make it four goals. He went close to a fifth goal in the second half when he fired a volley off the woodwork. Sorloth, who played for Sociedad from 2021-23, also scored four goals while playing for Villarreal last season in a 4-4 draw with Real Madrid.

"It's a relief to have days like this," he said. "I had one last year with Villarreal. You just feel so good inside when everything goes in." Sorloth joined Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi and Luis Suárez as the only players to have more than one game of four goals in the Spanish league this century.

Atletico looks like certain to finish in third place. Sociedad was in 12th place and struggling to finish in positions for at least a Conference League bid in the final season of coach Imanol Alguacil.

"This is a day to take complete responsibility, say it is not the players' fault and feel proud of what we have done for the past six and a half years together," Alguacil

OTHER RESULTS

Fifth-placed Villarreal got an 89th-minute goal from substitute Etta Eyong to beat Girona 1-0 and open a four-point gap over Real Betis in their battle for the final Champions League spot.

Celta Vigo scored twice after losing Marcos Alonso to a direct red card and beat Sevilla 3-2 to remain in seventh.

Valencia scored thrice in the first half to ease past Getafe 3-0 as it continues to recover its form as the season reaches its end. It had been in last place and was now



Sumanth clears the air about marriage rumours with Mrunal

A ctor Sumanth's upcoming film Anaganaga is set to premiere directly on OTT soon. Ahead of its release, rumours were circulating online about his alleged marriage to actress Mrunal Thakur, sparked by a picture of them making rounds on social media.

Mrunal Thakur chose not to respond, knowing the buzz was baseless. Meanwhile, during the promotions for Anaganaga, Sumanth addressed the rumours head-on.

"The news is completely wrong. I am not getting married. The picture was taken during Sita Ramam and the rumours are false," said Sumanth in an interview with media channels. Sumanth played a pivotal role in Sita Ramam, which starred Dulquer Salmaan and Mrunal Thakur in lead roles.

Sumanth was previously married to actress Keerthy Reddy, but the couple later divorced. Since then, he has expressed his disinterest in remarrying, preferring to remain single. He added that such baseless rumours are not only false but also

quite embarrassing.

On the other hand, Mrunal Thakur is currently starring opposite Adivi Sesh in the Telugu film Dacoit. In addition, she is busy with three to four Hindi films and seems unbothered by such gossip, choosing to ignore it entirely.

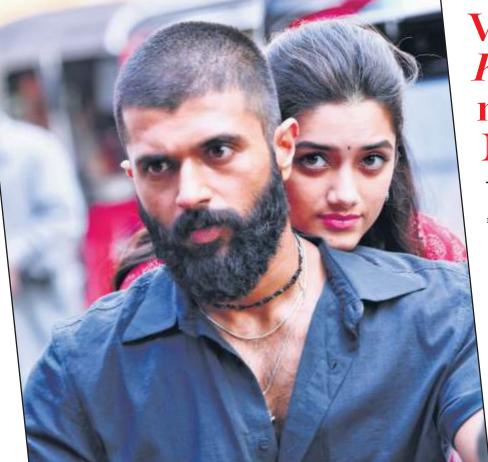


SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

nother young actor from the Ghattamaneni Krishna family is all set to make his film debut soon. Yesteryear superstar Krishna's grandson and Mahesh Babu's nephew, Jayakrishna, is preparing to enter the film industry, with an official announcement expected on Krishna's birthday, May 31. A source confirmed that director Ajay Bhupathi of RX 100 fame will helm this prestigious project. Ashwini Dutt and Gemini Kiran are jointly producing the film, ensuring a grand launch for the young actor. Jayakrishna is the son of Mahesh Babu's brother, Ramesh Babu,

who passed away in January 2022. Jayakrishna has completed an acting course in New York and is ready to make his debut. Krishna's younger brother, Adiseshagiri Rao, is overseeing Jayakrishna's debut film, the source added. "For the past few years, many scripts were considered, but they finally settled on Ajay Bhupathi's story and locked him in as the director. This is a prestigious project, with two big producers introducing Jayakrishna, and every detail has been taken care of," said the source. Interestingly, Ashwini Dutt has introduced several major stars to the industry, including Mahesh Babu, Ram Charan, and Allu Arjun. Now, he is introducing another star kid from





a legendary legacy—Jayakrishna.

VD's Kingdom may miss May release

ijay Deverakonda and Bhagyashri Borse play the lead roles in Kingdom, which was officially scheduled for release on May 30. Directed by Gowtam Tinnanuri, the film is a prestigious project for Vijay and is produced by Sithara Entertainments.

However, according to a source, the makers are now considering postponing the release to July. "Due to current circumstances and some remaining technical work, they don't want to rush the release," said the source. Although there's no official announcement yet, insiders reveal

that the film may not arrive on May 30. Vijay Deverakonda, who is seeking a major comeback, has invested significant effort in Kingdom and is pinning high hopes on its success. Recently, a song from the film was released and quickly climbed music charts, raising curiosity and expectations. Vijay also underwent a complete makeover for his role.

AP Home Minister launches emotional tribute song Amma



n the occasion of Mother's Day, Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha released the emotional track Amma from the upcoming movie Friday. The film stars Diya Raj, Inaya Sultana, Rihana, Vikas Vasishta, and Rohith Boddapati in lead roles. It is produced by Kesanakurthi Srinivas and direct-

ed by Eswar Babu Dhulipudi.

The film has completed shooting and is currently in post-production. Its earlier posters generated significant buzz, raising expectations around the release. The newly released song Amma, a tribute to mothers, was launched by Home Minister Anitha on Sunday. After watching the song, she praised the film's team for beautifully captur-ing the essence of maternal love and extended her best wishes to the cast and crew. The song is soulfully sung by Snigdha Nayani, with lyrics penned by Madhu Kiran M and music composed by Prajwal Krish.

Talking about the film, director Eswar Babu said it explores how a mother's emotional world affects her unborn

child—highlighting the essence of pregnancy and motherhood. "On this Mother's Day, let's remember two legendary women: Maharani Jija Bai, mother of Shivaji, and Jaivanta Bai, mother of Maharana Pratap. They raised their sons to uphold Dharma and protect their land," he added.

RAJ TARUN VENTURES INTO TAMIL CINEMA

ctor Raj Tarun, who has been struggling to find success in Telugu cinema, is now set to make his Tamil debut. The film will also be released in Telugu. On the occasion of his birthday, the team announced his new project. The film will be directed by renowned cinematographer and filmmaker Vijay Milton. Known in Tamil cinema, Milton has worked as a cinematographer on over 43 major films featuring top stars like Vijay and Ajith. He has also directed critically acclaimed films such as Goli Soda, Bairagi, and Kadugu.

This upcoming project is part of the Goli Soda franchise and is expected to be a high-energy, action-packed entertainer.

According to the makers, Raj Tarun will appear in a completely fresh and surprising avatar, playing a role unlike any he has done before. Further announcements regarding the film's title, cast, and release schedule are expected

soon.

Premisthunna promises Vishwak Sen Returns to Direction with CULT

irector Bhanu is bringing a fresh new love story to the screen with Premisthunna, starring Satvik Varma and Preeti Neha in lead roles. The film is produced by

Kanakadurga Rao Pappula. "Every love story has love, but this one has limitless love—as vast as the sky," say the makers. With a unique concept never explored in previous love stories, Premisthunna is crafted to stand out. The film is packed with elements that the young generation will want to watch repeatedly.

Siddharth Saluri, a descendant of legendary music composer Saluri Rajeswara Rao, has scored five songs for the film, making it a musical love story. Bhaskar Shyamala handled cinematography, while Anil Kumar Achugatla wrote the dialogues. Two well-known actors are playing key roles, with their names to be revealed soon.

ctor Vishwak Sen is seeking a comeback after his recent films Afailed to make a mark. His last film Laila, where he portrayed a woman, received heavy criticism. Known for his directorial ventures Falaknuma Das and Das Ka Damki, Vishwak has now returned to directing.

On Sunday, his new film was officially launched, marking his third directorial project, titled CULT. The launch event saw the presence of several Tollywood celebrities. The film is produced by Karate Raju and Sandeep Kakarala. Vishwak Sen is not

only directing the film but also writing the story himself, making it a deeply personal and creatively rich endeavor. CULT is touted to be a new-age

> party thriller

inspired by real events and promises a firstof-its-kind cinematic experience.

The actor-director is also introducing 40 newcomers through this movie. Acclaimed

dialogues, and renowned composer Ravi Basrur of KGF and Kantara fame is scoring the music. The film will be released in Telugu, Hindi, Japanese, Spanish, and



