\*LATE CITY VOL. 7 ISSUE 230 I \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

**BHOPAL** 

NDA govt redefined women-led development in 11 years:

**HYDERABAD** 

**DELHI** 

LUCKNOW

PROTECT FARMERS' INTEREST IN US TRADE TALKS'

**BHUBANESWAR** 

**RANCHI** 

Aadi Saikumar's Shambhala teaser unleashes a mystical STORM

**DEHRADUN** 

**CHANDIGARH** 

**VIJAYWADA** 

QUOTE OF THE DAY The Pioneer Criticism should be based on values and must be sharp. It should not be derogatory. I am appealing to the public not to entertain leaders who use abusive language and to teach them a lesson with your votes. Leaders who work with dedication are decreasing by the day in politics **P2** 

**BRS MLA Maganti** 

Gopinath dies at 63,

leaders condole

- M. Venkaiah Naidu, former Vice-President of India

**PUBLISHED FROM:** 

#### Nizam era building: The Pride Of Warangal

The Subedar Collector Bungalow in Warangal, constructed in 1886 during the Nizam rule era, is undergoing a significant transformation into a Heritage Bhavan. With an allocation of Rs 2 crore for minor repairs, work commenced in February and is now complete. The government has made the commendable decision to preserve this remarkable building as a heritage property, recognising its excellent condition even after 139 years. Set across 13 acres, this expansive estate features vast halls and a building comprising ..

### 'NDA will come to power TN, WB'

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday asserted that the NDA would form governments in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. Addressing party office bearers, he hailed Madurai as a city of 'Parivartan' and said his party's Karyakarta Sammelan (workers meet) would lead to change as well, of dislodging DMK from power. In the 2026 Assembly election, BJP-AIADMK will form NDA government in Tamil Nadu and people will defeat DMK in 2026 polls and the DMK is 100 per

#### BoB, HDFC Bank reduce lending rate

State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Sunday said it has cut its benchmark lending rate linked to repo rate by 50 basis points in line with the RBI's rate reduction. Meanwhile, private sector HDFC Bank reduced its Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rates (MCLR) by 10 basis points across tenure, which will benefit borrowers whose loans are linked to this benchmark. Pursuant to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reducing the policy repo rate, the bank has slashed its Repo Linked Lending Rate...

-PAGE: 8

#### Diksha stays within top Ten

Indian golfer Diksha Dagar carded an even par 72 to hold her position within the top 10 after the third round of the Tenerife Women's Open at Abama Golf here. Diksha was five-under for three days and is placed sole 9th in the standings. She is three shots behind the leader Sara Kouskova (69) at eighth-under. The other Indian to make the cut in Tenerife. Avani Prashanth played an even par third round and is now placed at 43rd on the leaderboard. Sara Kouskova surged ahead of the field on the third day with a round ...



# **Expansion reflects social justice**

#### Three Congress MLAs sworn-in as T'gana ministers

PNS HYDERABAD

Ruling Congress MLAs G Vivek Venkata Swamy, Adluri Laxman Kumar, and Vakiti Srihari were sworn in as ministers in the Telangana government on Sunday, marking the first cabinet expansion under Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy.

Governor Jishnu Dev Varma administered the oath of office and secrecy at a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, his cabinet colleagues, MLAs, and other leaders were present on the occasion.

The induction of the three new ministers marks the end of weeks of speculation over the expansion of the council of ministers headed by Revanth Reddy. The appointment of the three new ministers and the deputy speaker reflected the focus of the ruling Congress on social justice. It follows recent discussions

between CM Revanth Reddy, state Congress president B Mahesh Kumar Goud, and the AICC leadership in Delhi regarding cabinet appointments and party posts.

The full strength of the Telangana cabinet, including the Chief Minister, is 18.

With the induction of the three new ministers, the number of min• The full strength of the Telangana cabinet, including the Chief Minister, is 18

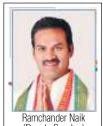
With the induction of the three new ministers, the number of ministers rose to 15



Adluri Laxman Kumar Vakiti Srihari



G Vivek Venkata Swamy



three new ministers on Sunday, there are now three vacancies in the cabinet. The appointment of state Congress office bearers, includ-

Following the induction of the

isters rose to 15.

ing the working president and others, has been pending since Goud took over as Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president in September 2024.

In a post on X, Reddy also congratulated party legislator Ramchander Naik on becoming the Continued on Page 2

#### Assembly polls, was admitted to the AIG Hospitals on June 5 after a massive heart attack. He was declared dead at 5.45 am

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

Opposition BRS MLA from Jubilee

Hills Maganti Gopinath passed away early on Sunday at a private hospital here following a heart

attack. He was 63.
Gopinath, who defeated Congress

leader and former cricketer Mohd Azharuddin in the 2023 Telangana

mer TDP leader, Gopinath served as the party's Hyderabad unit president and was elected from Jubilee

Hills on a TDP ticket in 2014. He joined the ruling BRS (then TRS) in 2016 when several other TDP legislators also joined the K

Chandrasekhar Rao-led party. He was re-elected to the Assembly on a BRS ticket in 2018 and again in 2023. Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Union Minister and state BJP president G Kishan Reddy, BRS president KCR, TDP leader and



## Cong launches pacification move

The Congress state leadership has launched an exercise to appease MLAs, who are disappointed at not getting a

that took place on Sunday. MLAs Adluri Laxman, Vakiti Srihari and Vivek got berths in the Cabinet, and they took oath on Sunday at the Raj



Ibrahimpatnam MLA Malreddy Ranga Reddy at his residence on Sunday

Bhavan. However, MLAs P. Sudharshan Reddy, K. Premsagar Rao, Malreddy Ranga Reddy and Komatireddy Raj Gopal Reddy didn't get berths and they are deeply disappointed.

The AICC's TG in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, and TPCC chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud entered the scene to pacify them. They spoke to Malreddy Ranga Reddy and made him cancel his press conference scheduled at Sunday 5 pm. Later, Mahesh Kumar Goud and Minister Ponnam Prabhakar went to Malreddy Ranga Reddy's residence and explained the situation

CM Revanth Reddy addressing the Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya's autobiography book release function at Shilpakala Vedika on Sunday

#### My school education was in the BJP, college in TDP, now doing a job with Rahul: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that he recently told Prime Minister Narendra Modi that his school education was in the BJP, college education in the TDP, and now doing a job with Rahul Gandhi.

The CM said he has good relations with both the Dattareya and Kishan Reddy families. "There is no need to talk specifically about my ties with Kishan Reddy. However, I used to contact Kishan Reddy now and then. I will pur-

sue the development of the state along with Kishan Reddy," the CM

Addressing Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya's autobiography 'Prajala Kathe naa Athma Katha' book release function at the Shilpakala Vedika on Sunday, the CM said that he will not hide his

He said that he had come to the book release function immediately after the Cabinet expansion programme due to his ties with Dattatreya. Dattatreya is a person who has no Continued on Page 2

## Dattatreya reflects gentlemanliness: Chandrababu

PNS HYDERABAD

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said that Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya is a replica of the word 'Gentleman.

Attending in Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya's autobiography 'Prajala Kathe Naa Atma Katha' rélease function at the Shilpa Kala Vedika on Sunday, Chandrababu remembered that he was affectionately called

Declaring that he still remembers it is not easy for a commoner to

Fish prasadam

distribution begins

at Nampally

exhibition grounds



AP CM Chandrababu Naidu particiates Haryana governor Bandaru Dattatreya's autobiography book release function at Shilpa Kala Vedika on Sunday

the old days 40 years ago, he said that come up in national politics.

Chandrababu said that Dattatreya took part in many public movements and faced several problems. However, Dattatreya has no enemies and his political life is a role model

means Hinduism and added that

Dattatreya comes to mind whenev-

er he savs Alai Balai. He also praised

Dattatreya for his interest in people

and his secular credentials.

for others, he added. He said that Dattatreya used to Chief Ministers on public issues and also strived for the development of

write letters to governments and He said that Dattatreya's name Hyderabad.

## No need to protect KCR, Cong trying to mislead public: Eatala

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Malkajgiri MP, Eatala Rajender, made it clear that he has no need to protect former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao. Congress Ministers are wilfully issuing statements to mislead the public, Eatala said.

He said that he didn't go to the Cabinet Subcommittee. The Cabinet Kaleshwaram Project without the projects in the Kaleshwaram Project,



Kaleshwaram Commission to make Subcommittee recommended the a political statement. There is no redesigning of several irrigation

he said, making it clear that he will reveal all GOs and Subcommittee decisions soon.

Addressing the media on Sunday, Eatala said that nothing is done by the government without discussing the matter in the Cabinet and taking a decision based on that.

How can Tummala Nageshwara Rao say that the Cabinet did not discuss the Kaleshwaram Project? KCR did not implement any decision on his own. KCR Continued on Page 2

### **CASH DISCOVERY ROW**

## Resignation only option before Justice Varma to avoid removal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Resignation is the only option before Justice Yashwant Varma to avoid impeachment by Parliament as the government pushes for bringing a motion to remove the Allahabad High Court judge over alleged corruption.

Officials aware of the procedure to appoint and remove Supreme Court and high court judges pointed out that while defending his case before lawmakers in any of the House, Justice Varma can announce that he is quitting and his verbal statement will be considered as his resignation.

Should he decide to resign, he will get pension and other benefits entitled to a retired HC judge.



But if he is removed by Parliament, he will be deprived of pension and other benefits, they noted. According to Article 217 of the Constitution, a high court judge "may, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign his office"

But if he is removed by Parliament, he will be deprived of pension and other benefits, they

According to Article 217 of the Constitution, a high court judge "may, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign his office." A judge's resignation does not other way a judge can vacate office.

require any approval. A simple resignation letter is sufficient.

A judge may give a prospective date to step down. In such cases, the judge can withdraw the resignation before the date he or she has mentioned as the last day in office.

Then Chief Justice of India Sanjiy Khanna had written to the president and the prime minister to remove Justice Varma, mired in the cash discovery row. Justice Khanna's report was based on the findings of a threejudge in house panel which investi-Removal by Parliament is the gated the case

Varma to resign but he had refused, a "distinguished jurist". sources had earlier said. A motion could be brought in

either of the two Houses of Parliament. In the Rajya Sabha, at least 50 members have to sign the motion. In Lok sabha, 100 members have to support it.

According to the Judges (Inquiry) Act of 1968, once a motion to remove a judge is admitted in any of the Houses, the speaker or the chairman, as the case may be, will constitute a three-member committee to investigate the grounds on which the removal (or, in popular term, impeachment) has been sought.

The committee consists of the chief justice of India (CJI) or a Supreme Court judge, the chief jus-Justice Khanna had prodded tice of one of the 25 high courts and

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju had last week said the present case is "slightly different" as an in-house committee formed by then CJI Khanna has already submitted its report. "So what is to be done in this matter, we will take a call," he said. The minister said the process has to be followed, but how to "integrate the inquiry already conducted" needs to be decided.

'As per the rule, a committee has to be constituted and then the committee has to submit a report and the report will be tabled in the House and discussions will start to impeach. Here, a committee has already been constituted, not by Parliament. But it cannot be brushed aside" as it was constituted by the CJI, he said.

#### Phone tapping suspect Prabhakar to appear before SIT today

PNS HYDERABAD

Prabhakar Rao, one of the main accused in the phone tapping case, arrived at the

RGI Airport on Sunday. He is scheduled to appear before the Special Investigation

Team (SIT) for questioning at the Jubilee Hills Police Station, where most of the accused were

questioned earlier. Sources indicate that Prabhakar's

appearance before the SIT may bring out vital details, as investigators continue to unravel the extent of the illegal surveillance operation.

# Monday Mirchi

#### IPS CHARU SINHA ARRIVED WITH DREADLOCKS AND SWAGGER

IPS officer Charu Sinha is back in Telangana—this time as CID chief—and she's making heads turn. Not just for her rocksolid record in tackling Naxals and terrorists, but for her look: dreadlocks. From leading CRPF in Srinagar during peak unrest to now heading Women Safety and Bharosa too, she's done it all. But it's the quiet confidence and that unmistakable swag that has everyone talking. "She didn't return, she arrived", as per young officers. Lady Singham, now with locks to match her legacy. She is No-nonsense on duty, but off duty? Total vibe. No one's seen a top cop walk in with this kind of presence in a long time—and it's clearly shaking things up. In a world of crisp buns and polished boots, Charu Sinha just reminded everyone that power isn't always in the protocol. Sometimes, it walks in wrapped in grit, grace, and a whole lot of dreadlocked dignity.

#### NIZAMABAD CP'S SHIVA TANDAVAM MOMENT WINS THE INTERNET

It was a brief moment, but it struck a powerful chord. During the Telangana Formation Day celebrations, Nizamabad Commissioner of Police K R Nagaraju was spotted humming along as the Shiva Tandava Stotram echoed through the venue—and the internet took note. Netizens were quick to appreciate the top cop's unfiltered connect & others lauded him for not shying away from singing along in uniform.

For the uninitiated, the powerful stotram was played right before the briefing of Operation Sindoor, by Armed forces officers, setting a tone of intensity and purpose. That video alone had already broken the internet—Nagaraju's spontaneous moment only added more spark.

#### **ILAMBARITHI ESCAPES** THE MONSOON MAYHEM

Talk about perfect timing—Ilambarithi has walked out of GHMC just before the rains roll in, and insiders are calling it the luckiest bureaucratic escape of the season. When he took charge, the monsoon had already wrapped up. And now, just as the clouds are gathering again, he moved out clearly a happy man with a clean exit. For newbies, GHMC Commissioner's job knows monsoon is the toughest stretch: waterlog-ging, traffic chaos, open drains, seasonal illnesses, citizen outrage-the works. New commissioner has to face the music-flood

Washington, Jun 8 (PTI)

The all-party Parliamentary

delegation wrapped up its visit to the US after meeting with US Vice President J D Vance

and Deputy Secretary of State

Christopher Landau among

political and diplomatic lead-

ership to drive home India's

rorism emanating from

The delegation, led by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor,

was on the last leg of a multi-

nation tour to brief key inter-

locutors about Operation

Sindoor that India launched in

retaliation of the April 22

Pahalgam terror attack that

The delegation was one of

the seven multi-party delega-

tions India had tasked to visit

33 global capitals to reach out

to the international communi-

ty to emphasise Pakistan's links

The delegation arrived in

the US capital on June 3 and

over the course of three days

held a wide array of meetings

on Capitol Hill as well as in

claimed 26 lives.

to terrorism.

Pakistan

complaints, dengue buzz, and angry WhatsApp groups. Yours truly wishes him luck just like officers in corridors of power have been doing it. He'll need it.

#### BUREAUCRATIC STORM BREWING, NIZAMABAD MAY SEE EXIT

Another round of transfers is loading in Telangana—this time, it's the districts that are under the scanner. A major reshuffle is expected any moment now, with most collectors likely to be moved. But it's Nizamabad that's buzzing the most. Whispers in Secretariat corridors say the change here is almost sealed—not for administrative lapses, but because of the growing chatter about family members of the collector get-ting too involved in official matters. That's never a good look, and it seems the top brass isn't amused. Across districts, performance, political equations, and even a few image issues are shaping the list. The exercise is also expected to realign postings based on recent performance and internal feedback from ministers and MLAs. A few surprise names may enter the mix, especially young officers who've been waiting in the wings for key district roles. It's going to be a game of chairs—and from the looks of it, the music has already started.

#### RETIRED IPS ABV SLAMS AP POLICE OVER PUBLIC HUMILIATION

Retired IPS officer A B Venkateswara Rao has come down heavily on the Andhra Pradesh police for what he called "cruel and excessive" treatment of three accused individuals, who were allegedly beaten and paraded on public roads. Though full details of the case are still murky, the visuals reportedly showing the accused being thrashed and photographed in the open sparked outrage. Rao didn't mince words. He said such public humiliation was a direct violation of the accused's dignity and due process. "This undermines the very foundation of legal safeguards," he remarked. Known for his sharp takes on policing standards, ABV cautioned that such street justice tactics could deeply damage public trust in law enforcement. His words echoed the growing discomfort among civil society and former officers about how policing is evolving under the current regime. His comments have now added weight to the calls for accountability—and reminded the system that even those under arrest deserve constitutional protection, not spectacle.

--Yours truly

## **Today is an unforgettable day** for me, says Adluri Laxman

I will work as per the CM's directions: Vivek

PNS HYDERABAD

Dharmapuri MLA Adluri Laxman said that today (Sunday) was an unforgettable

day for him.
"I was shocked when Chief Minister Revanth Reddy phoned me on Saturday night and asked me to get ready for the oath-taking ceremony. The CM told me to come to the Raj Bhavan at 11 am on Sunday, he said.

Addressing the media after taking oath as a Minister on Sunday at the Raj Bhavan, Laxman said that as an ordinary Congress worker, he thinks that getting a place in the Cabinet is a fortunate thing. All sections would get opportunities under the leadership of Revanth Reddy, he

He said that he is extending special thanks to the Congress high command and the CM on behalf of the Madiga commu-



Minister.

Chennur MLA G. Vivek said he will work as per the directions of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and that the high command knew about how he had worked for the Telangana Movement and after that.

Responding after taking oath as a Minister, Vivek said that he has now got a chance

to serve the public as a

He said they used to organise charity programmes through their charity agency as per his father's directions, even when they were in business.

"My father had a good image as he used to organise several social service programmes,

## Telangana now in the race for FDI investment: Eatala

PNS HYDERABAD

Maharashtra and Karnataka emerged as the top magnets for foreign investment in India, together accounting for more than half of the country's FDI. However, Telangana stood in the 7th place with a booty of USD 3 billion.

Overall, India's total FDI, comprising equity inflows, reinvested earnings, and other capital, rose by 14% to \$81.04 billion in 2024–25, marking the highest inflow in the past three years.

In the previous fiscal, the country received USD 71.3 billion. As per the latest figures released by the DPIIT, the two states attracted 51% of the country's overall foreign direct investment during the 2024–25 financial year.

Maharashtra led the chart, attracting FDI worth USD 19.6 billion, 31% of the national total between April 2024 and

Karnataka followed with overseas investments amounting to USD 6.62 billion. Other key recipients included Delhi (\$6 billion), Gujarat (\$5.71 billion), Tamil Nadu (\$3.68 billion), Haryana (\$3.14 billion), and Telangana (\$3 billion).

Experts said the surge in investment in Maharashtra and Karnataka was largely driven by improvements in infrastructure, which have made both states investor-

## If new people are given party posts, workers will suffer: Malreddy

PNS HYDERABAD

Congress's m MLA, Ibrahimpatnam Malreddy Ranga Reddy, said that they were the one who saved the Congress after fighting the BRS for 10 years and that if new entrants are given workers will suffer. The party is facing an embarrassing situation, he added.

It is known that Malreddy

was disappointed as he was hoping for a Minister post and was later pacified by Congress

Later, Malreddy spoke to the media and said that he would stay within the party line and demanded that Minister posts should be given to all 10 erst-

"The high command has not listened to us. If new people are given posts in the party, workers will suffer.

The party is facing an embarrassing situation. They are giving two or three Minister posts to the given districts. Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts used to have six Ministers in the past. The TPCC chief should give us an opportunity to air command. If my community blocks us, we will sacrifice our posts for the party,"

Ranga Reddy said.

## 9-year-old girl's body found in suitcase in Delhi

A nine-year-old girl was allegedly raped, killed and her body stuffed in a suitcase at a neighbour's house in northeast Delhi's Dayalpur area, triggering protests by her family members and locals.

The girl's body was found on Saturday evening. Police and paramilitary personnel were deployed in the area on Sunday to maintain law and order.

Police said the perpetrator of the heinous crime seems to have fled after stuffing the body in the suitcase. Senior police officers said all angles are being probed, including sexual assault.

"We are awaiting the autopsy report to confirm the cause of death. Teams have been formed to nab the absconding accused. We are taking this matter with utmost seriousness," a police officer said.

Vihar, had gone to give ice to a relative living nearby around 7 pm on Saturday, her family members said.

When she did not return home for a long time, her parents began searching for her. According to the victim's father, they approached several relatives and neighbours, but no one had seen her after her brief visit to the relative's house.

### Party ensured caste balance in Cabinet: Mahesh

PNS HYDERABAD

TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, MLC, said that the Congress ensured caste balance while expanding the Cabinet. He said two ministries were given to the SCs and one to the BC category.

He said the allocation was

done on the basis of the caste survey and SC classification demands. Three more Cabinet berths have not been filled so far, Mahesh said.

Addressing the media after meeting Ibrahimpatnam MLA Malreddy Ranga Reddy at his residence on Sunday, Mahesh said that they had met senior leader Maĺlreddy Ranga Reddy and understood his concern regarding ministerial expectations.

The matter has been communicated to AICC incharge Meenakshi Natarajan and the CM, he said, assuring that Ranga Reddy district will be given due priority in coming days.

#### Strong castes given place in the Cabinet, says MLA Samuel

Thungathurthy MLA Mandula Samuel said that strong castes have been given a place in the Cabinet.

Addressing the media after attending the swearing-in of the Cabinet at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday, he said that the social engineering was done to strengthen the Congress.

He said that they (Madigas) got a place in the Cabinet, and expressed happiness over the Congress leadership giving a chance to just three people to join the Cabinet, including two SCs, Vivek Venkataswamy, Adluri Laxman, and Vakiti Srihari from the BC rank and

He said that ministerial posts were allocated to strengthen the Congress socially. He thanked AICC leader Mallikarjuna Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, KC Venugopal, Telangana in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, the CM and PCC chief Mahesh Kumar

#### **Politicians changing parties** like diapers: Venkaiah

PNS HYDERABAD

Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu said that some politicians are changing political parties like the diapers of children.

"Criticism should be based on values and must be sharp. It should not be derogatory. I am appealing to the public not to entertain leaders who use abusive language and to teach them a lesson with your votes. Leaders who work with dedication are decreasing by the day in politics," he said.

Governor Dattatreya's autobiography book 'Prajala Kathe Naa Atma Katha' release function held at the Shilpa Kala Vedika on Sunday, Venkaiah advised politicians to consider Dattatreya as their role model in politics and to practice value-based politics.

He said that there is no need to reveal Dattatreya's background to people, as his past s like an open book. Dattatreya has earned the image of a spotless leader. He remained in the BJP regardless Participating in Haryana of posts, Venkaiah said.

#### Pained by stampede, have no connection with cricket stadium: Siddaramaiah

PNS MYSURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said that the stampede that killed 11 people outside the stadium Chinnaswamy he "didn't have any connection with the cricket stadium".

The CM also said, he was pained by the incident. "This incident shouldn't

have happened, it happened at the Cricket stadium. I don't have any connection with the stadium," cricket Siddaramaiah told reports here. The stampede occurred on June 4 evening in front of

the Chinnaswamy stadium here, where a large number of people thronged to participate in the RCB team's IPL victory celebrations. Opposition is demanding the resignation of chief minister and deputy chief minister in this issue.

He said, "It was an unfortunate incident, it shouldn't have happened. Such an incident

never happened after I became the CM. Prima facie it seems to have happened because of the officials fault, so we have taken action. Everyone is in

pain, including me.' Siddaramaiah said he itation event in front of Vidhana Soudha on the invitation by Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) Secretary and Treasurer.

Asked about the allegation that the then Bengaluru Police commissioner B Dayananda was made scapegoat, he said, the Commissioner alone has not been suspended, five officers have been suspended, and the intelligence chief has been changed.

"My political secretary K Govindaraj has been removed. We have taken a series of actions, not the police commissioner alone," he added.

On the issue of transfering Hindutva activist Suhas Shetty's murder case to NIA he

#### TODAY **ALMANAC** Month & Paksham Sukla Paksha Jun 08 07:18 AM Trayodashi to Jun 09 09:36 AM Chaturdashi Jun 09 09:36 AM to Jun 10 11:35 AM Nakshatram: Jun 08 12:42 PM to Jun 09 03:31 PM Jun 09 03:31 PM Anuradha: to Jun 10 06:01 PM 7:22 AM to 9:00 AM Rahukalam: 10:37 AM to 12:15 PM Yamagandam: 07:56 PM to 09:42 PM Varjyam

Gulika: 1:53 PM to 3:30 PM Amritakalam Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:49 AM to 12:41 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Partly Cloudy





obstacles in politics," he said.

The CM said that he had never seen these many Governors in one place, and that is possible only with Dattatreya. "This dais is like the Governor's parade. The entire Congress Cabinet is on the dais, and we

### My school education ...

tions with a host of US

Congressmen, think tanks,

policy experts, media as well as

members of the Indian-

meeting with Vance at the

White House for about 25

minutes on Thursday as "an

excellent meeting," and said

the vice president was "warm

and welcoming and recep-

Tharoor described the

American community.

Continued from page 1 enemies, the CM said. The CM said that Dattatreya

All-party delegation led by

Tharoor wraps up US visit

Washington, briefing the

American government offi-

cials as well as lawmakers

about India's stance on cross-

The Indian team met Vice

President Vance, Landau,

House Foreign Affairs

Committee (HFAC) leader-

ship, India Caucus leadership

and Senate Foreign Relations

Committee leaders and also

held meetings and interac-

border terrorism.

enjoys the same regard at the state level which former Prime Minister, the late Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had at the national level.

"Dattatreya's Alay-Balay programme was an inspiration for the Telangana Movement. People who enter politics should learn from Dattatreya's style of working and his policies. People will remember the late P. Janardhan Reddy and Dattatreya in the twin cities if they face trouble," the CM said.

Revanth said that Dattatreya used to give recommendation letters for Tirupati darshans and railway

The CM said that the stature that Dattatreya has will not diminish even if he holds no post. "Everyone respects Dattatreya irrespective of political affiliations. Dattatreya never turned back, even when he faced

The CM said that Dattatreya became the Haryana Governor from Gowliguda gully. He has a good equation with commoners and used to join the celebrations of the poor, the CM added.

can hold a Cabinet meeting here," he said.

### Expansion reflects ...

Continued from page 1
Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. Vivek and Laxman Kumar belong to SC (Mala) and SC (Madiga) communities, respectively, while Srihari is a leader who hails from the backward classes.

Ramchander Naik represents the ST community. Vivek Venkata Swamy, son of late Congress veteran G Venkataswamy, is a senior leader who had served as a Lok Sabha member earlier.

Popularly known as Vivek, he started his political career with Congress but also worked with the BRS and BJP before returning to the Congress ahead of 2023 assembly elections. Vivek had also served as the president of

the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA).

Vivek's elder brother, G Vinod, is an incum-

bent Congress MLA, while Vivek's son Vamsi Krishna is a sitting Lok Sabha member. In a bid to placate ministerial hopefuls who were left disappointed over their non-inclusion in the cabinet, AICC in charge of party affairs in Telangana, Meenakshi Natarajan, state Congress president Mahesh Kumar Goud visited the residences of Congress MLAs P Sudarshan Reddy and Prem Sagar, party

sources said.

#### Conglaunches ...

Continued from page 1

Meenakshi Natarajan, CM's Advisor Vem Narender Reddy, Mahesh Kumar Goud and Minister Ponnam Prabhakar and Rajya Sabha Member Anil Kumar Yadav went to Sudarshan Reddy's residence on Sunday to pacify him as he was deeply dis-

explained to Sudarshan about why he did not get a chance in the

Minister post.

appeasement attempt, Sudarshan said that he will obey the high command's decision. Later, they went to Prem Sagar Rao's resichance to join the Cabinet, as he dence.

#### BRS MLA Maganti...

appointed at not getting a

Continued from page 1

IT Minister Nara Lokesh and other leaders paid floral tributes to the mortal remains of Gopianath at his residence. BRS Working President K T Rama Rao, BJP MP K Laxman and several other leaders attended the funeral of Gopinath at the 'Maha Prasthanam' crematorium here on Sunday evening.

The funeral was held with state honours as decided by the ruling government.

Cabinet expansion. She said the MLAs were selected to meet the need to maintain social balance. Cooling down after Meenakshi's

had hoped that he will get a

It is learnt that Meenakshi

#### No need to ...

Continued from page 1 took signatures from everyone.

The then Ministers, Tummala Nageshwara Rao, Jupally Krishna Rao and Kadiam Srihari knew that. Congress leaders should take action after getting the PC Ghose report if they have the guts. Otherwise, the Congress Government should hand over the case to the CBI," Eatala said.

#### 'Will respond if Rahul writes to us directly'

PNS NEW DELHI

A day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi sought the Election Commission's response on his article alleging rigging in Maharashtra polls, sources in the poll authority said Sunday the constitutional body would respond only if the Leader of the Opposition writes to it directly.

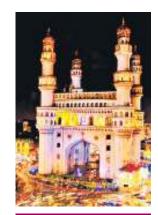
They also pointed out that as part of its outreach, the EC had invited all six national parties for separate interactions. While the other five met the EC brass, Congress cancelled the May 15 meeting.

Gandhi had on Saturday hit back at the Election Commission after sources in the poll panel rejected allegation of rigging in the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly polls, saying evasion would not protect its credibility but telling the truth would.

In an article, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha had alleged "match-fixing" in the Maharashtra polls and claimed that it would next happen in the Bihar elections and "anywhere the BJP is losing".

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#### CITY EVENTS

**Cultural Programmes** By Sangeet Natak Academy

> Ravindra Bharathi June 9, 9 am.

#### Felicitation Programme

By Telangana Rashtra Janapada Kalakarula Sangam

> Ravindra Bharathi June 9, 6 pm.

#### Sri Shvam Falgun Mahautsav

By Swara Brindavanam

Venue Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha June 9, 4:30 pm.

#### Hindi Musical Event

By Subbu Music Academy

Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha

June 9, 3 pm.

#### **GHMC** launches online property tax

services

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has announced that all property tax-related services previously available only at MeeSeva centres can now be accessed online through the official GHMC website under the Online Services tab.

This initiative allows citizens to avail property tax services from the comfort of their homes, eliminating the

need for in-person visits.

By providing their
Property Tax Identification Number (PTIN) and uploading essential documents such now submit their requests directly online, said the GHMC office in a statement. The applications will be automatically forwarded to the concerned GHMC revenue Officials for verification and approval.

The following property tax services are now available online: Self-assessment of property tax, revision of property tax, assessment exemption (for ex-servicemen), mobile number updation, correction of door number in property tax, correction of owner name in property tax and vacancy remission.

Additionally, GHMC stated that the Mutation of Property service is under development and will be made available online in due



# City Pioneer

The Pioneer

362 caught in

special drunk

driving initiative

The Cyberabad Traffic Police conducted a special drunk

driving enforcement drive over the weekend, leading to

the apprehension of 362

offenders for driving under the

vehicle type is that two-wheel-

ers are 260, three-wheelers: 24,

four-wheelers: 73 and heavy

vehicles: 5. Offenders were

also categorised based on

their Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels:

316 individuals had BAC lev-

els between 35 mg/100 ml to

200 mg/100 ml, 30 individu-

als had BAC levels between

201 mg/100 ml to 300 mg/100

ml, 16 individuals had BAC

levels between 301 mg/100 ml

to 500 mg/100 ml.

The breakdown of cases by

PNS HYDERABAD

influence of alcohol.

HYDERABAD | MONDAY | JUNE 9, 2025

# **GHMC** cracks down on food adulteration in city

**OVER RS 30 LAKH FINES IMPOSED, 12 HOSTEL KITCHENS SHUT** 

PNS HYDERABAD

In a determined effort to curb food adulteration and ensure safe consumption, the Food Safety Wing of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has intensified its enforcement actions across the city.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Food Safety Wing officials said that 1,887 food samples were collected in 2024, of which 95 were found in violation of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. Based on these violations, the GHMC imposed fines amounting to Rs 30.60 lakh on erring food business operators.

Furthermore, 12 samples were deemed unsafe for human consumption, prompting criminal prosecution against the violators. As part of its awareness and monitoring drive for the financial

year 2024-25, GHMC's Food Safety

GHMC's Food Safety Wing inspecting food outlets

Wing conducted 210 training and awareness camps using the Food Safety on Wheels mobile unit. During these camps, 4,006 spot tests were conducted to check the quality and hygiene of ingredients used by street food vendors. Vendors were educated on basic hygiene practices and safe food preparation methods.

To formalise and regulate street food vendors and hawkers, the GHMC issued 1,500 registration certificates. Additionally, a special drive to inspect hostels was carried out in areas such as LB Nagar, Kukatpally, Serilingampally, Ashok Nagar, Dilsukhnagar and Ameerpet. The officials inspected 117 hostels, issued notices to 74 hostel managements and shut down kitchens in 12 hostels due to unhygienic conditions. Fines amounting to Rs 5.09 lakh were imposed on 70 hostels under the



#### SCR flags off 'Sundays on Cycle' event to promote fitness routine

PNS HYDERABAD

South Central Railway (SCR) General Manager Arun Kumar Jain flagged off the "Fit India Cyclothon" event along with a team of SCR officials at the Railway Sports Complex on Sunday.

The event was organised by the SCR Sports Association under the 'Khelo India Scheme's Fit India initiative. It aimed at promoting fitness as a daily habit, under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, to build a fitness culture among railway staff and local communities.

Speaking at the event, Arun Kumar Jain appreciated the Sports Association for taking up such a meaningful initiative. He stressed that staying fit is the need of the hour and vital for everyone's well-being. He noted that the Fit India Movement has greatly encouraged people to lead healthier lives.

Arun Kumar highlighted that cycling is not only good for health but also environmentfriendly. He added that people in many countries are returning to cycling to stay fit. He urged all railway staff to actively take part in the Fit India campaign. The Fit India Cyclothon is part of a nation-wide drive envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make fitness a people's movement through campaigns like "Sundays On Cycle."

### Man arrested at RGI Airport for human trafficking

PNS HYDERABAD

The RGI Airport Police on Sunday arrested a man for allegedly cheating a woman under the pretext of providing her employment abroad and attempting to traffic her

According to RGI Airport Police, the accused, A Satyanarayana, a resident of West Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh, promised Lankapally Mary a job in Muscat. However, instead of securing a legitimate work visa, he arranged a tourist misleading her about the custody.

nature of the trip.

The deception came to light during an immigration screening at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. Authorities grew suspicious and questioned Mary about the purpose of her travel. Upon learning that she was headed for illegal employment, immigra-tion officials promptly directed her to the RGI

Airport Police. Following a formal complaint, the police registered case and arrested Satyanarayana. He has since

#### **National** conference on high-risk pregnancies

PNS HYDERABAD

Yashoda Hospitals - Hitec City organised a National Conference on Excellence in High-Risk Pregnancies, bringing together top specialists in obstetrics, internal medicine and critical

The event focused on collaborative approaches to managing complex pregnancy cases.

Dr' Pavan Gorukanti, Director of Yashoda Hospitals, highlighted their multi-disciplinary care model to anticipate complications early and safeguard both mother and baby. The conference featured expert talks on maternal cardiac issues, obstetric emergencies, endocrine disorders and innovations like MR-Linac-based radiation ther-

# City startups turning to neobanks for smarter money management

**SAMUEL JOSHUA** samuelmjoshuamjmc@gmail.com

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad, fast emerging as India's innovation capital, is seeing a sharp rise in the use of 'neobanks' by startups looking for smarter ways to manage money. These fully digital banking platforms offer the speed, transparency and flexibility that young companies need to grow and scale quick-

Today's startups require dynamic financial ecosystems and neobanks are uniquely positioned to meet that demand," said Dario Schiraldi, a global fintech expert who has studied market trends in India, the UAE and China. What we are witnessing in Hyderabad mirrors the agility-first approach startups demand across emerging markets.

This trend is being driven by ecosystem, supported by accel-



erators, tech parks and funding initiatives.

While traditional banks continue to play a role, many lack the digital infrastructure and quick response times that startups require. Neobanks, on the other hand, offer features like automated invoicing, fied cross-border payments.

Many new startups in Hyderabad have found that neobanks make it easier to transact globally with fewer delays. Dario Schiraldi noted that in countries like China and the UAE, digital banking is already deeply embedded into the startup landscape and Hyderabad is now follo

Hyderabad's startups are adopting the same digital-first, capital-intelligent strategies we see in other high-growth global markets, he

He also emphasised that the next wave of unicorns is likely to be built on neobank infrastructure. Dario noted, 'In the UAE, digital banks have helped startups scale by cutting financial overheads. India is on a similar trajectory." Unlike traditional banks, neobanks provide more than just basic financial services. They offer tools that help startups predict burn rates, manage vendor payments efficiently and access early-stage credit, all without the slow processes of legacy banks.

With support from T-Hub, WE Hub and access to global VCs, Hyderabad is ready for this shift. "Smart money management is not optional any-Schiraldi.

## Lighting to be inaugurated at Kachiguda station today

**PNS** ■ HYDERABAD

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has installed an elegant facade lighting system at the historic Kacheguda railway station at a cost of ?2.23 crore. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy will formally inaugurate the lighting on June 9.

In recent times, efforts have been made to beautify heritage structures through facade lighting, making them more visually appealing and helping the public appreciate their cultural and historical significance. As part of this initiative, the Kacheguda railway station

built in 1916 during the Nizam's rule in Gothic architectural style - has now been illuminated with 785 lighting fixtures. These lights will



architecture and heritage appeal, especially at night.

enhance the station's majestic of daily passengers, the newly lit-up station will now also serve as a cultural and visual Centrally located within the attraction. The lighting will city and catering to thousands help people understand and

tance of this railway station. In addition to its heritage value, Kacheguda railway sta-

appreciate the historic impor-

tion is also a model of green infrastructure.

It has been awarded the Platinum Rating by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for its commitment to environmental sustainability through green energy use. Moreover, it is recognised as an Energy-Efficient Station by Indian Railways, and notably, it was the first station in Indian Railways to introduce digital payment systems. Further, under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, the station is set for a massive redevelopment with an investment of ?421.66 crore, further enhancing passenger facilities and preserving its iconic legacy.

#### WEDDING RECEPTION



Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy blesses actor Akkineni Akhil at the latter's marriage reception

## Fish prasadam distribution begins at Nampally exhibition grounds

PNS HYDERABAD

The annual fish prasadam distribution by the Bathini Goud family kicked off at Nampally exhibition grounds on Sunday, drawing thousands of asthma patients from across the country. The 170-year-old tradition involves swallowing a live fish filled with herbal paste, believed to offer relief from asthma and respiratory prob-

The event was inaugurated by Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, along with Madhu Yashki, Rajya Sabha MP Anil Kumar Yadav, and Fisheries Development Corporation Chairman Mettu Sai Kumar.



Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar at the annual fish prasadam distribution in Hyderabad on Sunday

To manage the massive police personnel were turnout, 42 queue counters deployed. Voluntary organisawere set up and over 1,000 tions distributed drinking

buttermilk. The Minister appreciated their support in handling the large-scale event. Minister Prabhakar said

people have deep faith in the prasadam and many have experienced relief and appreciated the Bathini family's decades of service. He added that elaborate arrangements had been made over the past 15 days to ensure a smooth experience for attendees.

The Minister also expressed hope that the rains beginning during the Mrigasira Karthi period would bring prosperity to agriculture, especially dairy crops across the State and

country. PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, who also takes the prasadam every year, assured full government support. MP Anil Kumar Goud appreciated the arrangements and public participation.

The Bathini family appealed for the Padma Shri in recognition of their long-standing public service. Leaders present said they would recommend the same to the State and Central governments.

Fisheries Commissioner Priyanka, local councillor Rajesh Jaiswal, Secunderabad RDO Sairam, members of the Bathini family, Karnataka State MLC Manjula Bhandari, officials, local public representatives and others participated in the programme.

## Severe hostel shortage forces SC/ST students to quit studies social difficulties due to ongoing social discrimination.

PNS HYDERABAD

Severe hostel shortage is forcing many SC/ST students in Greater Hyderabad to quit their studies, said R Krishnaiah, President of the National BC Welfare Association.

In a letter to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Krishnaiah mentioned that severe hostel shortage is affecting students, with fewer than 25 hostels available for SC boys and girls studying in Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Medchal districts. These are not nearly enough, considering the thousands of engineering, degree, PG and pharmacy colleges in the region, he

Krishnaiah stressed that



ST students are also facing the same situation. SC/ST students cannot afford to stay in private hostels which cost around Rs 5,000 per month. He noted that they are often denied houses for rent and suffer from financial and

Krishnaiah also mentioned that severe hostel shortage is causing many ST students to drop out because they cannot

get accommodation. Tribal students are only now starting to pursue higher education and they must be supported and encouraged, he Despite the Central and

State governments announcing many educational schemes for tribal students, more action is needed on the ground. Krishnaiah urged the government to sanction colege hostels for ST students in Greater Hyderabad, five in Hyderabad, four in Ranga Reddy and four in Medchal for both boys and girls.

# Telangana







#### One more kode dies due to illness at Vemulawada

PNS RAJANNA SIRCILLA

In Tippapur village, one young kode (bull calf) that was ill at the local cattle shelter died on Sunday. However, the remaining 11 sick kodelu are responding well to treat-ment provided by veterinary doctors and are recovering, said District Animal Husbandry Officer Ravinder

He stated that out of the 1,300 animals in the cattle shelter, currently, 11 kodelu are under veterinary care. All 11 are responding positively to the treatment and recovering from their illness. He further added that no new cases of illness have been reported and assured that strict measures are being taken to safeguard the health of the goats.

#### NARAYANPET-KODANGAL LIFT IRRIGATION SCHEME

# Farmers demand Rs 70 lakh per acre compensation

PNS MAHABUBNAGAR

As per the promise made during the Assembly elections, Chief Minister Revarth Reddy has launched a lift irrigation scheme worth Rs 4,000 crore for the undiwided Mahabubnagar district. This is the Narayanpet-Kodangal Lift Irrigation Scheme. The project once completed would provide irrigation water to 1,30,000 acres in the region. The construction of the project has been initiated to meet the drinking and irrigation water needs of the area. Water for the project will be lifted from the Bhutpur reservoir constructed as part of the Bhima project.

Currently, various works related to the project are gradually tak-

ing off.

However, farmers who are set to lose their lands due to the Narayanpet-Kodangal project gave a shock to the authorities. They demanded a compensation of Rs 70 lakh per acre for their lands. With no other option, the officials had to step back. People from two villages expressed their opposition



in this manner.

As part of the land acquisition for the Narayanpet-Kodangal Lift Irrigation Scheme initiated by the Congress government, farmers from Katrepalli and Ernaganipalli villages who are set to lose their lands shocked the officials. They refused to give consent to give up their lands. Moreover, they demanded fair compensation for the loss of their lands, insisting on Rs 70 lakh per acre. Additionally, they clearly stat-

ed that they would only agree to part with their lands if one member from each affected family was given a government job. With no way forward, the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) and revenue officials, who held public hearings, had to retreat.

A public hearing was conducted in Katrepalli village under Makthal mandal, under the supervision of the Narayanpet RDO. Speaking to the farmers on this occasion, the RDO assured them

that compensation would be provided to all those who would lose land according to the 2013 Land Acquisition Act. He urged the farmers to cooperate with the land acquisition survey and support the government in the construction of the project.

However, the farmers rejected the officials' proposals. They demanded that Katrepalli village, which is losing land, be declared as an R&R (Resettlement and Rehabilitation) centre. They also insisted that each affected farmer be paid Rs 70 lakh per acre and that one government job be provided to each affected family.

Since the authorities did not agree to these demands, the meeting was concluded, and the officials proceeded to Ernaganipalli village, where another public hearing was held. There too, farmers demanded compensation between Rs 50 lakhs and Rs 70 lakh per acre. With no way forward, the officials had to step back again. Now, people are waiting to see how the government will respond to the farmers' demands.

## Fitness test of 692 school buses is still pending in Warangal

PNS WARANGAL

Behind every school bus, the message "Children's Safety is Our Priority" is proudly displayed. Yet, many bus owners seem to be neglecting this vital responsibility. According to regulations, all school buses must undergo fitness tests every year before the academic session begins. However, reports indicate that these tests are not being conducted properly due to negligence.

With the school reopening fast approaching, the bus safety aspect seems to be ignored. Just like last year, hundreds of buses are avoiding the mandatory fitness tests, raising serious

concerns among parents.

In Warangal district alone, there are 1,820 school and college buses. So far, only 863 buses have been tested and certified. Despite the expiration of the five-year validity period, authorities have exempted 225 buses from testing for various reasons. This leaves 692 buses still requiring online fitness tests and certification. With only five



For representation purpose only

to ensure that the vehicles undergo fit-

When accidents happen, officials face the blame. Parents are demanding more rigorous and proactive bus inspections to avoid such incidents. "Child safety must be our top priority, and bus fitness checks should be thorough. Having one bus pass the test does not guarantee the safety of the entire fleet. Regular inspections every one or two months are necessary. If any issues are found, buses should be immediately taken off the road," par-

## Idol installation ceremony held in Kottur mandal

The idol installation festival of Kethalamma Medalamma Sametha Mallana Swamy was held with great devotion and community participation at the temple in Inmul Narva village of Kottur mandal. The event, organised by the Reddy Seva Samiti, featured special puja rituals and a food distribution programme.

Telangana Legislative Council member Nagarakunta Naveen Reddy attended the celebrations as the chief guest. He was joined by senior Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leaders Kadempalli Srinivas Goud and Satyanarayana, who also took part in the puja activities and offered prayers.

The event saw participation from



MLC Nagarakunta Naveen Reddy, along with BRS senior leaders, participating in the idol installation ceremony in Kottur madnal on Sunday

several local leaders, including former Sarpanch Ajay and former MPTC member Balwanth Reddy.

sub-sarpanch Sriramulu Yadav, along with community members such as Jangaiah Yadav, Ramesh Yadav, Mahesh Yadav, Srinu Yadav, Gopal Nayak, Indrasena Reddy, Shyam Sundar Reddy, Maheshwar Reddy, Shashidhar Reddy, Rajender Reddy, Sekhar Reddy, and Shiya Chari, were also present Shiva Chari, were also present.

## From sarpanch to Minister, Vakiti Srihari rises through ranks

**PNS** RANGAREDDY

In a moment of pride for the Mudiraj community and the Congress party, Vakiti Srihari, a seasoned leader from the joint Mahabubnagar district, has been inducted into the Telangana state Cabinet. His appointment is being hailed as a symbol of social justice and recognition for backward classes within the party's frame-

Former ZPTC and senior Congress leader of Kottur mandal, Mamidi Shyamsunder Reddy, expressed immense happiness over Srihari's elevation, describing it as a historic step. Shyamsunder Reddy met and honoured him with a bouquet and shawl to mark the

Srihari, who hails from Palamuru and belongs to a family with a strong local political background, began his political journey in 1995 with the Congress party. Over the last 28 years, he has been

Buisnessman Vatsavai Ravi said that although

he had heard about the suffering of children

with thalassemia, seeing them in person touched the heart deeply. On Sunday, under

the auspices of Sankalpa Voluntary Service Organisation, free medicines were distributed

to children at the organisation's office. Vatsavai Ravi and TGSRTC Karimnagar Zonal Medical

Officer Dr Giri Simharao participated and dis-

On this occasion, Vatsavai Ravi said that

tributed medicines to the children.



Former ZPTC and Congress leader Mamidi Shyamsunder Reddy felicitating newly appointed Minister Vakiti Srihari in Shadnagar on Sunday

values and leadership. Born to President of the United Vakiti Narsimhūlu and Ramulamma, he is one of eight siblings and degree-level education.

His political career has been marked by consistent grassroots involvement.

He served as the Sarpanch of Maktal Major Gram Panchayat from 2001 to 2006, where he won with a record majority in the then united Mahabubnagar district. During the same peri-

Voluntary organisation distributes free

medicines to children with thalassemia

recently, during a blood donation camp lassemia and their parents should stay conorganised by their organization, even just a fident and courageous.

a steadfast loyalist to the party's od, he was also the Vice Andhra Pradesh Sarpanchs Association.

> won as an MPTC from Dasarpalli village (2006–2011) and as ZPTC from Maktal mandal (2014-2018), each time securing the highest majorities in the region. He also served as the floor leader of the Mahabubnagar Zilla Parishad during his ZPTC

single needle prick to draw blood caused great

pain to the donors. He said he understood the

extreme agony the children endure, having to

get needle pricks two to three times a month

for blood transfusions. He prayed to God to

grant good health to the children with tha-

lassemia. He also said that from now on, he

would work alongside the Sankalpa organi-

sation to support the thalassemia children.

They plan to organize blood donation camps

Giri Simharao said that children with tha-

TGSRTC Karimnagar Zone Medical Officer

every three months for the children.

## Tribal farmers protest over 'land grabbing' by pvt school

PNS MAHABUBABAD

Tribal farmers staged a protest by blocking the vehicle of MLA Murali Naik, who was on his way to inaugurate a private school building that was allegedly constructed by grabbing their lands.

The tribal farmers raised slo-

gans like "MLA Go Back" and Do Justice", expressing their anger and frustration.

As tensions rose, the MLA, showing displeasure, turned back and left the spot. On this occasion, tribal farmer and former Congress municipal ward councillor Bhukya Srinu spoke out, alleging that lands which had under cultivation since ancestral times were arbitrarily grabbed to construct private school buildings. He expressed anguish that these land grabbers were carrying out such acts with the backing of revenue officials.

He further stated that the private school in question is enrolling students without obtaining any proper permission, and urged higher authorities to take action against the school and deliver justice to the tribal farmers.



Tribal farmers blocking the vehicle of MLA Murali Naik in Mahabubabad on Sundav

#### Leopard kills calf in Gadwal district

PNS JOGULAMBA GADWAL

A leopard attacked a calf on Saturday night on the outskirts of Kottapalem village under Dharur mandal in Jogulamba Gadwal district. A farmer named Ramesh

had tied the calf in his agricultural field near the village and returned home for the night. When he went back the next morning, the calf was missing. After searching in the surrounding area, he found the dead calf near a hill. Upon informing the villagers, panic spread among them. Leopard pugmarks were found at the scene, confirming the presence of the big cat in the area. It has left farmers and villagers in a state of fear and anxiety.



## Mulugu Government General Hospital facing shortage of doctors, staff

PNS MULUGU

The Government General Hospital has been integrated into the Directorate of Medical Education (DME) in Mulugu. It is well known that until now, this was under the Medical Policy Council. In the fight to achieve better medical services in the newly formed Telangana State, the then BRS government established a medical college in the district. In this process, a medical college was also set up in Mulugu district, which has led to the daily growth of the government hospital at the district level in the district headquarters. As a result, people in the agency area now have access to better medical services.

Twenty years ago, a medical officer and a government hospital with 30 beds existed. After the formation of Telangana State, with the efforts of the previous government, the hospital was expand-



Government General Hospital (file photo)

ed to 100 beds. In 2023, the then BRS government sanctioned a medical college for Mulugu district, transforming the hospital into an affiliated institution. After the Congress government came to power, the medical college was inaugurated, and the first batch of 50 students began their studies, with another 50 students to be admitted this time.

To provide better education for medical college students,

the government upgraded this hospital to a general hospital and transferred it to the Medical Education Department. The transfer

process of employees and medical staff has been ongoing for three days. As part of this, Dr Jagdishwar, who served as the superintendent of the government hospital, will continue as DCH superintendent. Dr B Mohan Lal, principal of the medical college, has been appointed as the superinten-

Despite converting Mulugu Hospital into an affiliated hos-

dent of the general hospital.

pital of the medical college, the state government has not appointed sufficient number of doctors and staff, resulting in limited services. Compared to the past, the outpatient and inpatient services have doubled. On average, 650 patients receive OP services daily, while 150 patients are admitted as inpatients. Services such as maternal and child health, general medicine, surgery,, ophthalmology, orthopedics, and other departments are now available through a total of 14 specialists. Due to the lack of adequate staff in laboratories, tests are being halted.

The medical college has classes conducted by 12 professors, 17 associate professors, and 29 assistant professors. However, they face difficulties due to the lack of adequate facilities in the Mulugu hospi-

## Nizam era building: The Pride Of Warangal

PNS WARANGAL

The Subedar Collector Bungalow in Warangal, constructed in 1886 during the Nizam rule era, is undergoing a significant transformation into a Heritage Bhavan. With an allocation of Rs 2 crore for minor repairs, work commenced in February and is now complete.

The government has made the commendable decision to preserve this remarkable building as a heritage property, recognising its excellent condition even after 139 years.

Set across 13 acres, this expansive estate features vast halls and a building comprising 22 rooms. Historically, it served as a residence for Subedars and later for Collectors. The repairs, amounting to Rs 2 crore, have



utilised traditional techniques boasts an impressive design to maintain its authenticity.

across its 13 acres of land. Built This bungalow, situated next to withstand floods and other to the Warangal Collectorate, calamities, its sturdy construc-

tion utilises lime mortar for durability. The grand entrance gate, complemented by rooms for watchmen, welcomes visitors, with a large clock perched atop the arch.

Surrounding the bungalow is an expansive garden filled with a variety of trees, including sandalwood, black tamarind, and neem. Inside, the bungalow features 22 rooms designed for optimal airflow and natural light.

The original layout included two spacious halls, each measuring 44 feet in length and 10 feet in width, intended

for guest seating.

The ceiling rises to an impressive 22 feet, adorned with chandeliers that still exude a sense of royal grandeur.

The Subedars made this their home until September 17, 1948. After 1950, the bungalow transitioned into an official government residence for Collectors.

From the first Collector, MV Rajvendra, to the current one, P Pravinya, this has been a significant place of service. In 1982, under Collector

Jawahar's tenure, archaeological excavations revealed swords and artefacts from the Nizam era, later handed to the Archaeological Department. The garden is being revitalized with a selection of plants including Temple Tree, Royal Palm, Ukofellam, Lantana, Spider Lily, and Wadelia Rubra. The repair work is expected to be completed this week, with plans for a library, food court, and cultural activities in the pipeline. Soon, the public will have the opportunity to visit

this Heritage Bhavan.

#### Six bodies of youth retrieved from river PNS JAYASHANKAR Sunday, he visited the families

BHUPALPALLY

Bodies of six youths, who were feared to have drowned in the River Godavari, were retrieved on Sunday. The tragic incident happened at A tragic incident at Ambatipelli village under Mahadevpur mandal in the

district on Saturday evening. Six youths accidentally went missing while bathing in the Godavari river upstream.

With the help of two speedboats, State Disaster Response Force, Singareni rescue teams, and Fire Department person-nel conducted intensive search operations.

bodies The Madhusudhan (18), Patti Shiva Manoj (15), Thogari Rakshith (13), Karnala Sagar (16), Ram Charan (18), and Rahul (19) were recovered.

The recovery of all six bod-



Heart-rending scenes are witnessed at Mahadevpur Government Hospital where the bodies of six youngsters are kept in mortuary for post-mortem on Sunday

ies cast a pall of gloom over the

village. The bodies were shifted to Mahadevpur Government Community Hospital for postmortem. Meanwhile, former MLA Putta Madhukar demanded that the government take responsibility for the Medigadda incident. On

of the youths who were swept away near the Medigadda barrage and offered his condolences at the Mahadevpur government hospital. Speaking on the occasion, he

alleged that the Congress government deliberately sidelined world-renowned Medigadda project, despite being aware that flood flow would increase in the area. He accused the government of failing to implement even basic safety measures.

He claimed that due to the government's negligence, six innocent children lost their lives and demanded that the government be held account

He urged the state government to respond immediately and provide Rs 10 lakh ex-gratia to the kin of those who drowned in the river.

### ACROSS THE STATES



#### **Farmer's income has** doubled in Tripura: CM

ripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Sunday claimed that farmer's income in the state has doubled in last eight years. Addressing a programme in West Tripura's Tufanialunga tea estate, the CM claimed that farmer's income has increased from Rs 6,580 in 2016 to Rs 13,590 per month in 2024 in the state. The northeastern state has 4.74 lakh farmers. "The present government has been working for the welfare of the farmers because it will boost the rural economy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi who considered farmers as 'annadata' has set a target of doubling the farmers' income. Tripura has already made it possible," he said. Reeling off the schemes for farmers, the chief minister said the farmers have already received Rs 2,272 crore from the Centre under PM Kishan, Rs 23 crore by selling paddy under MSP by the state government and Rs 446 credit linkage under KCC. Urging the farmers to adopt modern equipment in agriculture, the chief minister said the Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare department has distributed equipment amounting to Rs 204.50 crore to



#### **Bank executive arrested** for stealing gold

bank executive was arrested in Thane district for allegedly stealing gold worth Rs 27 lakh that was pledged by customers A police official said on Sunday. Accused Sachin Arun Kalan (29), who works in a private bank in Ambernath East in the district, was held on June 6 under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for criminal breach of trust and other offences, the Shivaji Nagar police station official said. "Between May and May 26, Kalan, as the bank's relationship executive, was handling gold loan cases. During this period, he took away gold ornaments worth Rs 26.90 lakh that had been mortgaged by customers who had availed loans. A detailed probe is underway to cover all aspects of the crime," he



#### **Rajasthan reels** under intense heat

ercury soared in most parts of Rajasthan on Sunday as maximum temperature in several areas remained above the 45-degree mark with Sri Ganganagar being the hottest district in the state at 47.4 degrees Celsius. The Jaipur Meteorological Centre has predicted that the state will continue to grapple with an intense heatwave in the coming days. CBikaner on Sunday recorded a high of 46.0 degrees while it was 45.9 degrees in Barmer, 45.6 degrees in Churu, 45.4 degrees in Phalodi, 45.2 in Jaisalmer and 45 degrees Celsius in Kota. The weather will remain dry in most parts of the state next week. The mercury is likely to touch 45 to 47 degrees in Bikaner division of north-western Rajasthan till June 11 and severe heatwave in some places, the meteorological centre said. Similarly, strong dusty winds can blow at a speed of 30-40 kmph in Bikaner division and surrounding areas between June 8 and 10.

#### **BENGALURU STAMPEDE**

## BJP demands special session of the legislature

**PNS** ■ BENGALURU

Leader of Opposition in Karnataka Assembly R Ashoka on Sunday demanded that the government call a special session of the state legislature for three days, to discuss the June 4 stampede that killed 11 people, as he pointed out that people are seeking answers.

The BJP leader, who reiterating the demand for resignation of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D K Shivakumar, also announced that all his party legislators will contribute a month's salary to the kin of those deceased, who are in need, while urging the government to enhance the compensation to Rs 1 crore if it is not



bankrupt

The stampede occurred on June 4 evening in front of the Chinnaswamy stadium here, where a large number of people thronged to participate in the RCB team's IPL victory celebrations. Eleven people died and 56 were injured in the incident

## NDA govt redefined women-led development in 11 years: PM

A day before his government marks its first anniversary in third term, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance has redefined women-led development in its 11 years in power.

In all sectors, including science, education, sports, start ups and the armed forces, women are excelling and inspiring several people, Modi said on X.

He cited a number of welfare programmes which, he noted, have benefitted women immensely.

Various initiatives, from ensuring dignity through Swachh Bharat to financial inclusion via Jan Dhan accounts, the focus has been on empowering the women, he

If 'Ujjwala Yojana' brought smoke-free kitchens running on gas cylinders to the poor households, 'MUDRA' loans enabled lakhs of women entrepreneurs to pursue dreams on their own terms. Houses under the women's name in PM Awas Yojana too have made a

remarkable impact, he added. 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (save daughter, educate daughter) programme ignited a



national movement to protect the girl child, he said.

The prime minister shared a thread of a government-run citizenship engagement platform, which listed benefits brought to women by several government schemes.

It said the maternal mortality ratio declined to 93 per lakh live births in 2019-21 from 167 in 2011-13, and the households with tap water connections zoomed to 15.64 crore in May 2025 from 3.23 crore in August

Over 10 crore cooking gas connections were given under the Ujjwala scheme, it said, while highlighting several other welfare measures targeting women.

#### **MODI LACKS COURAGE TO HAVE** 'UNEDITED' PRESS MEETS: CONGRESS

PNS NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of scripting his media interactions and said, unlike his predecessors, he lacks the courage to hold "undoctored" press meets.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said leaders across the world hold freewheeling press conferences from time to time, but "ours has had none for 11 years"

"Narendra Modi produced,

directed, and scripted his media interactions last year during the election campaign during one of which he famously claimed to be nonbiological. But he has never ever had the courage to have an undoctored press meet," Ramesh said in his post.

This is in total contrast to all his predecessors. His favourite hate used to have spontaneous press meets almost every other month, where he would be ruthlessly questioned, and he would answer patiently.

# Punjab govt working for well-being of weaker sections:CM

**PNS** ■ AMRITSAR

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Sunday said his government is working untiringly for the wellbeing of the state's weaker and underprivileged sections.

Addressing a gathering after handing over loan waiver certificates to the beneficiaries here, Mann said the previous governments in the state waived loans of the affluent people but didn't bother about the welfare of the poor.
"For the first time in the his-

tory of Punjab, this reprieve is being extended to the underprivileged and weaker sections of society," Mann said. The loan waiver scheme worth Rs 67.84 crore has benefited around 4,800 families of loanees of the Punjab Scheduled Castes Land Development and Finance Corporation (PSCFC), the chief minister said.

On June 3, the Punjab Cabinet gave its nod to waive loans amounting to Rs 67.84 crore taken by over 4,000 Dalit families from the PSCFC.

Mann said the waiver covers all loans disbursed by the PSCFC up to March 31, 2020, offering significant relief to SC and Divyangjan (persons with



disabilities) loanees.

The move will benefit 4,727 loanees for an aggregate amount of Rs 67.84 crore. The scheme will cover all the loanees, including 4,685 defaulting loanees and 42 regular loanees, government sources said.

Addressing the gathering, Mann said 'no due certificates' (NDCs) will be issued by the state government and the full amount of Rs 67.84 crore comprising principal, interest and penal interest calculated as of April 30, 2025, will be reimbursed to the PSCFC by the state government.

The loanees who previously availed benefits under the earlier waiver schemes are also eligible for coverage under this initiative, Mann said.

No recovery proceedings will be initiated against the loanees and their accounts will be considered fully settled as of the cut-off date, he added.

### NDA will form governments in TN, WB: Amit Shah

PNS MADURAI (TAMILNADU)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday asserted that the NDA would form govern-ments in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

Addressing party office earers, he hailed Madurai as a city of 'Parivartan' and said his party's Karyakarta Sammelan (workers meet) would lead to change as well, of dislodging DMK from

In the 2026 Assembly election, BJP-AIADMK will form NDA government in Tamil Nadu and people will defeat DMK in 2026 polls and the DMK is 100 per cent failure government.

"In 2026, in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, NDA will form governments.'

Shah, before addressing the state, district and mandal level office bearers, chaired the meeting of the state core committee of the Tamil Nadu BJP. Ahead of leading the core panel parleys, he worshipped at the Madurai Meenakshi temple.

During his April visit to Tamil Nadu, Shah announced the revival of ties with the AIADMK.

In his address, BJP state president Nainar Nagendran hit out at the DMK regime over the law and order scenario and questioned the police over targeted killings of elderly people in villages in the western Kongu region.

He appealed to cadres to work with determination and described the alliance with AIADMK as a "suitable

Nagendran said his resolve will be to take the maximum number of MLAs to the Assembly, like a "yatra"

He hailed Amit Shah as 'India's Iron man, another Sardar Vallabhai Patel."

BJP leader K Annamalai said the only goal is unseating DMK from power in the state and urged cadres to go ahead with this "sankalpa."

PNS NEW DELHI

Ahead of his historic journey to the International Space Station (ISS), Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla has termed the preparations for the Axiom-4 mission as an "amazing journey" and that he was extremely fortunate to be part of something that is "much larger than yourself".

The 39-yéar-old Indian Air Force pilot is all set to travel with three other crew members to the ISS onboard SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft, mounted on a Falcon 9 rocket, that will lift off from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on Tuesday at 5:52 pm IST.

Shukla, who goes by the nickname "Shux", will be the second Indian to travel to space, 41 years after his idol Rakesh Sharma undertook a



Extremely fortunate to be part of space mission: Shukla

spaceflight in 1984 onboard erstwhile Soviet Union's Soyuz spacecraft for an eight-day stay in orbit.

'It has been an amazing journey; these are the moments that really tell you that you are getting to be a part of something that is much larger than yourself. I can only say how extremely fortunate I am to be a part of this," Lucknow-born Shukla said in a short video issued by Axiom Space ahead of Tuesday's launch.

Shukla's crewmates, commander Peggy Whitson and mission specialists Tibor Kapu from Hungary and Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski from Poland, describe him as "operational-savvy", "focussed" and

to space technologies.
"Shux's wisdom, the knowl-

'wicked smart" when it comes

edge he possesses, shows he could be 130 years old," said Kapu, the second Hungarian astronaut to travel to space since 1980. "For me, having him as my

pilot in the dragon capsule is great. He is already operational-savvy, and he is just wicked smart when it comes to spacecraft technologies," said Whitson, a veteran US astronaut who has spent 675 days in space and undertaken 10 spacewalks.

Slawosz said Shukla is very focussed in his approach and quick to respond to situations.

"He is very focussed. He will go one, two, three, four in record time. I don't even know how he gets there so fast," the Polish astronaut said.

#### Encroachers can't claim right to continue occupying public land: Delhi HC

PNS NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has held that encroachers cannot claim a right to continue occupying public land till their rehabilitation claims are not resolved, as this would unduly impede

public projects. The high court made the observation while granting liberty to the DDA to proceed with the demolition action at Bhoomiheen Camp in South Delhi's Kalkaji in accordance with law.

Justice Dharmesh Sharma

said the writ petitions were not only flawed due to the misjoinder of multiple parties with multiple causes of action, but also failed to meet the essential threshold provided by the Delhi Slum and JJ Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy for being considered eligible for relocation and reha-

bilitation. "None of the petitioners have any legal right to continue occupying the JJ cluster inces-

santly, to the detriment of the public at large," the court said in its order passed on June 6.

## Can't defy court orders, says Delhi CM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Sunday said the authorities cannot go against demolition orders issued by the courts and stressed that the displaced residents have been provided accommoda-

The remarks come amid criticism from the opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over the razing of the Madrasi Camp slum cluster near Barapullah in south Delhi, and similar demolition drives in other parts of the

while the AAP has targeted Gupta, saying those evicted were provided houses lacking basic amenities in faraway Narela, party MP Sanjay Singh and Delhi unit chief Saurabh Bharadwaj on Sunday visited the demolition site of the Madrasi Camp slum cluster, where they met with displaced residents, and intensified their attack on

Attending an event to mark the construction of a Jan Sewa camp at a slum cluster in the Haiderpur area, Gupta told reporters, "In the last few days... demolition action has been taken by the authorities, like at the Madrasi camp

the BJP.

where the court had given directions to remove the encroachment over the Barapullah drain, almost four times.

"No slum will be demolished without first providing permanent housing to its resdents," she said.

The encroachment over the Barapullah drain had reduced its width, causing problems of waterlogging in nearby areas, she said, adding the action was necessary to carry out desilting work.

"Neither the government nor the administration can do anything if the court has ordered something for the slums. Most anti-encroachment actions are being carried out in compliance with court orders and are targeting illegal occupations that are obstructing traffic or hindering public movement.

"The court had ordered the removal of this slum so that machines could be deployed to clean the drain. No one can defy court orders. Houses have been allotted to the residents of that camp," she told reporters.

Gupta also said that "FIRs will be filed and strict action will be taken against those spreading false information about demolitions"

## Padmanabhaswamy Temple holds rare ritual after 270 years

PNS THIRUVANANTHAPU-

Hundreds of devotees on Sunday thronged the famous Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala to witness Maha Kumbhabhishekam held

at the shrine after 270 years. This grand consecration took place following the recent completion of long-overdue renovation work at this ancient

Dedication of "thazhikakudams", (the three domes above the sanctum sanctorum), the reinstallation of the Vishwaksena idol, and the 'Ashtabandha Kalasam' at the Thiruvambady Sree Krishna Temple (located within the main shrine complex) were held in the morning, temple sources said.

The rituals were performed by priests during the auspicious time between 7.40 am to 8.40 am on Sunday," they said.

The rituals began after Moolam Thirunal Rama



Varma, the present head of the Travancore royal family,

offered prayers at the shrine. In the presence of Varma and other royal family members, the tantri (head priest) first carried out the "Ashtabandha Kalasam" at the

Thiruvambady Temple.
Later, the reinstallation of the Vishwaksena idol was held by 8.00 am, temple sources

said.

The Vishwaksena idol, renovated and reinstalled now, is about 300 years old and was built in "katu sarkara yogam", a traditional method involving a unique combination of materials to create idols

After that reinstallation, the tantries and priests, accompanied by the royal family head, moved as a procession for the dedication of the domes as devotees chanted "narayana" mantras.

Temple authorities made elaborate arrangements including the setting up of video walls on all the four entrances of the shrine for devotees to catch a glimpse of the rare ritual.

Long queues of devotees could be seen since early morning at the temple entrances Kerala Governor

Vishwanath Rajendra Arlekar was present at the shrine to witness the rare ritual throughout, they added. Various rituals, including

Acharya Varanam, Prasada

Shuddhi, Dhara, Kalasam, and

others, were held at the shrine

in various days in the last week ahead of the "Maha Kumbhabhishekam". Temple authorities said that

the objective of the Maha Kumbhabhishekam is to reinforce spiritual energy and reawaken the sanctity of the





#### A political bromance turned bitter feud

Once a formidable force reshaping US, Donald Trump and Elon Musk are now locked in a fierce war of words

n a turn of events as dramatic as their rise to influence, US President Donald Trump and billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk have severed ties, transforming from strategic allies to fierce public adversaries. What began as a mutually beneficial relationship built on shared interests in deregulation. Government efficiency, and anti-establishment rhetoric has now devolved into a bitter feud, rife with personal attacks, policy clashes, and political threats that may shape the course of the 2026 midterm elections.

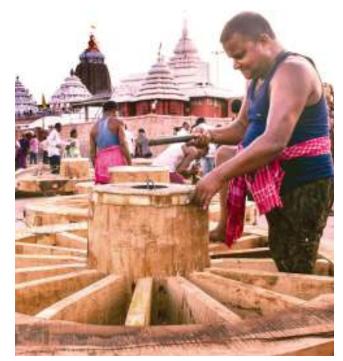
The alliance once seemed improbable — Trump, a brash political force with a loyal base, and Musk, the visionary tech magnate behind Tesla, SpaceX, and social media platform X (formerly Twitter), came from different worlds but found common ground. Trump admired Musk's entrepreneurial genius and boldness; Musk appreciated the former president's deregulatory stance and willingness to upend bureaucratic norms. The collaboration reached its peak when Musk was handed leadership of the Department of Government Efficiency, where he led aggressive cost-cutting reforms and reshaped federal spending

Under Trump, Musk's ventures thrived with major Government contracts and minimal interference. But the fragile bond began to crack when Musk publicly denounced a major new fiscal bill championed by Trump and Republican lawmakers. Dubbed the "big beautiful bill," it promised sweeping tax cuts and spending reductions but also carried the risk of ballooning the national deficit and stripping health insurance from millions. Musk slammed it as a "disgusting abomination," warning it would increase fiscal instability. His criticism struck a nerve in the

Musk escalated tensions by suggesting Trump should be impeached. Trump responded with threats, hinting at cutting Musk's federal contracts and warning of undefined "consequences" should Musk choose to support Democratic candidates in the upcoming elections. The President's warnings carried weight — Musk's companies rely heavily on federal partnerships, particularly in aerospace and defense.

For Musk, the breakup comes with significant consequences. Musk's criticism of the Trump administration could jeopardise future Government contracts and expose his businesses to political retaliation. On the other hand, his apparent openness to backing Democrats marks a significant departure from recent years, where his alignment with conservative causes and voices had grown stronger. For Trump, the loss of Musk's endorsement may alienate segments of the tech-savvy rightwingers. Yet it also gives him ammunition to portray himself as a populist leader unafraid to challenge. This breakup is more than a personal spat; it is a reflection of deeper tensions between Government power and private influence. As their relationship crumbles, the political and economic reverberations are likely to be felt far beyond Washington DC, shaping alliances, elections, and policy for years to come.

# PIC TALK



Carpenter gives final shape to the wheel for the chariot of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra ahead of the Rath Yatra festival, in Puri. PTI

## Maithili cuisine: A one of its kind

Spread across parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, and southern Nepal, Maithili culinary tradition is not merely about food it is a living chronicle of Mithila's history, devotion, Ayurveda and deep ecological harmony

nary offerings from Bihar is the Maithili or Mithila cuisine. It spans across parts of Bihar, Jharkhand (Part of Bihar till 2000) and the Koshi, Bagmati and Madhesh provinces of Nepal. Mithila first gained prominence after being settled by Indo-Aryan people who established the Videha kingdom. During the Later Vedic period (c. 1100-500 BCE), Videha became one of the major political and cultural centres of Ancient India, along with Kuru and Panchala. The kings of the Videha Kingdom were called Janakas and the Videha Kingdom was incorporated into the Vajjika League, which had its capital in the city of Vaishali and is also in Mithila. Mithila is one of the most significant pilgrimage sites in Jainism and is associated with Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara. Lord Buddha also visited this region and during his visit, he is recorded to have preached the Makhadeva and Brahmayu suttas, which are part of the Pali canon.

The region's legacy therefore is unparalleled, and it extends to the culinary sphere as well. In the 14th century, the Maithili book titled Varnaratnakara discussed Maithili cuisine and mentioned the importance of yoghurt (dahi), fish (machha), and various other elements. This historical reference suggests that Maithili cuisine has remained relatively unchanged for many centuries. Maithili cuisine isn't just about tradition, it also follows Ayurvedic principles and adapts to seasonal food cycles. Special dishes are prepared during Maithili festivals like Juddhashtami, Dashahara, Tila Sankranti, and the Chhath Puja.

Local produce is the fundamental and star element of the cuisine, there is also the incorporation of meticulous techniques, leading to dishes known for their simplicity as well as sophistication which resonate with the rich cultural history of the area. Did I mention the simplicity of dishes? There is also an element of grandeur that is associated with the food of this region — the 'Chhappan Bhog'! a feast in honour of people, usually, revered guests, friends, and family. This has its beginnings in being offered to Lord Krishna in gratitude, a total of 56 dishes offered to him by the Brijwasis, representing eight meals for each of the seven days he shielded the people of Vrindavan from Lord Indra's wrath. Chhappan Bhog represents a harmonious blend of six tastes: bitter (karwa), spicy (teekha), astringent (kasaila), sour (khatta), salty (namkeen), and sweet (meetha). By skilfully combining these tastes in various ways, 56 distinct and delectable dishes are made and include Parwal Tarua — Parwal, also known as pointed gourd is sliced into two halves lengthwise, coated in a thick batter, and deep-fried, Kadima Tarua



- Kadima refers to the fresh leaves of the pumpkin in Maithili, after washing the fresh leaves of Kadima, it needs to be folded like a triangle, the leaves are then heated on a low flame and coated in a batter giving it a crunchy exterior and a soft interior. The list goes on to include dishes made from potato, cauliflower, sesame, flaxseeds, Colocasia leaves (Kachu ke Patte), Chana Daal (Ninwa/Ghewre

ki Sabzi), Drumsticks (Sahjan ki Sabzi), and Biriya — a special recipe from the Mithila region of Bihar made by drying chickpea greens and coating them in flour and used in a spicy potato and mustard gravy. It is known for its aroma, texture and slight bitterness, all of which are standout features of the

In Maithili society, there is a saying, "Maach, paan aa makhaan swarme seho nahin bhatet," which translates to "Fish, betel leaves, and makhana (fox nuts) are not found even in heaven." This saying implies that these items are so highly regarded in Maithili culture that they are considered even more precious than heavenly delights. In Maithili culture, fish is typically not brought in from outside, it is sourced from local ponds and lakes.

ANIL RAJPUT

Even vegetables and ingredients for making pickles and papads are usually grown in the region itself, often in home gardens. The emphasis on using locally sourced ingredients adds to the uniqueness of Maithili cuisine.

The seasonal focus of the cuisine is reflected through dishes like Bagiya, which celebrates the new rice harvest. Typically enjoyed around November or December, it is made from freshly harvested rice flour stuffed with lentils or vegetables, jaggery and steamed. It is filled with sweet or savoury ingredients making it a powerhouse of flavour. Tilauri, a kind of cracker made from a batter of rice flour, sesame seeds and jaggery or salt, post this it is made in round shapes and dried in the sun — the dried Tilauri is then deep-fried in oil and eaten — this can be both sweet or savoury depending on the ingredients used. Bidhiya is made by drying green leaves like mustard greens (tori), lamb's quarters (beta), or pea leaves (mattar), these leaves are mixed with black lentil batter before being dried this dish showcases Mithila's resourcefulness in preserving seasonal produce. Kumhrauri is made by drying Ash Gourd and later used in different curries and dishes, and is made to preserve the excess production in the harvest season for other dry seasons. Taruwa dish uses different vegetables, dipped in a batter of blended soaked rice and various spices are added to the batter. It is one of the major dishes in Mithila culture which is mandatorily prepared for every festival and occasion.

The variety of the Maithili cuisine is augmented through its sweet dishes like Thakuwa which holds huge cultural and religious significance. It is also known as Thekuwa or Thokni and is a traditional Indo-Nepali cookie. It is an important item especially during the Chhath festival season — offered as a sacred gift to Lord Surya and Chhathi Maya on the third day of the festival. Another famous recipe is Anarsa — made from rice flour, soaked in sugar syrup, and deep-fried to perfection. The region's culinary story is incomplete without mentioning the Makhana kheer — a sweet rice pudding made with lotus seeds (makhana), milk, and dried nuts, and Kasar, a traditional dish, particularly associated with the Chhath Puja festival — it's dry and prepared with rice flour, jaggery, ghee, and sometimes fennel seeds and dry fruits.

The Maithili cuisine is without doubt a celebration on a plate, it's a burst of flavour that is unmatched and unique. It is reflective of the top-class culinary prowess of the region, and an ode to an unaltered culinary journey through the ages. I firmly believe that the youth and future generation need to discover its full range of variety, nutrition and an environmentally harmonious approach only then will they understand its true value and grand stature!

(The writer is the Secretary of the Cuisine India

## Understanding Karma, and divine control through Gita

#### SECOND **Opinion**

Te are aware of what autopilot is. It is a system that automatically controls a vehicle's path, allowing it to operate with minimal or no human intervention. Why am I using it for us human beings? Believed or not, our material bodies are vehicles, as described in the Bhagavad-Geeta by Lord Krishna in verse # 18.61. He states, "God, present as a part, in the vehicle (our body), resides in the hearts of all beings." Before I go any further, let me give you the Big Picture. There is God on top, as we can imag-

ine. Then, there is the Divine Authority, which works under the superintendence of God. They oversee the working of the material nature, which gives birth to the world along with moving and stationary things. And on account of this, the world cycle goes on. (9.10) Then, there are all living beings with souls, which are parts of God. (15.7) And, of course, there are trees, plants, etc. This entire setup is under the control of God, who is the Controller. Now returning to the topic, how are we on autopi-

**BISHNOI** lot? For us to understand this, we must know the 'Karmaphala Principle' and the personal nature. The first one is simple: "What you sow is what you reap." For example, one thinks of starting a business. If the thought is a serious one, he will one day get started on it. Similarly, someone is working as a menial labourer. He gets paid for it. The third

complex matter. For this, an understanding of the three 'gunas' (modes) is important. Whatever we see is made up of the three gunas, which are goodness, passion and darkness.

These are the basic ingredients of the Creation. Surely, our natures also consist of goodness, passion and darkness in various proportions. A good person will have a higher percentage of the 'sattvaguna' (the mode of goodness) and a small per cent of the 'tamoguna' (the mode of darkness). Similarly, a bad person will have just the opposite proportions, i.e. more tamoguna and less sattavoguna. 'Rajoguna' (the mode of

> passion) constitutes the majority percentage in nature of a common man. Then, how are our natures formed? Life after life, we associate with the three gunas, and that gets embedded in our natures. And when a person dies, the impression is carried to the next body. For example, a good man associates with objects in goodness. He eats foods, which are wholesome and nutritious. He sees programmes, which have natural scenes and even spiritual content. He hears mostly what is instructive. Contrarily, people, who are greedy, lusty, angry or hateful, engage in acts related to these hellish

emotions. Lord Krishna warns, "Lust, anger and

greed are the three different doors to hell, which cause ruination of the soul. Therefore, one should give up these three. (16.21) Lord Krishna is very stern about hate. The Lord states, "I send those envious, harmful, cruel and low-grade people

example is of words. Teachers are the best examples of it. They to the world again and again, and that too in demonic species."

Now I come to how we are on autopilot. It should be clear to us that karmaphalas generated by pious and impious acts will manifest in our present lives or future ones. There is no escape from it. Even God does not interfere in it.

What God does do in the case of a person in God's consciousness? Lord Krishna states, "Having My consciousness, you will cross all impediments by My grace." (18.58) The rest of us will have to face and tolerate the consequences. There is no escape, which is what autopilot is. We are programmed that way. The other feature of autopilot in our lives is much more serious. Our natures are continuously evolving as a result of what we do or associate with. For example, a person is naturally lusty. He will get attracted to objects of lust automatically. He can stop himself using the free will given to him, but few can do so. Ône needs God's help to undo what the present nature ordains. So what have we learnt? That we are on autopilot helplessly. Our karmaphalas will determine what happens to us. What we do today will largely determine what we will get in our future and subsequent lives. Our present efforts will have some effect, but not of any great significance. Are we stuck? Not really. God is the Controller. As explained earlier, God can change things. He can help tackle our bad karmaphalas, as well as help us in changing our faulty natures. You will be surprised by the outcome. We would no longer be on autopilot but in good control over our lives.

(The author is a spiritual coach. Views expressed are personal)

## Letters to the Editor

#### **Indian workers face harrassment**

Labour laws are being violated in Kuwait and many other countries of the world and Indian workers are facing harassment from their employees. Many people migrate in the hope of a better life, but are asked to surrender in front of the powerful authorities there. Companies manipulate labour laws in their favour.

They file fake 'absconding' cases against those who raise their voice against violations of labour laws. They ask the employees to vacate their company flats without giving him/her his/her 'end of service' letter and passport.

The Indian Embassy must intervene and investigate the matter to safeguard the workers' rights. They must also ensure that labour laws are not violated and no person has to go to jail over false allegations. In light of growing reports of Indian workers facing exploitation and false charges abroad, particularly in Kuwait, urgent action is

Many migrate seeking dignity and opportunity but are instead subjected to abuse, illegal evictions, and denial of rightful documents. Companies misuse labour laws to silence dissent.

The Indian Embassy must step in decisively, investigate such cases, and ensure that no worker is left help-

less or wrongfully criminalised in a foreign land. Justice and dignity must prevail.

JUBEL D'CRUZ | MUMBAI

#### **Donald Trump Elon Musk part ways**

Donald Trump and Elon Musk's friendship is well-known. One is a powerful politician and the other is the richest person. However, differences have started between the two. It is turning into a war of words. US President Donald Trump has announced a reduction in contracts with Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk's companies. Musk has threatened to stop the service of the "Dragon Capsule", which is used to transport astronauts and other materials to the International Space Station, on social media. After the failure of the US Government's Boeing Company's Starliner spacecraft, Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams was safereturned to Earth by the Dragon Capsule. Also, NASA has taken help from SpaceX in many military missions.

Elon Musk's Government Efficiency Account (DOSE) was created primarily to reduce Government spending. Musk believes that Trump's policy undermines the original purpose of this account. He described Trump's bill as "disgusting." Trump initially took a tough stance on imposing import tariffs on China. Musk's Tesla company was to directly benefit from it. Because Chinese electric cars have eroded Tesla's position in other major markets. After all, Elon Musk helped Trump in the election with a business perspective or goal in mind. But Trump's new bill will be a problem for Musk's Tesla company.

DATTAPRASAD SHIRODKAR | MUMBAI

#### Water ATM's in Delhi

The report "Government to install water ATMs across schools and public spaces" (June 7) reveals the Delhi Government's keen interest in safeguarding the interest of the students and increasing the facilities in the schools. The proposal to provide pure cold water along with language laboratories and digital libraries is indeed a welcome step. It will be a great encouragement for the children who struggle a lot in reaching the school, carrying a heavy load of books, study materials and water-bottles. Free Laptops to meritorious students will definitely motivate the students to fare better in studies.

**AJIT KUMAR** 

Since most schools have no adequate space and facility for boarding and deboarding of students and are located on the edge of the main roads, it often creates problems and chaos, apart from persistent traffic - snarls and even accidents in the vicinity. Though it is mandatory for the management of every school to arrange necessary space and convenience in the compound itself, this rule is not adhered to rigidly. Moreover, the to and fro travel of students between schools and homes, mostly in hired vehicles, packed like sardines, in highly precarious condition, often causes mishaps. Hence remedial steps have to be taken on priority basis to ensure adequate space and convenience within the school precincts.

TT SAKARIA | DELHI

#### **INCREASING WORKING HOURS IS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE**

he news that the Andhra Pradesh Government increasing the daily working hours to 10 hours (7-6-25) shocks one and all. The ruling dispensation takes pride in implementing drastic changes in the name of Reforms, however anti people they are. Even the previous tenures of the present Chief Minister are marked by pro management and anti workers decisions. Now increasing the cap on daily working hours to 10 hours, increasing the over time in a quarter from 75 to 144 hours and allowing women to take up night shifts are being justified by the concerned minister as acts to allure investors and empower women by enabling them to earn more. Both the claims are absurd.

No doubt, labour is the most flexible and vulnerable component that could be exploited more easily to maximise profit. But experts say any amount of work done for more than 8 hours a day will have

diminishing marginal productivity, besides its serious negative impacts on physical and mental health and social behavior. Investors have never claimed working hours as a disturbing factor for not investing in the State. The minister says ensuring safety in the workplace as a condition to allow women in the night shift. It may remain only in the statutory books as the Government that allures the investors cannot be expected to be strict in enforcing rules.

The Government's apathy towards the wealth creating toiling section could be easily understood from the fact that even the Wage Board is not formed and the Minimum wage of the scheduled employees are not upwardly revised since more than a decade. It would be a wise act on the part of the Government to consult the workers' Unions before taking up such measures which are likely to have far reaching impact on workers. AG RAJMOHAN JANANTPUR

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



## How climate change is pushing agriculture to the brink

The rainfall has grown erratic, endangering the livelihoods of millions. From delayed rains and failed crops to groundwater depletion and glacial melt, a cascading crisis is unfolding — one that not only threatens food security but also fuels rural distress, mass migration and growing unrest

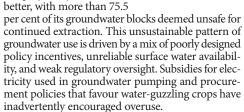


griculture in India remains deeply intertwined with the monsoon, which accounts for nearly 70 per cent of the country's annual rainfall and supports over half of its cultivated land. However, rising global temperatures have made the monsoon increasingly unpredictable. Early or delayed onsets are now common, while rainfall patterns have grown more volatile, with some regions experiencing intense downpours while others endure prolonged dry spells.

In states such as Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and eastern Uttar Pradesh — where agriculture heavily depends on the monsoon rains — farmers are struggling to cope with these shifting climatic patterns. Smallholder farmers, who typically cultivate less than two hectares and constitute the majority of the agricultural workforce, often lack access to adequate irrigation, storage facilities, and financial support. Consequently, even slight disruptions in rainfall timing or unexpected droughts during critical crop phases can lead to significant yield losses, pushing already vulnerable households deeper into debt.

With monsoon rains becoming less reliable, farmers are increasingly turning to groundwater to keep their crops alive. Borewells and tube wells have become essential lifelines during prolonged dry spells. However, this fallback is fast becoming a crisis of its own. Unregulated and widespread extraction of groundwater is rapidly depleting aquifers, especially in regions already under significant water stress. According to the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), over 1,000 of the 6,607 assessed groundwater blocks across the country have been classified as "overexploited." The situation is particularly severe in the northwestern, western, and southern peninsular regions of the coun-

try. In states like Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, decades of intensive agriculture — especially the cultivation of water-intensive crops such as wheat and paddy — have severely strained groundwater reserves. According to CGWB 2023 data, 87 per cent of Punjab's 153 assessed blocks are classified as overexploited, critical, or semi-critical, leaving only 13 per cent in the 'safe' category. Haryana fares no better, with more than 75.5



advertently encouraged overuse.

The growing water crisis in India is made even



worse by changes taking place at higher altitudes, particularly in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region. The region has seen average temperatures rise by  $+0.28^{\circ}$ C per decade since 1951, with some river basins warming at an even faster rate. As a result, glacial melt has accelerated significantly. Scientific assessments indicate that the rate of glacier mass loss has increased by 65 per cent in the past decade, with average losses rising from -0.17 metres of water equivalent per year between 2000 and 2009 to -0.28 metres per year between 2010 and 2019.

The rapid retreat of glaciers poses serious risks to downstream water availability, especially for key glacier-fed rivers such as the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Indus. These rivers are vital lifelines, supporting millions across northern India by providing water for irrigation, drinking, and hydroelectric power. Historically, meltwater from these glaciers played a crucial role in sustaining river flows

and replenishing groundwater supplies. However, the accelerated glacial melt and resulting drop in river discharge, especially during dry seasons, are slowing groundwater recharge. This poses a severe challenge to farmers who depend heavily on both groundwater and river water to sustain their crops. Reduced river flows are also undermining canal irrigation systems and hydropower generation, both of which are essential for India's agricultural productivity and ener-

ARVIND KUMAR JHA THE INCREASING SOIL SALINITY IS DRIVING DOWN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND ESCALATING RECLAMATION COSTS — OFTEN TOO EXPENSIVE FOR SMALL AND MARGINAL FARMERS. MANY ARE FORCED TO ABANDON FARMING OR

SHIFT TO ALTERNATIVE
LIVELIHOODS LIKE SHRIMP
AQUACULTURE, WHICH CAN
FURTHER EXACERBATE SALINITY
PROBLEMS

gy security

As both surface and groundwater sources come under increasing stress, the consequences are becoming visible in the form of rising soil salinity — especially in heavily irrigated regions. This problem is particularly acute in coastal areas such as the Sundarbans in West Bengal and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, where rising sea levels have led to saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers and paddy fields. In the Sundarbans alone, nearly 30 per cent of arable land is affected by salinity. Across the country, approximately 6.74 million hectares of land are classified as salt-affected, and this area is expanding by nearly 10 per cent annually. Experts warn that if this trend continues unchecked, nearly half of India's cultivable land could be compromised by 2050.

The increasing soil salinity is driving down agricultural productivity and escalating reclamation costs — often too expensive for small and marginal farmers. Many are forced to abandon farming or shift to alternative livelihoods like shrimp aquaculture, which can further exacerbate salinity problems. With more than half of India's workforce dependent on agriculture, the loss of fertile land presents a dire threat not only to rural livelihoods but also to the country's overall food security. According to the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India, over 30 per cent of the country's total geographical area is undergoing desertification/ degradation, much of it driven by water and wind erosion, and loss of soil fertility. States like Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana are among the worst affected. Experts warn that rising temperatures are compounding the crisis by depleting soil moisture and

increasing water stress during critical crop stages such as flowering and grain filling. The Indo-Gangetic plains, India's wheat basket, are already experiencing significant yield declines of 1 per cent to 8 per cent (depending on the region) due to these climate pressures. However, when indirect impacts — particularly reduced water availability and declining irrigation levels — are taken into account, wheat yields are plummeting even more sharply, with losses ranging from 4 per cent to as much as 36 per cent.

Climate change is also intensifying the threat of agricultural pests and diseases by creating favourable conditions for their proliferation. Rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and changing humidity levels have expanded the range and severity of pest outbreaks. For instance, the locust swarms that ravaged crops across Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and parts of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra in 2020 were partly triggered by unusually wet weather conditions n the Arabian Peninsula, linked to climate variability. These swarms ravaged nearly 48,669 square kilometres of cropland, with Maharashtra being the hardest hit, losing over 10 per cent of its farmland. Similarly, the incidence of pests such as the fall armyworm, whiteflies, and mealybugs has increased significantly. Climate change is also altering the life cycles of pests and their natural predators, reducing the effectiveness of traditional pest control methods. This has forced farmers to increase pesticide usage, leading to higher production costs, health hazards, and environmental degradation.

These interconnected challenges are deepening agricultural distress, severely impacting farmers' livelihoods and mental health. Financial pressures and uncertainty have contributed to a tragic rise in farmer suicides. In 2022 alone, more than 11,000 suicides were reported, with Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Karnataka bearing the greatest burden. As farming becomes increasingly unsustainable, many young people are abandoning agriculture in pursuit of more secure livelihoods, driving a surge n rural-to-urban migration. This demographic shift is putting enormous strain on urban infrastructure, public services, and labour markets. In already overstretched cities, even minor disruptions can trigger social unrest, presenting significant challenges for local governance and law enforcement. Economic desperation in rural India has also been linked to rising protests and growing susceptibility to radical ideologies. Groups like the Naxalites in central and eastern India have historically exploited economic marginalisation and agrarian grievances to fuel anti-state sentiment and recruit disaffected populations.

If climate — induced despair continues unchecked, it risks deepening disillusionment and weakening the bond between vulnerable communities and the state — posing a serious threat to internal stability and national cohesion.

(The writers are former PCCFs, UP and Maharashtra, Views are personal)

# From sidelines to centre stage: Women athletes redefine the future of sports

he next Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, in 2028, will have many firsts! The number of women athletes exceeds their male counterparts. There will be a full gender parity in all team events, while the number of women's football teams surpasses men's. There is another first! Kirsty Coventry, a Zimbabwean athlete, elected this year, takes up the mantle of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), becoming the first-ever woman to lead the Olympics in its 131-year history. In the Olympics, in terms of the number, women athletes scaled new heights from 2.2 per cent representation in 1900 in Paris to achieving gender parity in Paris again in 2024, a quarter and a century later. But, the journey remained fraught with multiple challenges. Lack of financial resources impacted the quality of training, facilities, and overall support available to female athletes (Blinde et al., 1993), and hampered the growth and sustainability of women's sports leagues and teams (Sartore & Cunningham, 2014). Potential brands often undervalued women's sports, considering it to be an arena of 'unproven returns'. There was, however, a significant shift in recent times when angel investors and venture capitalists came forward to explore the over-looked market and made use of the best available data.

and content on digital/ social media. The emergence of Angel City FC in 2020 in the US National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), set a new precedent, when its all-female founding team 'inverted the accepted business model of sports franchise, moved their brand beyond the local base, to digital brand building'. Within the first three years, it could raise a market valuation of \$250 million in 2024. Such experimental ventures remain not confined to Europe and the USA, but, in areas like the Middle East, where governments are increasingly directing resources towards grassroots initiatives designed to

foster greater girls' participation in sports. In India, around 1200 companies invested a combined ₹526.14 crore in 2022-23 on CSR investments, nearly double compared to the previous financial year (₹291.75 crore), for promoting sports, including women's. However, many sports analysts believe that 'not many companies consider women's sports while choosing their CSR goals' (Goodera). Nevertheless, a 2024 survey (Service Monkey & Parity), found that 'women athletes are trusted influencers', the majority of sports fans (88 per cent) regard them as 'impactful role models' and almost 73 per cent said that they watch women's sports at least a few times a year, which is 81 per cent in case of men's sports, and an overwhelming majority think (92 per cent) that it is 'important' for girls to play while growing up. A 2023 report (Deloitte) highlighted that 85 per cent of women who played sports as children, and are now Fortune 500 CEOs, believed that the 'top skills they developed by playing sports



helped them to succeed in their professional careers. In 2024, global revenues for women's sports moved up \$1.3 billion, with an impressive 300 per cent growth in just three years (Deloitte). Moreover, sponsorship deals for women's sports have also seen a 20 per cent year-over-year increase since 2020 (Sports United). 'In recent years, attendance, viewership and social engagement for women's sports have spiked, leading to long-overdue financial backing through investments and sponsor-

ships...' said, the CEO and founder of SponsorUnited. Across all countries, 32 per cent of fans of women's sports say they are more likely to purchase products when a brand supports women's sports. While in 2022, there was a 30 per cent surge in the number of advertisements featuring women sports celebrities in India (TAM AdEx). The owner of the UP Warriors in the Women's Premier League (WPL) and the head of Capri Sports, were categorical that 'perception about women athletes as brand endorsers has transformed significantly because of chang-

ing consumer mindsets, and growing data-backed proof. Now, this momentum requires a strategic roadmap that balances innovation with a focus on core business fundamentals for sustained growth and commercial success as well. Industries must move from a short-term return on investment (ROI) to a venture capital mindset driven by values, long-term vision, and a commitment to societal impact for the long-term health of women's sports.

**ARCHANA** 

DATTA

Undeniably, digital space could boost the visibility of women in sports to about 18.5 per cent in 2022, marking a 2.53 per cent average annual increase. But, women sportspersons face a 'different scrutiny on digital space as audiences expectations are still deeply embedded in societal norms' and brand marketing strategies continue to focus more on 'traditional femininity'. A social media analysis during the 2018 Commonwealth Games, found that words like 'strong' and 'talented' were frequently used in the case of male athletes, while women athletes were

labelled with terms like 'pretty' or 'girls'. A similar analysis of the online sports stories and images posted during the Rio Olympic Games found that men athletes were portrayed in 'active or competitive roles, while women athletes were frequently depicted in 'passive or aesthetically appealing ways'. Women athletes' Instagram posts on non-sportrelated images receive significantly higher engagement. As a result, many high-profile women athletes adopt branding strategies that promote polished, heteronormative femininity, avoiding controversial political stances and thus limiting their abilities to challenge gendered perceptions in sports, argued a study on feminist neo-liberal marketing strategies. Women sportspersons also continue to face 'widespread, overlapping and grave forms of violence at all levels' (UN). Nearly 21 per cent of professional women athletes experienced sexual abuse as a child in sports, almost double the rate of male athletes (11 per cent). A 2021 study (World Athletics) found that 85 per cent of online abuse in the lead-up to and during the Tokyo Olympics was directed at women. But, sports bodies tend to focus more on curbing doping and match-fixing as sports integrity measures. In India, the prolonged protests by Olympic medal-winning women wrestlers exposed the ineptitude of such bodies.

In 2023, the UN Women and UNESCO outlined a 10-point 'Call to Action' for gender equality in and through sports, addressing issues like fair pay, media representation, and safeguarding standards. Countries must adopt it, and standardise procedures to strengthen the grievance redressal mechanisms of sports bodies with a strong legal framework, ensure survivor support and accountability, and also take technology companies and social media platforms on board to tackle online abuses. Governments, Corporations and media houses should all come together to create a level playing field with resources, exposure and voice to herald an era of equitable, safe and inclusive sports.

(The writer is former Director-General of Doordarshan and AIR. She is also the former Press Secretary to the President.

Views expressed are personal)

# From discipline to display: The silent erosion of traditional Yoga

rowing up, I always learnt and practised yoga in a quiet, disciplined, and almost sacred way. In India, yoga was never just an exercise; it was a deeply spiritual and scientific system, honed over thousands of years to align the body, mind, and spirit. Whether it was traditional forms like Hatha Yoga and Ashtanga Yoga, or guru-shishya lineages such as Sivananda Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, or Satyananda Yoga, the core practices remained largely consistent, with only minor variations, and were intentionally grounded in both physical discipline and profound philosophical wisdom.

Hatha Yoga, which I practice at Sivananda School of Yoga practice, for instance, is not merely about bending the body into various shapes. It is about balancing the masculine and feminine energies within oneself ('Ha' in 'Hatha' means Sun and 'tha' means Moon). The slow, purposeful asanas are designed to prepare the body for deeper spiritual practices like meditation and so on. Ashtanga Yoga, demands discipline and synchronisation of breath with a progressive series of postures, promoting physical endurance and men-

tal clarity.

Iyengar Yoga, developed by BKS
Iyengar, emphasises precision and alignment. Props like belts and blocks are used

not as gimmicks but as intelligent aids to help practitioners achieve the correct posture safely. Satyananda Yoga, from the Bihar School of Yoga, also a disciple of Swami Sivananda, offers a holistic system combining asanas, pranayama (breath control), and meditation, deeply grounded in ancient scriptures yet highly accessible to modern practitioners. These traditional forms of yoga were complete systems — designed not

just to build strong bodies but to cultivate resilience, compassion, inner peace, and eventually, spiritual awakening. But today, the variations presented, especially to attract younger audiences are at times of concern. In the quest to make yoga more "appealing," a whole new breed of hybrid practices have emerged at times sans focus on posture or mind breath and body coordination.

body coordination.

While innovation can often bring new energy to old traditions, in the case of yoga, I worry that something fundamental is being lost. Power Yoga, for example, was developed to suit the Western craving for calorie — burning workouts. It emphasises speed, strength, and sweat — but often sacrifices breath awareness, alignment, and the contemplative aspects that are central to yoga. Aerial Yoga uses silk hammocks to suspend practitione per cent in midair. While it might look beautiful on social media, it introduces new risks to the musculoskeletal system, especially if taught without a proper understanding of traditional postures and body mechanics. HIIT Yoga and CrossFit Yoga attempt to fuse high-intensity interval training and weightlifting

principles with yogic postures.

The fact is that yoga was never intended to be a high-stress activity on the body. Then there's Paddleboard Yoga and Spin and Yoga, both interesting combinations, but ones that often seem to dilute the inward focus that traditional yoga demands. Balancing on a paddleboard or spinning on a cycle while trying to breathe deeply and remain mindful often becomes more of a challenge to one's physical endurance rather than an invitation to stillness and self-inquiry.

What concerns me is not merely the creation of these hybrids, but the way they are marketed: Yoga is increasingly sold as a product — a lifestyle choice that promises flat abs, glowing skin, and mental sharpness in 30 days or less. The ancient aim of yoga — union with the higher self — is often barely mentioned. The sacredness of the practice, its depth, and its inherent science seem at risk of being trivialised into a trendy hashtag or a flashy gym class. Experimenting with traditional practices with-

out a deep understanding of their purpose and structure can be risky. Traditional yoga evolved slowly, through painstaking observation of the human body and

observation of the human body and mind. Every asana was designed with attention to anatomical, energetic, and psychological effects.

Disrupting this carefully developed sequence — speeding it up, loading it with weights, suspending it mid-air — can lead to injuries ranging from minor sprains to serious spinal issues. Traditional yoga balances the nervous system, calming the fight-or-flight response and cultivating parasympathetic dominance (rest and digest mode).

High-intensity fusions may instead overstimulate the nervous system, leaving practitioners wired and anxious rather than grounded and serene. Having said that, I believe there is always room for creativity. Yoga should be alive, growing, and meeting the needs of new generations. But this growth must be rooted in respect for the science behind traditional systems. Without that grounding, we risk turning yoga into just another fitness fad — here today, gone tomorrow — when in fact it is one of humanity's most precious treasures for holistic health and self-realisation. As someone who has felt the profound benefits of traditional yoga, I urge others — especially younger audiences drawn to "new-age" yoga, to explore the traditional systems first. Understand the depth before seeking novelty. Build a strong foundation before experimenting. After all, yoga isn't just something we do, it's something we become, and it's a way of life. And that transformation is far too sacred to be rushed, repackaged,

(The writer is a certified Sivananda Yoga teacher. Views

expressed are personal)

or compromised.

### MONEY MATTERS



#### **China to hold South Asia expo from June 19**

unming, the capital of southwest China's Yunnan province, will host from June 19 to 24 this year's China-South Asia Expo with India and Pakistan having the largest presence. The expo will feature 11 themed halls highlighting key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and modern agriculture. This is the 9th edition of the expo in which a vast number of businessmen from India and South Asian countries besides traders from around the world take part. About 1.400 enterprises from 54 countries and regions have confirmed participation, state-run Xinhua reported. Nearly 1,000 professional buyers are expected to attend, Li Chaowei, director of the Yunnan provincial department of commerce said. China's trade with South Asia in 2024 is stated to be around USD 200 billion with the bulk of it with India, according to official data. The India China trade last year totalled to about USD 127.7 billion with India's trade deficit mounting to USD 99.2 billion He said the expo also provides a broad platform for showcasing products from South Asian countries, with two South Asia pavilions offering nearly 800 booths. India and Pakistan have the largest presence, with each having 140 booths, state-run Global Times quoted Li as saying



#### 'India poised to benefit from FTAs'

ndia has emerged as a "great place" to use the advantages accruing from Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), a senior retail industry official said as he highlighted the success of Make in India programme. "We are among the most attractive markets, with a growing young population that makes us one of the world's largest consumer markets with insatiable demand for the best in the world," said Retailers Association of India (RAI) CEO Kumar Rajagopalan at an event here. FTAs will also give Indians access to items that get manufactured abroad at a more convenient pricing, he added. But he was also quick to dismiss notions of dumping cheap inferior goods into the Indian market, pointing out that the country has created laws that can protect against such trade-damaging practices, and that can be challenged at the World Trade Organization. According to Kumar, a trade veteran of 40 decades, a fullfledged quality control checking system is in place to ensure Indian consumers are getting the best products as imports of edibles is set to increase following the signing of more and more FTAs by the Indian government in an endeavour to reach out the global markets



#### **Completed 29 major** irrigation projects: UP

he Uttar Pradesh government has completed 29 major irrigation projects over the past eight years, according to an official statement. These projects have directly benefited 43,53,850 farmers across the state and led to an increase of 19,11,231 hectares in irrigation capacity. The initiative not only strengthens the state's agricultural productivity, but also marks a significant milestone in flood control and water conservation efforts, the UP government said in the statement. Over the past eight years, seven major irrigation projects have been completed -- Bansagar Canal Project, Lahchura Dam Project Pahari Dam Project, Saryu Canal National Project, Arjun Sahayak Canal Project, UP Water Restructuring Project (Phase-II), and Umarhat Pump Project (Phase-II)," it said. These projects have benefitted 42,28,355 farmers in districts like Mirzapur, Prayagraj, Mahoba, Hamirpur, Bahraich, Gonda, Balrampur, Shravasti, Siddharthnagar, Sant Kabir Nagar, Basti, Gorakhpur, Maharajganj, Banda, Amethi, Raebareli, Etawah, Etah, Kannauj, Kanpur Dehat, Kasganj, Kaushambi, Fatehpur, Farrukhabad, Firozabad, Barabanki, Mainpuri, and Lalitpur, it

# India is key strategic market for global brands, says Myntra CEO

**PNS** ■ SINGAPORE

India is a key strategic market for global brands while domestic brands are strengthening their propositions, Nandita Sinha, CEO of Bengaluru-headquartered Myntra, which launched in

Singapore last month, said. With the launch of Myntra Global in Singapore, we're also laying the foundation for

our global foray, with a longterm aspiration to serve the Indian diaspora beyond India," Sinha said on Sunday after attending the NRF 25, an international retail show held here June 3-6.

"The new-age insurgent brands are tailoring their value proposition," she said, underlining the growing strategic importance of the Indian mar-

# 'India will protect farmers' interest in US trade talks'

PNS NEW DELHI

India will prioritise protecting its farmers' interests while assessing potential gains and losses in the ongoing trade negotiations with the United States over agricultural market access, Agriculture Minister

Shivraj Singh Chouhan said.
"Our priority is to protect the interest of our farmers. India will not work closing its eyes. We will assess our gains and losses. Keeping that in mind, an agreement will be finalised," Chouhan said in an interview. He was responding to a

query on how India would safeguard farmers amid US pressure for greater market access for American agricultural and horticultural prod-

The negotiators are expected to agree on the framework for the broad contours of the first phase of the bilateral deal, expected to be signed by



between India and the US. One thing is clear, we will protect the interest of our farmers. When we talk about two nations, we need to see the overall trade."

"The discussions are ongoing

fall (September-October) 2025. "The discussions are ongoing between India and the US. One thing is clear, we will protect the interest of our farmers. When we talk about two nations, we need to see the overall trade," the minister

According to a NITI Aayog report, "Promoting India-US Agricultural Trade under the new US Trade Regime", the value for US agriculture and allied product exports to India was about USD 2.22 billion in the triennium ending 2024. In the same period, India exported USD 5.75 billion

worth of agricultural products to the US. India's main agricultural exports to the US include frozen shrimp, basmati rice, spices, processed cereals, and

other value-added products. The US wants to export more agricultural products

such as corn, soybeans, and animal feed, but faces high Indian tariffs -- especially in agriculture, where average tariffs can reach up to 39-50 per

The minister's comments come as India and the US continue negotiations on expanding agricultural trade, with Washington seeking reduced tariffs and improved market access for its farm products in the Indian market.

#### RARE EARTH MAGNETS IMPORT FROM CHINA

## Auto industry seeks govt help in expediting approvals

PNS NEW DELHI

The automobile industry has sought government support in expediting approvals from the Chinese government for importing rare earth magnets used in various applications, including passenger cars.

As per the industry sources,

various domestic suppliers have already sought approval from the Chinese government through their local vendors in China.

However, no approvals have been granted so far, sources said. China controls over 90 per cent of global processing capacity for the magnets, used across multiple sectors including automobiles, home appliances and clean energy.

The Chinese government has put restrictions, with effect from April 4, mandating special export licences for seven rare earth elements and related magnets.

In Japan, Suzuki Motor has already suspended production of its Swift car because of China's curbs. Last week,

Maruti Suzuki India Senior Executive Officer (Corporate Affairs) Rahul Bharti said China has asked for an enduser certificate, endorsed by the Indian government and approved by the Chinese government.

"So that process is on and industry is in discussion with the government," he stated.

Deloitte India Partner and Automotive Sector Leader Rajat Mahajan noted that the shortage is a major supply chain disruption especially for EVs as rare earth metals are used extensively in the electric motor which is a core compo-

Rare earth magnets have high magnetic energy storage capacity with low coercivity at high operating tempera-

#### European plane maker ATR bullish on India; in talks with airlines

PNS NEW DELHI

Bullish on the business opportunities in India, European aircraft maker ATR is in discussions with scheduled and nonscheduled operators to explore sale of its aircraft.

Considering the growth potential of the Indian market, a senior ATR official said it expects the country to have 300 more turboprops in the next 10 years. A joint venture between Airbus and Leonardo, ATR manufactures turboprops with up to 78 seats as well as freighters. Currently, there are 70 ÅTR aircraft in the country that are operated by IndiGo,

ATR is still "very bullish" on



the Indian market and is in active discussions with some of the operators, the company's Managing Director and Head of Region Asia PacificJean-Pierre Clercin told PTI in a recent interview in the national capital.

Without divulging specific details, he said the company is in talks with scheduled and non-scheduled operators, including those already flying

## Bank of Baroda, HDFC Bank reduce lending rate by up to 50 bps, 10 bps

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Sunday said it has cut its benchmark lending rate linked to repo rate by 50 basis points in line with the RBI's rate reduction.

Meanwhile, private sector HDFC Bank reduced its Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rates (MCLR) by 10 basis points across tenure, which will benefit borrowers whose loans are linked to this benchmark. Pursuant to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)



reducing the policy repo rate, the bank has slashed its Repo Linked Lending Rate (RLLR) by 50 basis points with effect from June 7, BoB said in a statement. The bank's RLLR stands at 8.15 per cent, it said. With this, BoB has fully effected on the RBI rate cut in its RLLR, it added. According to HDFC Bank website, the new MCLR rates are effective from June 7. With the reduction, the overnight and one-month rates are down by 10 basis points to 8.90 per cent.

The three-month rate has dropped 10 bps to 8.95 per cent, while the six-month and one-year rate is 9.05 per cent, down 10 bps.

Both the two-year and threeyear tenure lending rate have

been reduced from earlier 9.20 per cent to 9.10 per cent.

Earlier on Friday, the RBI cut interest rates by a larger-thanexpected 50 basis points, and unexpectedly reduced the cash reserve ratio for banks to make available more money to lend in a bid to boost the economy. The RBI's six-member monetary policy committee, headed by Governor Sanjay Malhotra and consisting of three external members, voted five to one to lower the benchmark repurchase or repo rate by 50 basis points to 5.5 per cent.

## Gautam Adani draws Rs 10.41 cr pay, lags behind peers

PNS NEW DELHI

India's second richest person Gautam Adani received a total the fiscal year ended March 31, 2025, lower than most industry peers and his own key executives.

Adani, 62, drew salaries from two out of the nine listed companies in his ports-to-energy conglomerate, the latest annual reports of the listed entities of the group showed. His total remuneration was 12 per cent more than the Rs 9.26 crore he had earned in the

previous 2023-24 financial year. His remuneration for 2024-25 from the group's flagship firm Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) included Rs 2.26 crore salary and

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Odisha is no longer the miner-

als hub of India, it is becoming

a diversified industrial power-house, Chief Minister Mohan

Charan Maihi said on Sunday.

while interacting with industrial-

ists at the Lok Seva Bhavan,

ahead of the first anniversary of

his government. "Odisha is no

longer just a minerals and metals

hub. We are becoming a diversi-

fied industrial powerhouse, where

opportunity flows from port to

plant and from cities to every aspi-

Maihi made the statement

another Rs 28 lakh in perquisites, allowances and other benefits. The total earnings from AEL at Rs 2.54 crore was higher than Rs 2.46 crore in the previous fiscal. Besides, he drew Rs 7.87 crore

from Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) - - Rs 1.8 crore salary and Rs 6.07 crore

This compared with Rs 6.8

rational district," he said.

The state is growing across 20

sectors -- from mining, metal-

lurgy and metal downstream to

emerging opportunities in chemicals, food processing,

apparel and textiles, he

said.Majhi spoke about the measures his government has

"One year ago, the people of

Odisha placed their faith in us

to build a future that is inclu-

sive, aspirational, and transfor-

mative. Today, as we reflect on

this first year, we do so with

pride, in our progress and

taken to help industries.

Odisha is becoming diversified industrial powerhouse: CM

crore he received from APSEZ in 2023-24. Adani's salary is lower than the heads of almost all large family-owned conglomerates in

While the richest Indian, Mukesh Ambani, has been foregoing his entire salary since Covid-19 broke out, prior to which he had capped his remuneration at Rs 15 crore, Adani's remuneration is much lower than telecom czar Sunil Bharti Mittal (Rs 32.27 crore in 2023-24), Rajiv Bajaj (Rs 53.75 crore in FY24), Pawan Munjal (Rs 109 crore in FY24), L&T Chairman S N Subrahmanyan (Rs 76.25 crore in FY25) and Infosys CEO Salil S Parekh (Rs 80.62 crore in FY25).

renewed commitment to the

ment was focused on job cre-

ation, he urged the industrialists

to join the journey of making the

Maintaining that his govern-

journey ahead," he said.

#### Maha, K'taka account for 51 pc of FDI in India

PNS NEW DELHI

Maharashtra and Karnataka accounted for 51 per cent of the foreign direct investment try during the last financial year 2024-25, according to the latest data of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)

Maharashtra attracted maximum foreign inflows at USD 19.6 billion and accounted for 31 per cent of the country's total FDI during April-March 2024-25.

Karnataka received USD 6.62 billion overseas investments during the last fiscal year, the data showed.

an industrial powerhouse. "Over the last year alone, 206

large projects were approved -

- nearly double the average of

the previous five years. These represent a total investment

value of over Rs 4.5 lakh crore

and an employment potential of

nearly 2.9 lakh jobs," he said.

summit, 56 projects have

already been taken up for

ground-breaking and inaugura-

tion, with a combined invest-

ment of over Rs 1.78 lakh

crore, and employment poten-

tial for 1.1 lakh people.

"Since the Utkarsha Odisha

## Global trends, inflation data to drive market sentiments

PNS NEW DELHI

Equity investors would track global market trends, inflation data and trading activity of foreign investors for further cues this week, analysts said.

Moreover, progress of monsoon and developments related to trade talks would also be monitored by investors, experts noted.

Going forward, market participants will focus on key macroeconomic data for further cues. High-frequency indicators such as CPI inflation will be closely tracked to gauge demand trends and the central bank's next steps. Additionally, the progress of monsoon and sowing patterns will be monitored due to their implications for rural consumption," Ajit Mishra --SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd -- said.

On the global front, developments in trade negotiations and movements in US bond yields will continue to influence investor sentiment, he added.

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty surged on Friday, driven by a rally in rate-sensitive sectors following the Reserve Bank's jumbo rate cut of 50 basis points.

The 30-share BSE Sensex

ended the day higher by 746.95 points, or 0.92 per cent, to settle at 82,188.99. The 50-share NSE Nifty

reclaimed the 25,000-level and climbed 252.15 points, or 1.02 per cent, to settle at 25,003.05.

"We expect Indian markets to witness a gradual up-move, supported by positive sentiment following higher-thananticipated rate cut by the RBI and optimism surrounding a potential US-India trade agreement with officials from both sides meeting in New Delhi to finalise the first phase of the proposed deal," Siddhartha Khemka, Head, Research, Management, Motilal Oswal

Financial Services Ltd, said.

## Revival signs in primary market: Over a dozen IPOs set to launch

PNS NEW DELHI

After a sluggish start to 2025, the primary market is showing signs of revival with over a dozen companies having lined up their IPOs in the next three to six months buoyed by a stabilizing secondary market and easing geopolitical tensions, merchant bankers said.

Among the companies preparing to tap the capital markets are HDB Financial Services, a subsidiary of HDFC Bank, National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL), Kalpataru, Rubicon Research, All Time Plastics, Regreen-Excel EPC India, and Paramesu

Biotech, they added.

Additionally, Credila, SK Finance, Veritas Finance, Paras Healthcare, CIEL HR Services. Avanse Financial Services, Drof-Ketal Chemicals India, Brigade Hotel Ventures and Shreeji Shipping are looking to launch their IPOs.

All these companies have already received clearance from the markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India

These companies are mobilising funds to support capital expenditure requirements especially for expansion plans, repayment of borrowings, and for general corporate purpos-



However, the overall IPO es. This renewed activity follows the launch of six IPOs last activity in 2025 has slowed, month, including Schloss with only 16 firms coming Bangalore, the owner of luxuout with public issues so far, compared to 29 IPOs in the ry hotel chain The Leela

slowdown is attributed to ongoing volatility in the equity market due to a mix of global and domestic factors. This shift followed a remark-

same period last year. The

able 2024, in which 91 maiden public issues collectively raised Rs 1.6 lakh crore, driven by robust retail participation, a resilient economy, and booming private capital expendi-

Despite the cautious start to 2025, there are promising signs. A growing number of companies are filing documents, and the second half of the year is expected to witness robust IPO

"We will see robust activity in the IPO markets in the second half of 2025 as a good set of companies are looking to launch their public issues. There is a good appetite among investors for attractively priced IPOs," said Saahil Kinkhabwala, Director, Investment Banking, Monarch Networth Capital Ltd. Pranjal Srivastava, Partner,

Banking, Investment Centrum Capital, noted that the Indian IPO market's sluggish beginning in 2025 reflects cautious investor sentiment amid global economic uncertainties and domestic market volatility.

# The Pioneer erabad

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MONDAY JUNE 9, 2025



In an exclusive chat with **The Pioneer**, Shriya Pilgaonkar opens up about stepping into the layered world of *Chhal Kapat* -The Deception, her lifelong love for murder mysteries, and what made playing Inspector Devika such a transformative experience. From childhood nostalgia for Agatha Christie novels to exploring complex emotional terrains on screen, she reflects on how this whodunnit is more than just a suspenseful thriller—it's a deep dive into friendship, trauma and the grey areas of human behaviour.

opportunity to portray strong and vulnerable women who are nuanced and layered on screen," she says. "I think as an actor, the way I want to be memorable is through these parts that people really con-

While she's enjoyed a wide range of dramatic and thriller roles, the *Taaza Khabar* actress is now setting her sights on cinema, aiming to explore new genres and reinvent herself. "There are so many different genres I want to explore," she reveals. "Although I've done more dramas and thrillers, I'm now moving in a direction to make choices where I will be reimagined—and seen in a different look, in a different vibe. That's what makes act-

ing really exciting."
Over the past decade, Shriya Pilgaonkar has established herself as a performer who brings depth and authenticity to every role. With Chhal Kapat-The Deception, she steps confidently into darker, more ambiguous territory—and promises to leave audiences questioning everything they think they know.

> It's a genre I've genuinely loved for as long as I can remember. Naturally, I've always wanted to be part of a story like that, because so many of my favourite shows and films are murder mysteries and whodunnits







face. Set in a secluded village near Burhanpur, the story begins with a reunion of childhood friends—only for one of them to be found dead, sending shockwaves through the celebration. What follows is a tense, emotionally layered whodunnit that blends psychological drama with a tightly woven mystery. At the heart of it all is Inspector Devika, played with quiet intensity by Shriya Pilgaonkar, whose own past gives her a piercing insight into the truth. Directed by Ajay Bhuyan and produced by Juggernaut Production, the series has already struck a chord for its fresh take on the genre, offering more than just suspense—it's a deep dive into fractured friendships, hidden scars and the cost of deception.

In this conversation with *The Pioneer*, the Guilty Minds star shares what drew her to the role, how the series sets itself apart from other murder mysteries and the thrill of finally stepping into a genre she has loved since childhood.

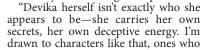
'The interesting and entertaining part about Chhal Kapat-The Deception is that it's seven episodes of just 20 to 25 minutes each," she says, highlighting the show's binge-worthy format. "It's the perfect binge-watch, and something you can enjoy with your family in one sitting."

But what truly sets the series apart, she believes, is its emotional core. "Murder mysteries are always a fulfilling watch. But this is not just about the investigation unfolding. It's a lot about relationships and friendships and unresolved trauma. There's this emotional undertone in the series which people will connect to in their own lives as well.

Indeed, the story begins with joy and nostalgia as bride-to-be Alisha Dixit reunites with her childhood best friends Mehak, Ira and Shalu at her ancestral haveli. But when Shalu, now a rising social media influencer, is found dead, the celebration quickly descends into a spiral of suspicion, secrets, and heartbreak.

For the *Dry Day* actress, stepping into the shoes of Devika was more than just another role—it was a long-held dream, "Growing up, I was always drawn to mysteries-I devoured Agatha Christie novels, followed Hercule Poirot and Sherlock Holmes, read every Nancy Drew and Enid Blyton book I could find," she recalls fondly.

"It's a genre I've genuinely loved for as long as I can remember. Naturally, I've always wanted to be part of a story like that, because so many of my favourite shows and films are murder mysteries and whodunnits." Playing Inspector Devika gave her the chance to be part of the world she's always admired, and it also marked her first time playing a cop. But Devika isn't a typical investigator. She carries emotional baggage and a personal history of domestic abuse—



elements that inform her unique intuition

and ability to see through deception.

operate in the grey areas and reveal dif-ferent sides as the story progresses. It was definitely a learning experience, but also a lot of fun stepping into the shoes of someone so complex and unpredictable." Having consistently portrayed strong, layered characters across film and web, she reflects on her journey with gratitude. "I'm actually really grateful that I've had the





### BUILDING CLIMATE-RESILIENT COLD CHAINS WITH PHASE CHANGE MATERIALS

intensifies, the focus on decarbonising every link of our supply chain has never been more critical. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines "Climate Technologies" as any technology designed specifically to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This includes an expansive range of innovations that enable both mitigation and adaptation strategies. The growing recognition of our collective responsibility governments, businesses and the public has led to an increased need for sector-specific guidance and interventions. One such critical sector is cold chain logistics, which plays a pivotal role in food, healthcare and essential supplies, yet remains energy-intensive and emission-heavy. Climate technologies encompass a wide spectrum of innovations grouped into ten families crucial for reaching global net-zero ambitions. In the context of cold chain logistics, two families' energy storage systems and the circular economy stand out for their transformative potential. These technologies, particularly Phase Change Materials (PCMs), are redefining climateresilient practices in cold chain logistics.

Cold chain systems require constant and reliable cooling to maintain the integrity of perishable goods. Traditionally, diesel generators and electric batteries have served this demand, but both come with considerable environmental costs. Electric batteries, especially lead-acid variants, require multiple energy conversions (electrical to chemical to electrical to cooling), leading to significant efficiency losses and lifecycle emissions. Moreover, they offer a relatively short lifespan of around three years and involve hazardous end-of-life disposal processes. A more efficient and environmentally sound alternative lies in thermal energy storage, particularly using PCMs. These materials store energy in the form of latent heat and are especially suited to cooling applications. For example, a 10 ft x 10 ft solarpowered cold room integrated with PCMs and refrigeration can remain entirely off-grid, needing only 4kWp of solar PV panels to operate throughout the day and night. By contrast, a system reliant on electric batteries would need a higher installed capacity of 17 kWh - significantly increasing the cost and carbon footprint.

When comparing thermal and battery storage for cold chain applications, thermal storage may cost around INR 5,000 per kWh, making it more cost-effective than lead-acid batteries Thermal storage also achieves approximately 95% conversion efficiency, compared to 80% for electric hatteries PCMs offer a lifespan of up to 15 years, far outlasting the three-year service life of lead-acid batteries. From an environmental perspective, thermal storage systems, primarily composed of non-toxic salt hydrates and water. pose minimal disposal hazards. This data clearly positions PCMs as a superior climate

environmental and economic benefits.

Another critical pillar in climate technology for cold chains is the adoption of circular economy practices. In traditional cold chain logistics, particularly in pharmaceutical transport, single-use insulated boxes and packaging materials dominate. These often include EPS (expanded polystyrene or "thermocol"), which is non-biodegradable and emits harmful HydroFluorocarbons (HFCs) during production gases that have a far greater warming potential than CO2. Switching to reusable shipper boxes that incorporate PCMs and are designed for over 3,000 cycles offers a more sustainable solution. While the initial capital investment may be higher up to five times the cost of disposable options, the longterm savings in freight, packaging and disposal far outweigh the upfront costs.

Consider a case study where 75,000 vaccine units are moved per month. The EPS box system requires 1,500 boxes monthly, each holding 50 units. In contrast, a reusable system needs only 187.5 boxes, each reused 4 times per month and carrying 100 units. The total monthly cost of using EPS boxes, including freight, stands at approximately INR 19.65 lakh. In contrast, the reusable system brings it down to INR 14.17 lakh- a 28% cost reduction, even accounting for reverse logistics. Additionally, the reusable boxes are lighter, increasing payload efficiency and reducing fuel consumption.

India's cold chain industry is still evolving, providing a rare opportunity to build climate-resilient infrastructure from the ground up rather than retrofitting inefficient legacy systems. While the global climate crisis accelerates, we cannot afford to delay implementation based on theoretical analyses or wait for Western benchmarks. Small-scale pilots with measurable baselines should be initiated immediately to evaluate and refine climate technologies in real-world conditions. Businesses must move beyond viewing sustainability as a cost centre. Instead, decarbonisation and environmental responsibility should become core components of their growth strategies. A dedicated team or task force focusing on climate initiatives aligned with strategic objectives like cost reduction, fossil fuel elimination and emissions mitigation is essential. The transition to climate-smart logistics is no longer optional. It is a non-negotiable imperative. Phase Change Materials (PCMs) are emerging as a

cornerstone climate technology for cold chain logistics. Whether in stationary storage, reefer vehicles, or pharmaceutical packaging, their

reduce reliance on fossil fuels and support circular practices make them indispensable for a sustainable future. To win the climate race, we must combine scientific innovation, business model reinvention and a shift in mindset. With technologies like PCMs, the future of cold chain logistics can be not only cooler but also cleaner.

> (The author. Vishnu Sasidharan, is the VP -Climate Technologies, of PLUSS Advanced Technologies.)

## Why more engineering scholarships can't wait!

In the interconnected age, we require engineers who are not only more in number but also better-trained, more innovative, and world-aware professionals. The pressures that societies are facing due to climate change, overburdened health systems, flimsy infrastructure, food shortages and digital exclusion are increasing manifold. All these issues demand complex, mass-scale solutions, and engineering is central to all these.

For developing countries, engineers are not only experts. They are gold mines of ingenuity, drivers of economic change and forces of resilience. They develop clean water installations in arid regions, construct renewable energy sources in off-grid communities, construct roads and bridges in rural communities and leverage data, Al and tech to advance public health and diverse sectors. The potential is immense but there is a need to train and retain the next generation of engineers. This is where engineering scholarships become not only an instrument for access but a strategic necessity.

#### **NEED FOR ENGINEER**

Indian engineers (like other third-world engineers) are future-builders - creating a sustainable, prosperous, and inclusive future. Their technological and infrastructural innovations are needed to tackle challenges of tomorrow with solutions today. Competent engineers are needed more and more, especially in India where technology powers solutions to India's most important socio-economic issues. The following are reasons why engineers matter:

- Closing India's employability gap
- Creating low-cost, high-impact solutions
- Tackling infrastructure and urbanisation challenges Driving economic expansion and employment
- opportunities
- Driving sustainable development with new

#### WHAT LIMITS THE TRADITIONAL **SCHOLARSHIP MODELS**

Historically, in the world of scholarships, especially in the developing world, the emphasis has been on merit, with impunity to structural disadvantage in the form of rural distance, gender, and poverty. This limited approach has given rise to a number of issues:

- Lack of integrated support: Pure financial aid usually lacks mentorship, internships, or career support, limiting practical experience and employability.
- Disconnect from industry requirements: Traditional scholarships and scholarship programme structures rarely align with evolving industry needs such as AI, data science, and sustainability - this doesn't help solve the most important problem facing engineering today - skill
  - Brain drain: Many prestigious scholarships help fund future studies with a focus on international education. Funding education abroad without any reintegration plans fuels brain drain, with talent lost to other countries.
  - Underfinancing is uncertainty: Many developing countries have strained public education budgets (for example - Nigeria and Bangladesh) and these are more focused on primary and secondary education. Engineering scholarships, which is the logical next step, and serves to train the next generation of nation-builders, are often inconsistent and underfunded.

#### NEW AGE APPROACH TO ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIPS

It's time that engineering scholarships evolve with a focus on the strategic, inclusive, and experiential. They must help the next crop of future engineers with the following:

- Closing gaps: Scholarships must close socio-economic and gender gaps not just by funding, but also, more importantly with creating connections for the deserving - especially in the areas of mentoring, career counseling, and networking.
- Allowing flexible use of financial aid: Restricting assistance to 'higher education fees' only shortchanges the potential. Scholarships must have the freedom to enable students to invest in a variety of objectives like career advancement, technical skills, entrepreneurship, further studies, or research. Freedom is in the interests of diversified aspirations and allows students to invest in opportunities that match their own aims and changing career needs. Completely merit-based scholarships like the IET India Scholarship Award that have no strings attached will help inspire engineering students in the truest sense.
- Aligning with development priorities: Scholarships must be utilised on priority sectors like renewable energy, digital infrastructure, water management, and health technology. The collaboration between universities, industry, and engineering institutions makes sure that education is related to the requirements of the world

Scholarship schemes can provide the educated, cosmopolitan pool of engineers that growth-oriented countries like India need for long-term development in terms of inclusiveness, relevance, and experiential

#### **WHY THIS MATTERS**

Investing in and building engineering scholarships fosters equality, resilience, and global readiness, for the whole nation. To rebuild infrastructure, combat climate change and health emergencies, countries require skilled engineers to address cross-border challenges. Building engineering capacity provides countries with the ability to have a workforce capable of resolving key problems and propelling sustainable development:

- Improving career and employment opportunities
- Scholarships provide world-class technical expertise in the majority of highly recommended fields.
- Practical training bridges field and classroom exposure gaps.
- Cross-disciplinary perspectives also fuel the imagination of young innovators.
- Training at regular intervals acquaints young engineers with emerging technology. Networking provides industry leaders and future employers' access.



The most pressing issues of the 21st century can be solved with technology that is already available. We must understand that it's not the sophisticated diplomats and economists who will provide solutions, but engineers with the skill and the vision to remake the world. For the developing world, identifying and cultivating this talent is the key to national strength and world contribution. Without opportunity and more importantly, inspiration, however, such talent is squandered. Reimagining how we finance and organise engineering scholarships is not philanthropy, it's a smart investment in translating potential into action. The moment to invest in engineers is now.

(The author, Dr. Abhijit Chakrabarti, is the Chairman, of IET India Scholarship Advisory Committee.)











P&S Co. launched its first Telangana store at GVK Mall, Hyderabad, under franchisee Rapid Corp. The inauguration was attended by the brand's co-founders, Pooja Bihani Kanoria and Salauni Gupta Bihani. Known for dressing celebrity children from families like the Ambanis. Piramals, Adanis and Bollywood stars, P&S Co. blends tradition with comfort.





venture—Pooja Sarees Couture—at the upscale Road No. 10 in Banjara Hills. The launch event was graced by Special Secretary to the Telangana Government, Hari Chandana Dasari and BNI Hyderabad Executive Director, Sanjana Shah, who jointly inaugurated the boutique alongside founder, Archana



WHAT'S BREWING? 1





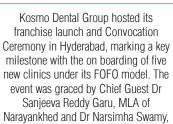




KP's 21st Century IAS Academy celebrated the success of its 2024 UPSC achievers with a grand felicitation event on June 8 at Sundarayya Vignana Kendram, Hyderabad. The event honored top rankers including Pulkit Bansal (AIR 155) and C. Sravana Sowmya (AIR 951) and featured distinguished guests like former Maharashtra Governor CH. Vidya Sagar Rao and Additional DGP Dr Mahesh Bhagwat. Academy founder P. Krishna Pradeep outlined an ambitious vision to produce 100 civil servants by 2028, while also highlighting initiatives like free training for tribal students in Adilabad



The Eid-ul-Adha (Bakrid) prayers were held with great fervour and joy at the Eidgah of Dargah Shareef Hazrat Salar-E-Auliya in New Hafeezpet village, Serilingampally Mandal. The celebrations were conducted under the spiritual guardianship of the Dargah's Muthawalli and Sajjada Nasheen, Sultan Ahsan-Ud-Dowla and witnessed a large gathering of devotees offering prayers in a spirit of unity and devotion.



President of IDA Telangana. The group also celebrated graduates from its Clinical Mastership Program, reinforcing its commitment to raising clinical standards and building a quality-driven dental care network across India.





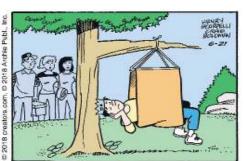
PAPEXPO 2025, India's first dedicated exhibition for the paper industry, was inaugurated at HITEX, Hyderabad, by key industry leaders including Narendra Paruchuri, Soumyajit Mukherjee, and Dr. Ajay

Satia. Hosted by the Paper Foundation and supported by the Ministry of MSME, the three-day event, held until June 8, brought together the entire paper industry alue chain with support from IPPTA, IIP and FPTA.

#### **ARCHIE**







#### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**



SEE ? SEE ? LOOK , MOM ! THE WATER'S UP TO MY KNEES! LOOK WHERE THE







#### GARFIELD





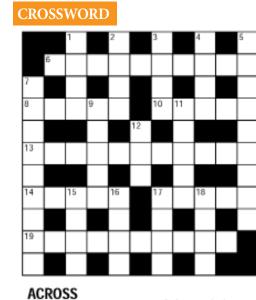


#### REALITY CHECK









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17 The country with Tokyo 19 In all places

#### 17 A boy's name 18 Meat from a pig

#### A large boat Extremely 3 A throbbing pain 4 The sound of an explosion



9 Annoy or bother

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#### **GINGER MEGGS**







#### DIFFICULTY RATING: \*\* \* \*\* \*\*\*

# 'NO ONE CAN STOP PAWAN KALYAN'S FILM IT'S SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE'

The Telangana Film Chamber of Commerce elected a new body. President and secretary spoke about the theatre bandh, actors' remuneration, and Pawan Kalyan's film





SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

o one can stop Pawan Kalyan's film — it is simply not possible, said Sunil Narang, who has been elect-ed as the President of the Telangana Film Chamber of Commerce for the third time. "Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself praises Pawan Kalyan and calls him a 'Toofan', so nobody can stop his film," he added.
Sunil said he was shocked upon hearing

about the theatre bandh. "I didn't participate in last month's exhibitors' meeting held by the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce. But I was surprised to hear about the theatre bandh. In the industry, many refer to 'four people' as being behind such decisions, but in reality, there are many owners," he stated. Speaking after the

election of the new body on Saturday, Sunil addressed several ongoing issues. "Of all the theatres in Andhra Pradesh, our Asian Cinemas chain owns nearly five percent. We have 70 theatres, out of which 30 are on ground lease. Apart from these, we also have a few multiplexes — but the total doesn't exceed 5 to 6 percent," he clarified.

Commenting on the high remuneration

taken by top actors despite underperforming films, Sunil said, "I can't talk about their remuneration, because they are like Gods. But they should definitely do more films each year."

Newly elected secretary Sridhar also shared his thoughts. "This percentage system for single screens is not new — we've been fighting for it since 2016. We want the percentage system, and we never spoke about the theatre bandh. That actually came from the East Godavari district. We never issued any

letter or statement about a bandh. Two producers and two directors deliberatecreated this issue. We'll soon reveal their names," he said.

Sridhar emphasised that stardom comes from consistent work. "Many actors became stars because they used to do two to three films a year. But nowadays, actors are doing just one film in two years. Since January, only three films — Sankranthiki Vasthunnam, Mad Square and Court — were successful. The rest haven't yielded profits for theatre owners."

He added that actors are still drawing massive salaries despite poor box office performance. "One actor's film turned out to be a disaster, yet he was paid Rs 13 crore for it," he said.

Speaking about the Chamber itself. Sridhar noted, "This is one of the oldest bodies. It was originally called the Hyderabad Film Chamber of Commerce

and started nearly 80 years ago. After Telangana was formed, the name was

changed."

Addressing another issue, Sridhar said he had left theatres vacant in anticipation of Pawan Kalyan's film *Hari Hara Veera* Mallu, which was scheduled to release on June 12. "But now, the film has been post-poned. What can we do? This entire month is gone without a good release— it's a huge loss, especially for single-screen theatres," he said.

theatres, he said.

He warned that if actors don't increase their output, the cinema exhibition business will suffer greatly. "Many stars must do at least two films a year.

Otherwise, theatres will soon be turned into malls, godowns, or wedding halls. Six singlescreen theatres shut down

due to financial losses," he



## Balakrishna and **Gopichand Malineni** reunite for a historic action film

andamuri Balakrishna and director
Gopichand Malineni
are teaming up once
again for a new film — and this again for a new film — and this time, it's a historic action spectacle. The duo previously collaborated on *Veera Simha Reddy*, which was declared a hit. Now, they are reuniting for their second project, officially announced by the director on social media.

The film will be produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru, who is also bankrolling Ram Charan's upcoming film *Peddi*. The announcement was accompanied announcement was accompanied by a striking poster featuring a roaring lion, half of its face armored with a metallic shield and the other half depicted in its wild, natural form — giving a symbolic hint at Balakrishna's character in the film.

"The God of Masses is back... and this time we're rearing louder!

this time, we're roaring louder! Honoured to reunite with Nandamuri Balakrishna garu for our second mass celebration together — #NBK111. This one's going to be historic!" wrote Gopichand Malineni on



his social media handle.

The announcement coincides with Balakrishna's birthday on June 10. In addition to this exciting update, fans can also expect something special from his other film *Akhanda 2* — possibly a teaser. Directed by Boyapati Srinu, *Akhanda 2* is the sequel to the successful Akhanda and the team is currently in the midst of shooting.

Aadi Saikumar's

Shambhala teaser

unleashes a

mystical storm

## Mohan Babu: Prabhas' support for Kannappa shows his generosity he mythological epic "This is only my second time in Guntur. I Mohan Babu University. Many of them *Kannappa* is gearing up for first came here many years ago and I feel are now IAS and IPS officers." Praising its grand release on June emotional returning with Kannappa," he Prabhas, who plays an important role in

the title role. Veteran actor Mohan Babu shared, "I came from a below-Babu, who plays a key role and middle-class family and reached here also produces the film, through hard work. I believe in discipline directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, addressed the audience at the and I never fear anything if I'm right. with Preity Mukundan playing pre-release event in Guntur. That's what I teach my students at

> s anticipated Deepika

Padukone has

27, with Vishnu Manchu in said. Reflecting on his journey, Mohan the film, he added, "Prabhas is a very generous person. His support for this film is invaluable." Kannappa is

> Deepika Padukone joins forces with Allu **Arjun and Atlee**

for pan-India

spectacle



## of Shambhala: A Mystical World, calling it "stunning with an intriguing concept." The film stars Aadi Saikumar and directed by Ugandhar

irector Anil Ravipudi Muni, with production by Rajasekhar Annabhimoju and Mahidhar Reddy. Was all praise The teaser opens with a thought provoking voiceover: for the teaser

"There are countless unfathomable mysteries in this universe. When science cannot explain them, it calls them superstition. But the moment it finds an explanation; it calls it a breakthrough." Chaos ensues in a village after the dis-

covery of a mysterious fragment believed to control the five elements. Villagers begin behaving as if possessed. The protagonist enters the scene to stop the dark force, only to be met with hostility from those under its influence.

Featuring eerie visuals and suspenseful pacing, the teaser introduces characters exhibiting abnormal behavior, setting the stage for a gripping supernatural experience. The film stars Archana Iyer, Swasika, Ravi Varma, Madhunandan, Shivakarthik and Shailaja Priya in pivotal roles.

## Priyadarshi & Niharika NM shine in Mithra Mandali poster reveal

fter teasing fans with quirky pre-look posters, the makers of *Mithra Mandali* have unveiled the much-awaited first look — and it's every bit as vibrant as promised. Produced under Bunny Vasu's new banner BV Works, in collaboration with Kalyan Manthina, Bhanu Pratapa and Dr Vijender Reddy Teegala, the film introduces a masked ensemble featuring Priyadarshi, Rag Mayur, Vishnu Oi and Prasad Behara.

Adding to the buzz, the film also marks the Telugu debut of social media sensation Niharika N M, who recently gained international attention for her involve-

ment with *Mission: Impossible – Final Reckoning*.

Directed by debutant Vijayendar S, the film is set to be a riot of comedy, chaos and youthful energy, riding on the comic timing and unique style of its core cast.



# Swapnil Kusale, Elavenil to lead India in ISSF World Cup

aris Olympics bronze medallist Swapnil Kusale will lead the Indian squad along with comeback shooter Elavenil Valarivan at the season's third ISSF World Cup which will feature of a galaxy of international stars, beginning here from Tuesday. Kusale fought his way back to the men's 50m rifle 3 positions (3P) event on the back of a good show on the domestic circuit.

Two-time Olympian Elavenil will be seen in international action for the first time since Paris, although she did make the trip to Buenos Aires and Lima as an RPO (Ranking Points Only) shooter.

Reigning Asian Games champion Palak in the women's air pistol also makes it back to the team. There will be a few World Cup debuts like newly-crowned women's air rifle national champion Ananya Naidu.

There will be two new faces in the men's air pistol — Aditya Malra and Nishant Rawat — as India explore their depth in the two disciplines ahead of bigger challenges



later in the year. A total of 695 athletes, including Olympic and World champions and legends of the sport from 78 countries,

will participate in the World Cup.
The season began with a double-header in South America where Indian rifle and pistol shooters picked up 15 medals including six gold, helping the team finish a creditable second and third respectively on the

squad. Hosts Germany have fielded a strong 27-member contingent led by their pistol legend and former Olympic and world champion Christian Reitz. Anna Janssen, their women's air rifle qualification world record holder, would also be starting on home soil. Another RFP legend Jean Quiquampoix, part of a 16-member French squad, will help complete

> ly dominated the event over the last decade or so. The Koreans will also be there in full force with 19 shooters, including two of their three reigning women Olympic champions Yang Jiin (25m pistol) and Oh

> the troika of legends who have complete-

ment. China, winners of the first two legs,

are bringing their men's air pistol Olympic

champion Xie Yu, in what is a 22-member

Yejin (10m air pistol). Several Paris Olympic medallists like the USA's Sagen Maddalena, Italy's Paolo Monna and Danilo Sollazzo and Alexandra Le of Kazakhstan are also set to start

## Kane saves England in World Cup qualifying

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Barcelona

ngland needed a second-half goal from Harry Kane to secure a 1-0 win over lowly Andorra and maintain a perfect record under Thomas Tuchel after three World Cup qualifiers.

England was held scoreless by a team ranked 173rd in the world until Kane redirected a pass from Noni Madueke into the top of the net in the 50th minute after the Bayern Munich striker's initial effort was saved by goalkeeper Iker Álvarez.

"We need to be better for sure," Kane said. "It's not one that many will remember and we had good spells, but we take the three points and move on."

It was goal number 72 in his 106th appearance for the Three Lions.

Tuchel's side remained top of Europe's Group K with nine points after wins against Albania and Latvia. They have yet to concede a goal under the German coach. Nevertheless, Tuchel said that he was "not happy" with the slim win over tiny Andorra, which has a population of around 80,000. "At the end of it, it was absolutely not OK because we lost focus and we lost the urgency that is needed,"

Andorra remained winless but managed to frustrate England's stars for most of the game with its five-man defensive line. Ezri Konsa had to block a late shot by Andorra's Guillaume Lopez to prevent the chance of an equaliser.

"We kept giving it away and that gave them a bit of confidence and energy," Kane said. "At 1-0 with five to 10 minutes to go you have to be careful."

England dominated possession and Eberechi Eze went close to a second goal when he forced Álvarez to tip his header of the bar as the visitors couldn't extend the lead. England had won its previous six meetings with Andorra by a combined score of 25-0.

"In terms of effort, I think I couldn't be prouder of my team and how they carried it out," Andorra coach Koldo Álvarez said.

The game was played at Espanyol's stadium in Barcelona, nearly three hours south of the Pyrenees principality due to concerns that work on Andorra's home stadium wouldn't be finished in time.

Only the group winners qualify directly for next year's tournament in North

America. The second-placed teams go into a playoffs. Europe will have 16 teams in the expanded 48-team field for the World Cup. The group stage of European qualifying runs through November.

England will next host Senegal in a friendly on Tuesday. Albania and Serbia draw under tight securityAlbania and Serbia drew 0-0 in the latest chapter of a charged rivalry rooted in deep historical and ethnic tensions between the Balkan neighbors.

**England dominated possession** and Eberechi Eze went close to a second goal when he forced **Alvarez to tip his header of the** bar as the visitors couldn't extend the lead

Serbia goalkeeper Dorde Petrovic saved a penalty kick by Rey Manaj in the best chance of the game, which was played without Serbian fans as determined by UEFA for security concerns.

Albania is second in Group K behind England with four points after three games. There were few chances in the match played under tight security, with more than 2,000 police officers guarding the capital.

Albanian fans loudly whistled when the Serbian anthem was played and shouted Kosovo, which predominantly has an ethnic Albanian population and which was part of Serbia until 1999 when a NATO air campaign pushed Serb forces and authorities out. Some fans tossed beer cups at the Serbian players, despite repeated calls for them to stop.

A 2014 game between the teams in Belgrade was abandoned when a drone carrying an Albanian flag sparked a fullscale brawl. The last time they met on Albanian soil was in 2015.

Veteran Dzeko scores for Bosnia A goal from 39-year-old Edin Dzeko gave Bosnia and Herzegovina a 1-0 win over San Marino.

The Balkan republic leads Group H with three wins, while San Marino is bottom with zero points.

Austria beat Romania 2-1 in the same group as Michael Gregoritsch and Marcel Sabitzer scored for the hosts before Denis Alibec halved the difference in injury

## IPL needs 12-16 week window to match the likes of NFL: Burman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi

he Indian Premier League needs a 12-16 week operating window to match the brand value of top sporting leagues in the world including the NFL, NBA and Premier League, reckons Punjab Kings co-owner Mohit Burman.

At \$16.8 million, the IPL is only behind NFL (\$36.8 million) in terms of per-match value but needs to catch up with its global rivals like NFL and leading European football leagues when it comes to the overall brand value pecking order.

According to leading investment bank Houlihan Lokey, the IPL is valued at roughly \$16 billion while one NFL franchise Dallas Cowboys alone is worth \$9 billion, followed by New York Yankees at \$7.1

NBA franchise New York Knicks is valued at \$7 billion while top football clubs Real Madrid and Manchester United have drawn a valuation of \$6 billion. Compared to the existing eight-week IPL, the much

(August to May), NBA (seven months) and NFL (4.5 months) also push their valua-

"We're already second in the world when it comes to per-match value, just behind the NFL. But overall brand value? That's a different game. I think we need a 12-16week window to get there," said Burman, who is also the chairman of Dabur India.

"That gives us space to tell better stories, build rivalries, and create more value for everyone — fans, sponsors, broadcasters. But it's not just about length. It's about what we do in that time — the kind of content we push out, how we engage fans yearround, how we build the league beyond the season. IPL has the scale. Now it's about consistency and depth."

The IPL's dominance in world cricket is undisputed but to maintain that envious position, nothing can be taken for granted, said Burman. "The IPL is already the biggest cricket product in the world, but staying there means not taking anything for granted. Player availability is crucial. longer windows of Premier League We need a clean window where the best

in the world can play without restrictions," said the 56-year-old businessman.

standings. The Munich leg will however

present a much tougher challenge given the

much wider presence of the world's best

shooters. Legendary Chinese marksman Li

Yuehong, the reigning Olympic champion

and three-time Olympic medallist in the

25m rapid-fire pistol (RFP), and 20-year-

old Sheng Lihao, the reigning Olympic,

world and Asian champion and world-

The fan experience must keep evolving. It's not just about cricket anymore its sport, entertainment, culture all rolled into one. We don't need to take the IPL abroad — what we do need is to build global relevance. Content, players, and stories that connect with fans across the world."

Besides Punjab Kings, Burman and other team's co-owners have also invested in the Saint Lucia franchise of the Caribbean Premier League. Their IPL rivals too have expanded their ownership in multiple leagues including SA20, ILT20, MLC, CPL and most recently The Hundred. Burman is all for taking the IPL brand to the world. "It's a smart and strategic move. A lot of teams are now building a common core — with shared vision, systems, and values - across multiple leagues. That's what makes it sustainable and scalable," he said when asked about the trend of IPL teams expanding overseas.

"For us, the goal is clear: build the Kings ecosystem across geographies and formats. Whether it's IPL or CPL, we want to run our teams with the same purpose — high performance, strong culture, and deeper fan connection. We're not just creating teams — we're building a brand that travels. And this is just the beginning," he said.

PBKS reap rewards of success, up 25 percent year on year commercially The IPL and its franchises are in the pink

of financial health considering the phenomenal growth of the competition introduced in 2008. Considering that, is the onfield performance of a franchise heavily linked to its commercial success?

'They go hand in hand. Strong on-field performances drive commercial growth that's the reality. Brands want to be part of winning stories. We've seen that this year we're up 25 per cent year-on-year com-"More fan engagement, stronger spon-

sor interest, and better value across the board. This season proves that when vour on-field and off-field stories align that's where the real magic happens," he

## India need to avoid conceding late goals against Netherlands in FIH Pro League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Amstelveen

dhe Indian men's hockey team will have to shed the habit of conceding late goals if it wishes to bounce back against the Netherlands and stay in contention for top spot in the FIH Pro League here Monday.

India have dropped to the fourth position in the Pro League standings after the 1-2 loss against Netherlands on Saturday. Netherlands are atop the leader-board

with 17 points from nine games, followed by England (16 points from eight games), Belgium (16 points from eight games) and India (15 points from nine games). The European leg of the Pro League

holds greater significance for India. A top-

place finish will help India directly qual-

ify for next year's World Cup to be co-hosted by Belgium and Netherlands. If they fail, India will have another chance through the Asia Cup to be held in Rajgir, Bihar from September 5 to 14 this year. Against Netherlands on Saturday, India squandered a one goal lead to lose

to Olympic champions Netherlands. early phases of the first half, with captain chance from field opportunities, an area Harmanpreet Singh converting a penalty

The Dutch, however, made a strong comeback and ultimately emerged victorious courtesy a brace from Thijs van Dam, which included the winning goal in the 58th minute. The Indian defence was upto the task against Netherlands' fierce attacks but some lapse in concentration and man-marking cost them dearly with two minutes remaining.

Having said that, the Indian forwards The Indian side showed promise in the will have to be assertive and create more which was found wanting on Saturday.

Also, what needs to be worked upon is more co-ordination between the midfield and forwardline, a vital area which creates

goal scoring opportunities.
"We did well in the first half but the third quarter wasn't as good. In the fourth quarter we did well again and were winning the ball, but we weren't getting any shots on goal. "It was unfortunate to lose like that because I thought we could push for a draw. We want to push ourselves as hard as we can, especially against a team like the Netherlands," India head coach Craig Fulton said after Saturday's match.

## Diksha stays within top 10 after third round

ndian golfer Diksha Dagar carded an even par 72 to hold her position within the top 10 after the third round of the Tenerife Women's Open at Abama

Diksha was five-under for three days and is placed sole 9th in the standings. She

Kouskova (69) at eighth-under. The other Indian to make the cut in Tenerife, Avani Prashanth played an even par third round and is now placed at 43rd on the leaderboard.

Sara Kouskova surged ahead of the field on the third day with a round of threeunder 69 and now leads by one stroke. The Czech national won the Jabra Ladies Open just last week and is in prime position to follow the title with one more this week. Diksha started her day with a birdie on the first hole before dropping shots on the sixth and eighth holes by the time she was hallway through the round.

On the back nine, Diksha picked up a shot on the 10th hole before dropping one back on the 13th and picking up one more on the 16th to make sure she is still placed in the Top-10.

Avani started her round with back-toback birdies on the 10th and 11th holes and then dropped a double bogey on the



16th. On the front nine she dropped two more shots on the first hole with another double bogey before picking them back up on the third and sixth holes.

She would drop a shot immediately on the seventh and then birdie the eighth to close the day with a par score on a rollercoaster day. Kouskova only dropped one shot during her third round on the 12th hole. She made birdies on the sixth, 11th, 14th and 17th holes.

Shannon Tan of Singapore is in tied second place alongside Ana Pelaez Trivino of Spain and Noora Komulainen of Finland. The Singaporean national carded 72, while Ana and Noora played rounds of six-under 66 and three-under 69 respectively to place themselves one shot behind the leader.

Order of merit leader Mimi Rhodes played carded three-under 69 to move into tied 10th with Patricia Isabel Schmidt and second day leader Lauren Walsh.

Walsh had an abvsmal third round and she shot five-over 77 to stumble down

## Will visa delays, border fears keep international fans away from Club World Cup in US?

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New York

s the United States readies for the FIFA Club World Cup, concern over such things as international travel, fan safety and even economic uncertainty threaten to diminish enthusiasm for the tournament.

The United States will see the arrival of 32 professional club teams from around the globe to 11 cities for the tournament. There's a \$1 billion prize pool.

The Club World Cup is considered in many ways to be a dress rehearsal for the big event, the 2026 World Cup to be hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. But there seems to be little buzz for the Club World Cup at home or abroad. The expansion of the field from seven to 32 teams has diminished the exclusivity of the event, and ticket sales appear slow.

At the same time, the tournament is being played amid reports of foreign tourists being detained and visa processing delays. Chaotic US Immigration and Customs Enforcement activities and President Donald Trump's travel bans aren't exactly reassuring international fans,

Wary travelers, visa woesTrump's policies appear to have already impacted travelers. The National Travel and Tourism Office released data showing visitors to the U.S. From foreign countries fell 9.7 per cent Affairs hearing last month, suggested

in March compared to the same month last year. The travel forecasting company Tourism Economics has predicted that international arrivals would decline 9.4 per cent this year.

The US Travel Association, a nonprofit group that represents the travel industry, has urged the Trump administration to improve such things as visa processing and customs wait times ahead of a series of big sporting events on US Soil, including the Club World Cup beginning June 14, the Ryder Cup later this year, next summer's World Cup and the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Association President Geoff Freeman said, for example, that the wait in Colombia for a visa interview appointment is upwards of 18 months — already putting the 2026 World Cup out of reach for some travelers. He said his organisation is working with the White House's World Cup Task Force to address issues.

They (the task force) recognise how important this event is: success is the only option. So we're eager to work with them to do whatever it is we need to do to ensure that we can welcome the millions of incremental visitors that we think are possible. Freeman said. "But these underlying issues of visa and customs, we've got to address."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, speaking at a House Committee on Foreign



consular staff could be put on longer shifts and that artificial intelligence could be used

to process visas.
"We want it to be a success. It's a priority for the president," said Rubio.

But the Trump administration may have added to the concerns for international visitors by issuing a ban on travelers from 12 countries, with restrictions on travel from

nine more countries.

Iran, one of the countries named, has qualified for the World Cup. The proclamation included an exemption for "any athlete or member of an athletic team, including coaches, persons performing a necessary support role, and immediate relatives, traveling for the World Cup, Olympics, or other major sporting event

as determined by the secretary of state." It did not mention fans. Fan fearsThere are signs current immigration policies were already impacting soccer fans and spurring worries over safety.

A Latin American supporters group in Nashville stayed away from a recent Major League Soccer game because of ICE activity in the city. The city's Geodis Park is set

Danny Navarro, who offers travel advice to followers on his social media platforms under the moniker TravelFutbolFan, said the World Cup Task Force announcement did not allay fears about travel, especially when Vice President JD Vance said, "We

want them to come. We want them to cel-

ebrate. We want them to watch the game.

But when the time is up, they'll have to go

home. Otherwise, they'll have to talk to

(Homeland Security) Secretary (Kristi)

to host three Club World Cup matches.

Noem." That insinuated fans visiting the United States for the World Cup could use it to stay in the country, which is nonsensical,

Navarro maintained. For many countries, fans traveling to the World Cup — an expensive travel plan with hiked flight and hotel prices — are broadly viewed as higher-spending and lower-risk for host nation security

planning. Navarro put the onus on FIFA. "They must know that there is an anxiety among international travelers wanting to come in. They must know there's an anxiety among the U.S. Fan base that is multicultural and wanting to go to all these places. Are they going to? Are they going to be harassed by ICE?" Navarro said.

There is just a lot of uncertainty, I would say, too much uncertainty, that the fan base doesn't want to think about."