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Model Code of Conduct turned into 'Modi code of conduct': **Mamata** 5



DJ KAYAN'S 'FIERCENESS' EMBODYING THROUGH HER MUSIC 10



'Baahubali: Crown of Blood will conclude on a cliffhanger,' reveals **RAJAMOULI** P11

QUOTE OF THE DAY the pioneer

The BRS is very weak in the state and the contest is between the BJP and the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections. The BJP will win most of the LS seats in Telangana. The Prime Minister visited Telangana 22 times and attended most inauguration ceremonies of development projects, but KCR did not come for Modi's visit. The Congress may come to power by giving false promises



- Dr Tamilisai Sounderrajan, ex TG Governor

P2

DON'T MISS...

Osmania University launches...

Osmania University, Vice Chancellor Prof D Ravinder Yadav announced the official launch of the Osmania Film Club along with the unveiling of its logo on Tuesday. This initiative aimed at showcasing the unity and equality among Osmanians by bringing together artistes to create compelling short films under the banner of the "Osmania Film Club." The idea behind the club emerged from a collective effort by students from various campus colleges within Osmania ..

-PAGE: 3

Patna most vulnerable to...

Patna experiences the worst floods in India, followed by West Bengal's Murshidabad and Maharashtra's Thane, according to a district-level flood severity index (DFSI) developed by researchers at IIT-Delhi and IIT-Roorkee. The index takes into account the historical severity of floods based on the number of affected people, the spread and duration of floods. The researchers said the top 10 districts where flood severity...

-PAGE: 5

Significant divide in India's...

A Swiss brokerage on Tuesday said there is a "significant divide" in India's consumption story and that the K-shaped trend is likely to continue in the near-future. "India's consumption story reflects a significant divide, driven by a resilient economy but characterised by a stark contrast in spending patterns," UBS India economist Tanvee Gupta Jain said in a note. "...the divergence between affluent and broad-based household demand persists...

-PAGE: 8

Inconsistent SRH take on LSG in...

Sunrisers Hyderabad will be eager to move on from their underwhelming batting display when they host Lucknow Super Giants in a crucial Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday. Both teams are locked in at 12 points from 11 games with SRH making the top four cut based on a slightly superior net run rate of -0.065 compared to LSG's -0.371. The Sunrisers find themselves in a fierce competition for the top four spot with Kolkata...

-SPORTS

Rain drains city of power







- Many parts of city witness 5-hour blackout after brief downpour
- 480 of 3,000 city feeders damaged due to gales
- City power demand dipped from 4,000 MW to 1,000 MW in just half an hour

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Aside from political recriminations about the 'robustness' of the power supply system before and after regime change in Telangana, it is now absolutely clear that one brief spell of rain with gales is all it takes to cripple power supply across the city, leave alone contiguous areas.

On Tuesday, following a brief spell of heavy rain accompanied by gales, most areas of Hyderabad witnessed a blackout for more than five hours. Many citizens complained all through the night that power supply, which had snapped initially at 4:30 pm, was not restored even after 4-5 hours.

As per officials, more than 480 of the 3,000 feeders across the city were damaged. By 10:30 pm nearly 300 of them were restored. Officials said by Tuesday night all feeders would be restored. Banjara Hills Circle faced longest power cut in all the 12 feeders from 4.30 pm or 5.30 pm.

City power demand dipped from 4,000 MW to 1,000 MW in just half an hour. More than the rain, gales and uprooted trees contributed to the bulk of the damage.

TSSPDCL CMD Musharaff Faruqui said that the second spell of rain around 8:00 pm hampered the restoration process because of which long power cuts were witnessed. According to officials, the issued flared up because on some very high tension wires, a lot of flexies had fallen. Besides, several uprooted trees were lying across roads.

Due to heavy traffic congestion caused by water-logging and slow movement of vehicles, the work of the emergency teams was delayed.

City power demand dipped from 4,000 MW to 1,000 MW in just half an hour. More than the rain, gales and uprooted trees contributed to the bulk of the damage.

Officials claimed that a similar situation happened in 2021. However, citizens vented ire that even due to a brief spell of rain, almost the entire infrastructure Continued on Page 2

Revanth reviews rain situation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy reviewed the inundation of low-lying areas, traffic problems, and power outages in most parts of Hyderabad on Tuesday due to heavy rain and gales.

Revanth Reddy, who is on a visit to Warangal, reviewed the situation with GHMC Commissioner Ronald Rose, City Police Commissioner K. Srinivasa Reddy, Transco CMD S. A. M. Rizvi and other officials from there.

2



Show the courage of Kakatiyas: Revanth

URGES VOTERS TO DEFEAT DELHI SULTANS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Reiterating his statement that the Lok Sabha elections are a 'battle between Telangana and Gujarat,' Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy asked the people of Warangal to show the valour of the Kakathiyas and defeat the Delhi sultans.

Addressing a corner meeting in Warangal city on Tuesday Revanth appealed to the people to send the Gujarat team out for a duck. He said that these are not just elections but a war and that the people should defeat Gujarat.

He appealed to the people to ensure the victory of Kadiam Kavya from the Warangal Lok Sabha constituency and added that Warangal would be made the second capital of Telangana. He said that Errabelli Dayakar Rao and Aruri Ramesh are like ganja in a Tulasi garden.

"Errabelli and Aruri are land grabbers and the BJP and the BRS are not different. The BRS fielded a dummy candidate in Warangal and has entered into a secret pact to defeat the Congress candidate," he said. He said that he came to Warangal to expose the BRS's conspiracies and ensure the Congress candidate's victory.

The CM said that the people defeated KCR in the Assembly elections but KCR has not changed and is continuing his same attitude.

Revanth said that KCR is not speaking about Modi nowadays and has mortgaged the Warangal seat to the BJP to get bail for his daughter Kavitha.

No power shortage, massive demand being met: Bhatti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Due to the summer heat, power demand has increased substantially in the State, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu who handles the energy portfolio said.

He hailed the efficient functioning of the electricity department and said that power is being supplied without any interruption.

In a detailed statement, Bhatti said there was an increase in power consumption by 52.9 per cent from May 1 to 6 over that of the corresponding period last year. While the demand for power in May 2023 was 7,062 MW, it jumped to 10,799 MW now, he said.

The average consumption also increased from 157.9 million units to 226.62 million units registering an increase of 43.5 per cent.

In the GHMC area, the increase in demand and consumption from May 1 to 6 is 47.6 per cent compared to that of the same period last year. In May 2023, the demand was 2830 MW and it has increased to 4,177 MW now. Similarly, the average consumption of power increased by 53 per cent from 57.5 million units last May to 88 MU in May 2024. Continued on Page 2

Petrol will cross Rs 400 per litre if BJP wins, says BRS chief KCR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS supremo KCR said that fuel prices will cross Rs 400 a litre if the BJP wins. "The BJP is saying Ab Ki Baar 400 par. This means if they win, petrol price will cross Rs 400 per litre," KCR said. Addressing a roadshow in Kamareddy, an Assembly segment of the Zaheerabad Lok Sabha constituency, he said that the BJP will not get even 200 LS seats.

"Electricity, water and Rythu Bandhu is gone. I don't know if there will be Rythu Bhima or not. They said an unemployment allowance of Rs 4,000 would be paid to the unemployed. They said they will give a bank card worth Rs 5 lakh as Yuva Vikasam.



2

Postpone Rythu Bharosa payment

EC directs TG CM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Tuesday directed the Telangana government to defer payments under the Rythu Bharosa scheme till Lok Sabha polls are held in the state on May 13, saying Chief Minister Revanth Reddy violated the model code of conduct by referring to the payouts in his public speeches.

In a letter to the Telangana Chief Electoral Officer, the Commission said Reddy had violated the model code of conduct by publicly speaking about the ensuing disbursement under the scheme on or before May 9.

Elections to all 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana will be held in the fourth phase on May 13. "In the above premise and clear violation of Model Code of Conduct by Revanth Reddy, President Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee and star campaigner and Chief Minister, the Commission has directed that disbursement of balance instalment under the Rythu Bharosa scheme for Rabi season of 2023 will be effected only after completion of poll in the state of Telangana on 13.05.2024," the Commission said.

It also expressed concern over attempts to politicise the ongoing scheme during the elections and held that such actions were deemed as attempts to influence voters and disturb the level playing field.

2

EXCISE 'SCAM'

No relief for Kejriwal, Sisodia & Kavitha

Delhi court extends judicial custody

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Tuesday extended the judicial custody of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, his party colleague Manish Sisodia and BRS leader K Kavitha in cases related to the alleged excise scam.

Special judge for CBI and ED matters Kaveri Baweja extended Kejriwal's custody till May 20 in the money laundering case linked to the alleged scam being probed by the ED, after he was produced before the court through a video-conference on the expiry of his remand granted earlier.



Arvind Kejriwal



Manish Sisodia



K Kavitha

2

Provocative politics won't fetch votes in TG: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLA KTR said that provocative politics won't get anyone votes in Telangana as the public is aware of that.

In the context of Prime Minister Modi coming to the state, BRS MLA KTR posed some questions on X.

"Dear 'pricey' Prime Minister Modi, explain to the people about your contributions to the State before seeking their votes. Despite completing 10 years as Prime Minister, you forgot the most important promises made to the State," KTR said. Continued on Page 2



3 INDEPENDENT MLAS WITHDRAW SUPPORT

Haryana BJP govt loses majority

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Three Independent MLAs withdrew support to the BJP government in Haryana on Tuesday and announced that they would back the Congress reducing the Nayab Singh Saini government to a minority in the Assembly.

The government which has the support of two other Independents is now two short of a majority in the 90-member House which has a current strength of 88.

Recently, some Jannayak Janata Party MLAs promised support to the BJP although the JJP pulled out of the coalition government in March. The BJP has 40 MLAs, the Congress 30 and the JJP 10 in the House. Independent MLAs Sombir Sangwan (Dadri), Randhir Singh Gollen (Pundri) and Dharampal Gonder (Nilokheri) announced their decision at a press conference in Rohtak in the presence of the Leader of the Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda and state Congress chief Udai Bhan.

"The government should resign. President's rule should be imposed in the state and elections held. This is an anti-people government," Hooda said.

The Congress said in a statement that the three MLAs have already sent letters to the Governor saying that they have withdrawn their support to the government.

At the press conference, Gonder said, "We are withdrawing support to the government and have decided to support the Congress.

2

Modi to attend 2 meetings today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to Hyderabad on Tuesday night and stayed at the Raj Bhavan.

The PM will go to Vemulawada on Wednesday morning and will have darshan at the Sri Rajarajeswara Temple at 10 am. Later, the PM will attend a public meeting there.

After that, the PM will go to Warangal by helicopter and will attend the public meeting being held at Mamunuru.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will come to Hyderabad on Wednesday night. On Thursday morning, Amit Shah will attend a campaign meeting of Bhongir BJP candidate Narsaiah Goud.

Telecom department blocks mobile handsets, disconnects numbers involved in frauds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tightening the noose around fraudsters engaged in defrauding mobile users through text messages, the Department of Telecom (DoT) has started blocking handsets used in such activities besides disconnecting mobile numbers.

The DoT has launched Chakshu portal two months ago to handle telecom fraud related grievances.

Since the launch of the portal, the department has blacklisted 52 entities involved in sending malicious and phishing SMSes, blocked 348 mobile handsets on pan-India basis and flagged 10,834 suspected mobile numbers for re-verification, according to official sources.

In response to a post on social media platform X by a technology professional on an SMS related fraud, the DoT said that it has blocked the mobile number mentioned in the post as well as blocked handsets linked to it.

"Mobile number is disconnected, and 20 associated mobile handsets have been blocked for misuse in cybercrime/financial fraud. If you observe any such incidents, please immediately report suspected fraud to Chakshu," DoT said in its reply. According to official sources, the DoT has deactivated 700 SMS content templates.

The source said: "10,834 suspected mobile numbers flagged for re-verification to the telecom operators, 8,272 mobile connections disconnected failing re-verification till April 30, 2024."

Besides, DoT has blocked 1.58 lakh unique mobile device identification number IMEI due to involvement in cyber crimes and financial frauds or mobile connections taken on fake or forged documents.





Jamaat-e-Ulema extends support to Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Jamaat-e-Ulema has extended its support to the Congress. Jamaat-e-Ulema president Mohammed Kalimuddin appealed to Hindus, Muslims and minorities to vote for the Congress.

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, Kalimuddin asked people to ensure the victory of the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections like they ensured the victory of the Congress in the TG Assembly elections.

Kalimuddin said that the people of Telangana are happy under the rule of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He said that Rahul Gandhi took up the Bharat Jodo Yatra and Nyay Yatras to ensure the welfare of the people. He said that Rahul Gandhi should become the Prime Minister if the people.

Cong Govt released Rythu Bharosa funds as it feared losing votes: Eatala

REVANTH IS NOW CONSIDERED A LIAR, SAYS EATALA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Declaring that the Congress government released Rythu Bharosa funds thinking that the Congress may not get votes in the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP candidate in the Malkajgiri Lok Sabha constituency, Eatala Rajender, said that the Congress government is also tapping phones.

He said that power cuts have started in the state and that nothing will move at the Centre if the public votes for the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections.

He said that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has surpassed former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao in morphing videos and audio. He said that Revanth Reddy is now considered a liar in just four months.

Eatala said that people do not know the candidates of the Congress and the BRS and that there is no chance of them saving their deposits.

Addressing a 'Meet the Press' programme held in Hyderabad on Tuesday, Eatala said that surveys cannot predict election results and that minority voters are also been saying that they will vote for the BJP. He said that he had never seen this kind of contaminated politics in the 20 years of his political life.

Eatala said the Congress has not implemented even a single assurance except free travel facility for women in TSRTC buses. He said the Congress government is adopting delaying tactics in the name of committees instead of taking action against those involved in the Kaleshwaram scam.

He said that Prime Minister Modi gave legitimacy to the BC Commission and that the opposition is resorting to a false campaign that the BJP will scrap reservations.

Eatala said that there is no clarity on who is the Prime Ministerial candidate in the INDI Alliance. The time is over for coalition politics, he said, and added that Rahul Gandhi will not become the Prime Minister.

Bhatti accuses KCR & BJP of match-fixing

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that there is a match-fixing deal between former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and the BJP.

He said that KCR has been supporting the 'injustices' done by the BJP to SCs, STs and BCs. It is better for KCR and the BJP if they speak directly after removing their masks, he said.

Addressing the media at the Gandhi Bhavan on Tuesday, Bhatti said that the conspiracy to scrap reservations started immediately after Modi became the Prime Minister.

He said that BJP leaders were openly saying that they would amend the Constitution if they wins 400 LS seats.

He said that KCR's situation in the phone tapping issue is like that of a pumpkin thief.

Bhatti said that he was confident that the Congress would win 14 LS seats in Telangana.

Bhatti said the Congress's policy is to 'increase wealth and to distribute it.' He said the Congress would increase reservations based on population after conducting a caste census.

He said that the BJP started conspiring after the Congress announced that it would increase reservations. He appealed to SCs, STs and BCs to vote for the Congress to protect reservations.

He said that the Congress would conduct a caste census immediately after taking over at the Centre. He said that the biggest Constitution in the world is in danger and that conditions in the country.

Will scrap Agniveer scheme, amend GST : Rahul

PNS ■ GUMALA/CHAIBASA(JHARKHAND)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said the Agniveer scheme will be abolished if INDIA bloc is voted to power, alleging that it was initiated by PM Narendra Modi and not by the Army.

He also promised to amend the GST and bring out a separate Sarna religious code for tribals.

"INDIA bloc will scrap the Agniveer scheme, a scheme brought by Modi and not by the Army. We do not want to differentiate between martyrs. Anyone sacrificing for the nation should be attributed martyr status, should be given pension," he said at an election rally in Jharkhand's Gumla.

"The BJP government implemented wrong GST schemes with five tax slabs. We will amend it and make one tax slab which will be minimum. We will reduce the tax burden on the poor," he said.

The former Congress chief attacked the BJP-led Centre for "betraying" tribals and alleged that Modi insulted President Droupadi Murmu.

"PM insulted President Murmu, a tribal, by not inviting her to the new Parliament building inauguration and Ram Temple consecration in Ayodhya," he said.

ECI's biased decisions draw flak from public

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

The Election Commission's decision on some issues is drawing flak from not only political parties but also the public as the ECI is taking different decisions on the same issue in different states.

On some issues, the Election Commission has taken different decisions in Telugu states. The Election Commission gave the green signal to the Telangana government to release funds for farmers under the Rythu Bandhu scheme.

But the Election Commission refused to permit the Andhra Pradesh government to release funds for welfare schemes like Rythu Bharosa.

When the Andhra Pradesh Government sought permission to release input subsidy funds to farmers as compensation for crops damaged by cyclone and drought the Election Commission refused permission.

Similarly, the Election Commission refused permission to release funds for students' fee reimbursement scheme.

The Election Commission directed the Andhra Pradesh government not to release any funds for any welfare schemes till the elections are over.

However, the Election Commission permitted the Telangana government to release funds to farmers under the Rythu Bandhu scheme as input subsidy. The Telangana government has already started releasing funds to farmers.

The people of Andhra Pradesh are criticising the biased decisions of the Election Commission. In both Telugu states, the BJP or its alliance partners are not in power. In Telangana, the Congress is in power and in Andhra Pradesh the YSR Congress is in power.

Asaduddin became millionaire, but Hyd voters remain poor: Sameer

Cong candidate Sameer takes out massive bike rally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress candidate in the Hyderabad Lok Sabha constituency, Mohammed Waliullah Sameer, has accused AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi of amassing wealth while ignoring the grinding poverty of large sections in the city.

Sameer highlighted the stark contrast between the growing fortunes of some political leaders and the poverty of their constituents.

"Hyderabad will remain a constituency of poor voters and rich leaders if the AIMIM or the BJP wins," he said, emphasising that only the Congress can bring tangible benefits to the people.

He addressed media persons ahead of a massive bike rally in Karwan on Tuesday. Senior Congress leaders like Karwan in-charge Osman Ali Hajiri and others participated in the bike rally and public meeting.

The bike rally started from Tolichowki Crossroads near Rumaan Hotel, covered Seven Tombs, Golconda Fort and Langar Houz and ended at Puranapool Crossroads. The event attracted a significant crowd and was followed by a huge public meeting at Tolichowki Chowrasta.

Posts will be given to MLAs based on performance: Venugopal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AICC General Secretary KC Venugopal said that posts will be given to MLAs based on performance.

Participating in a teleconference from New Delhi with Telangana Congress leaders Revanth Reddy, AICC incharge General Secretary Deepa Das Munshi, Ministers, MLAs and MPs on Tuesday, Venugopal lashed out at 15 MLAs including Health Minister Damodar Rajanarsimha.

It is learnt that Venugopal was angry with R&B Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy as the latter has been neglecting the Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency.

TDP extends support to BJP's Tandra Vinod Rao

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In what can be said to be a game changer, the TDP on Tuesday extended full support to the BJP's Tandra Vinod Rao in the coming LS elections.

At the behest of the TDP high command, the TDP district unit announced the decision at a press conference in Khammam. As an NDA partner, it is our responsibility to ensure the victory of Tandra Vinod Rao, TDP's Dr Vasireddy Ramanatham said.

Later, BJP and TDP leaders took part in the Kamma Athmeeya Sammelanam and called upon people to defeat the Congress.

Revanth reviews..

Continued from page 2

The officials informed the Chief Minister that the power supply had been disrupted in many areas due to heavy rains and strong winds. The Chief Minister directed the officials to resolve the problems immediately and restore power supply. He suggested that officials should provide assistance to people in waterlogged colonies. Police officials were directed to clear traffic problems in the city as soon as possible. The Chief Minister suggested to the Congress workers that officials and staff of various departments should be involved in support activities and that should the problem be serious, they should bring it to the attention of higher authorities.

Rain drains...

Continued from page 2

collapsed or became dysfunctional. Adding insult to injury, lineman and AEEs were not picking calls at all.

Areas such as Boduppal, Boudhnagar, KPHB, Kukatpally, Madeenaguda, Kapra, Banjara Hills, Alwal, Bandlaguda, Himayathnagar and Chintal were in a mess following the blackout, with pillars broken, trees and branches lying across roads, and flexes strewn all over.

With the first spell of rain causing city-wide misery due to blackout and related mess, some of the netizens said that the Congress government should provide inverters.

A Arun Muthineni said, "Almost 5 hours of power cut in and around Mohan Nagar (Nagole Area). We are irritated with this. I think the Congress government should start providing invertors".

Ajay, another consumer, said, "Power cut since 5.45 pm at Musarambagh .. No response on the complaint numbers..Congress Govt .Thank you for the hardships .Let's not vote for Congress on 13th for the troubles we are facing .It's 9.20 pm now we all are helpless."

A Kiran from Yellareddyguda said: "There's been a power cut from the past 3 hours in the Yellareddyguda area, Hyderabad may be due to rain. But even after the rain stopped they didn't give it".

Another citizen at Film Nagar said, "We are facing power cuts in Veterinary Colony from evening 4:00pm. We have kids at home and it is really scary for them and all our power backups went to dead state".

Another consumer Pramod said: "It has been 5 hours now and there is no power in Jagadgirigutta and most of the city. Do we need to sleep without power tonight? Dear CM Sir u said no power cuts but it's NOT true.. .We seeing frequent cuts."

BRS weak, fight now between BJP & Congress: Tamilisai

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP's star campaigner Dr Tamilisai Sounderarajan said that the BRS is very weak in the state and that it is a direct contest between the BJP and the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections.

Dr Tamilisai was speaking at a media conference held at the BJP state office here on Tuesday.

She said that she was confident that the BJP would win a majority of the LS seats in Telangana and added that she had good relations with the people of Telangana.

She said that the Prime Minister had visited Telangana 22 times and attended most of the inauguration ceremonies of development projects, but KCR did not come to receive the PM when he was the CM.

She said that KCR never showed any courtesy to the Governor's office and added that people know about the BRS.

She criticised Congress for grabbing power using false promises. Dr Tamilisai said that Rahul Gandhi was trying to gain political mileage by spreading lies on reservations and by inciting casteism.

She said the Prime Minister, Home Minister and RSS leaders have already given their explanations regarding.

No power shortage..

Under the BRS admin between 2022 and 2023, power consumption did not increase even by one per cent, he said.

In the last two days, the power demand peaked at about 4,000 MW and consumption to over 90 MU. Night-time power consumption increased like never before far exceeding estimates. On Tuesday at 12.19 am, the demand was 4,059 MW. It is 300 per cent more than that of last year, he pointed out.

"Even then electricity department staff were constantly on the alert and supplied power without interruption despite the massive increase in power demand," Bhatti said. "It is deplorable that instead of appreciating the electricity department, opposition leaders are carrying out a false propaganda that there are power cuts," he said.

He said that BRS leaders forgot that during KCR's rule, farmers came on to the roads and staged dharnas.

"Has KCR forgotten the then Transco and Genco CMD Prabhakar Rao lamenting at a media conference about the raw deal meted out to the electricity department by the BRS admin?" he said. "It is despicable on the part of KCR to tell lies about power supply," he added.

"When the generator arranged by BRS leaders for KCR's meeting in Suryapet developed a snag he blamed the electricity department.

Petrol..

Continued from page 2

Have you given it to any student? They cannot even provide rice to the children. In 125 schools, students have been hospitalised after eating contaminated food," KCR said. Addressing the people in Kamareddy, KCR said the Rythu Bandhu scheme will not come back as the CM informed the Election Commission to stop it.

"During the last election, as part of the six guarantees, the Chief Minister said that he would give a pension of Rs 4,000 instead of Rs 2,000. While the new Rs 4,000 did not come, even the pension of Rs 2000 was not given in January.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:	Krishna Paksha
Tithi: Amavasya:	May 07 11:41 AM to May 08 08:51 AM
Sukla Paksha Pratipada:	May 08 08:51 AM to May 09 06:21 AM
Nakshatram:	
Bharani:	May 07 03:32 PM to May 08 01:33 PM
Krithika:	May 08 01:33 PM to May 09 11:55 AM
Rahukalam:	12:12 PM to 1:48 PM
Yamagandam:	7:26 AM to 9:01 AM
Varjyam:	12:44 AM to 02:14 AM
Gulika:	10:37 AM to 12:12 PM
Amritakalam:	09:09 AM to 10:37 AM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	NIL

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered Thunderstorms
Temp: 37°c
Humidity: 51%
Sunrise: 5:47 AM
Sunset: 6:39 PM

Updated: May 7, 2024 5:00 PM

EXCISE 'SCAM'...

Continued from page 2

The judge also extended the judicial custody of Sisodia till May 15 in a related corruption case being probed by the CBI.

The judge fixed May 15 for further arguments on framing of charges in the corruption case against Sisodia.

The court, meanwhile, extended till May 14 the judicial custody of Kavitha in the money laundering case, while her JC in the corruption case was extended till May 20.

The judge extended the custody of the Telangana MLC after she was produced before the court on expiry of her remand.

During the proceedings, the Enforcement Directorate told the court the investigation was at a crucial stage and it is likely to file a charge sheet against Kavitha within a week.

The judge also extended the judicial custody of co-accused Chanpreet Singh till May 20 in the money laundering case.

Kejriwal was arrested on March 21 and is currently lodged in Tihar Jail under judicial custody.

The court had on April 30 court dismissed the bail pleas of Sisodia in corruption and money laundering cases, lodged by the CBI and the ED.

It had on May 6 dismissed the bail applications filed by Kavitha in corruption and money laundering cases.

The matter pertains to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy for 2021-22.

Postpone ...

Continued from page 2

The commission noted that similar directives were issued for the Rayathu Bandhu scheme during the Telangana assembly elections in 2023 on the condition that no new beneficiaries will be added to the scheme and the disbursement of instalments will be done without any publicity.

The commission had asked the the Telangana government to make payments through bank transfers and that no public function or political functionary will be involved in the process.

The scheme has been renamed as Rythu Bharosa by the Congress government in Telangana.

The EC noted that a minister of the erstwhile BRS government too had violated the model code of conduct by attempting to take credit.

3 Independent MLAs withdraw...

Continued from page 2

We have taken this decision due to various issues like the problems of farmers, inflation and unemployment."

"The three Independent MLAs have extended their support to the Congress. The BJP government earlier had the support of 10 JJP MLAs and Independents, but the JJP also withdrew support and now Independents are also leaving," Udai Bhan said.

"The Nayab Singh Saini government is now a minority government. Saini should resign as he does not have the right to stay even for a minute," the Congress leader said. Assembly elections are due in October in Haryana.

Hooda expressed his gratitude to the three MLAs for their support and said they have taken the decision keeping in mind public sentiments.

The Leader of the Opposition said there is a wave in favour of the Congress in the country including Haryana and that the Independent MLAs took their decision respecting public sentiments.

He claimed that the people have made up their minds to elect a Congress government in the state.

"We had given our support to the BJP government with honesty. But today unemployment is at its peak and inflation and farmers' issues are also there. Every section of society is fed up. People are facing a lot of problems with the Parivar Pehchan Patra (family ID card) and property ID system," Gollen said.

When asked why they did not speak up on these issues earlier, Gollen said that even during the farmers' agitation, they had raised their voice.

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the pioneer
HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | MAY 8, 2024

45 lakh in city eligible to vote: Ronald Rose

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

District Electoral Officer (DEO) Ronald Rose said that there are 45,91,201 total voters in the district, out of which 23,38,857 are male, 22,52,008 are female and 336 are third gender voters.

Ronald Rose said that the arrangements have been completed in view of the upcoming elections for Hyderabad, Secunderabad Parliament Constituencies and Secunderabad Cantonment assembly constituencies in Hyderabad District.

He said that 30 candidates are contesting from Hyderabad Constituency, 45 candidates from Secunderabad constituency and 15 candidates from Secunderabad Cantonment assembly constituency.



District Election Officer Ronald Rose, Police Commissioner Srinivas Reddy and others at a media conference in Hyderabad on Tuesday

He said that 3,986 polling booths were set up in the district to conduct the elections.

He said that webcasting is being arranged at all the polling booths. A total of 1,250 Central government employees were appointed as micro observers and given training. Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation program (SVEEP) programs are being conducted on a large scale to increase the polling percentage.

It is stated that 16,776 people applied for postal ballot in the district and so far 9,266 people exercised their right to vote through postal ballot. Facilitation centres will be kept open on May 9 and 10 for those who could not use the postal ballot on the last date till 8th of this month and they are advised to utilize this opportunity. He said that polling staff will be provided free transport facility on May 12 and 13.

The DEO explained that arrangements are being made to ensure that medical personnel and medical kits are available at each location. Hyderabad CP K Srineevasa Reddy said that the campaign programs will be banned from 5 pm on May 11. Section 144 will remain in force in the district until the elections are over.

Officials told to make fields visits daily to tackle water shortage

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) Managing Director (MD) Sudarshan Reddy directed the officers of Jalamandali to make field visits on a daily basis mainly at problematic areas. He held a review with the Jalmandal officials at the head office in Khairatabad on Tuesday.

He made enquiries about drinking water supply in the city, tanker management strategy, complaints and management of water kiosks and directed them to increase the number of water kiosks. He asked officials regarding the complaints received on social media like WhatsApp, Facebook, and X social media platforms. If there are complaints of polluted water, respond immediately and solve the problem, he said.

He suggested the Quality wing officials should not compromise in water quality. It is advised to ensure that the percentage of chlorine is adequate. Sewage jetting missions should be used to avoid sewage overflow problems. (HMWSSB Managing Director (MD) Sudarshan Reddy was speaking with the officials at the HMWSSB office in Khairatabad.)

Osmania University launches Osmania Film Club

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University, Vice Chancellor Prof D Ravinder Yadav announced the official launch of the Osmania Film Club along with the unveiling of its logo on Tuesday. This initiative aimed at showcasing the unity and equality among Osmanians by bringing together artistes to create compelling short films under the banner of the "Osmania Film Club."

The idea behind the club emerged from a collective effort by students from various campus colleges within Osmania University. These students took the lead in uniting artists from diverse backgrounds and disciplines to nurture their talent and transform them into proficient filmmakers.

As a testament to their dedication, a short film titled "Oka Ushassu" was showcased during the recently held Taksh



event as part of the 107th Foundation Day Celebrations.

Dr Lokesh, Pranay, Vijaya, Nikhil, and Sushobhan, representing the Osmania Film Club, spearheaded the successful organisation of the event at the Vice Chancellor's office. The Osmania Film Club promises to be a platform where creativity flourishes, boundaries blur, and stories resonate, reflecting the rich tapestry of talent within Osmania University.

The event saw the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including Osmania University's Vice Chancellor, Prof D Ravinder, Registrar Prof. Laxminarayana, OSD to VC Prof Reddya Naik, Dean of Student Affairs Prof. Rajendra Naik, Joint Director of Directorate of Admissions Dr Mohd Akhter Ali, and Infrastructure Director Prof. Naveen Kumar, who graced the occasion to support and encourage the Club members.

Rapido offers free rides to voters to polling stations on May 13 in Hyd, 3 other cities

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Voters across Hyderabad and also in Karimnagar, Khammam and Warangal in Telangana will be provided free bike taxi, autorickshaw and cab rides on May 13, polling day in the state, by a ride hailing platform.

Ride hailing platform Rapido on Monday said it is joining hands with the office of Chief Electoral Officer to further encourage people to vote. To that end, it organised an event to raise voter awareness at Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium here in which was attended by Vikas Raj, CEO.

On election day, voters can avail free rides on the Rapido app using the code 'VOTENOW' and get a free ride to exercise their democratic right. The initiative aims to facilitate residents' voting rights and ensure a more inclusive electoral process, a release said. Voting for 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana will be held on May 13. Rapido further said this effort aligns with Rapido's nationwide campaign, deploying over 10 lakh captains across more than 100 cities to provide free rides on election day.

Rapido's co-founder Pavan Guntupalli said, "We are undertaking this initiative to ensure that every voter in Hyderabad, Karimnagar, Khammam, and Warangal can successfully fulfill their civic duty by casting their votes in the Indian General Election 2024."

The ride hailing platform wants to specifically ensure that differently-abled and senior citizen voters have equitable access to exercise their democratic right. By extending free auto and cab rides to them, the ride app is redoubling its commitment to inclusivity and social responsibility, he added.

Raj said, "By offering free commute to voters, especially the differently abled and senior citizens, Rapido is facilitating greater inclusivity and ensuring that every eligible citizen can exercise their democratic right."

Man gets 20 years' rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting minor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A local court here on Tuesday sentenced a man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment after he was found guilty of sexually assaulting a minor. The case dates back to 2020.

The accused was identified as Mohammed Saleem (45) an auto-rickshaw driver. He lived close to the victim's residence, the incident happened when Saleem lifted the girl on his shoulder and took her to the terrace where he committed the offence.

The convict threatened the child not to reveal the incident to anyone. Upon feeling the pain, the victim complained to her mother who took her to Madannapet Police Station where a case was registered under sections 363 & 376AB IPC sec 5(m) r/w 6 of protection of children from sexual offences act 2012 . The victim was taken to Bharosa centre for recording her statement. The Bharosa team also conducted a medical examination.

The investigation was taken up by SVN Shivaram Sharma, ACP, Santoshnagar Division. After thorough enquiry, and filed a charge sheet accordingly.

PHONE-TAPPING CASE

A 1 informed his superior about his trip abroad for treatment

CHITHALURI REVANTH
■ HYDERABAD

The accused number one of phone-tapping case Prabhakar Rao

has contacted two IPS rank officers and an Inspector rank officers to inform them that he has gone for medical treatment and he will come back in a few months.

During the arguments over 73 CrPC at the Nampally court, advocate Surender Rao for Prabhakar Rao argued that his client called the police and gave his address, phone number and e-mail id to contact him. But still they are trying to issue a warrant against him.

Surender Rao said that he has been suffering from throat cancer for many years. Also he booked his flight tickets in February and he left India in March. There is no legally reliable material other than confessions, he mentioned.

A source said that more than twice he called the police regarding the case. But they have not responded properly. However he may come in June.

The Public Prosecutor Samba Shiva Reddy said that Prabhakar Rao left the country the next day after the case was registered, on March 11 and Sravan Rao (A6) left the next day after Praneeth Rao was arrested.

He requested the court to grant a warrant under 73 CrPC to produce Prabhakar Rao in the court. To issue 73 CrPC, Samba Shiva Reddy cited 'State Through Cbi vs Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar & Ors' case.

To counter that case, Surender Rao said that it was a terrorist attack case and also a warrant issued around four years after the incident happened. Also in the cited case police had done some efforts to nab him, but the police have done anything for Prabhakar Rao, he sought to know.

The police are issuing 91 CrPC notices to son of Prabhakar Rao and he is replying to those notices. Under that section, police are asking him when he will come back, and other questions and he has furnished every detail to the police.

TSRTC to run 60 special buses for IPL match today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) has deployed a total of 60 special buses for IPL matches at Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium (RGIC) on May 8.

On Tuesday TSRTC released a press statement where it mentioned that the buses will be operated between 6 pm to 11.30 pm from various destinations to the stadium and after the completion of the match again these buses will be available to pick up passengers for return journey.

TSRTC will run four buses from Uppal stadium to Mehdipatnam route, four buses from Ghatkesar to stadium route, four buses from NGO's colony to stadium, two buses from Ibrahimpatnam to stadium route, two buses from Koti to stadium route, two buses from Afzalgunj to stadium route, two buses from Lakdikapool to stadium route, two buses from Dilsukhnagar to stadium route, four buses from Jeedimetla to stadium route, four buses from JBS to stadium route, four buses from charminar to stadium route, two buses from LB Nagar to stadium route, two buses from BHEL to stadium route, two buses from Kondapur to stadium route, two buses from Mehdipatnam to stadium route, and two buses from Medchal to stadium routes.

Spectators can contact 9959226160 of Koti, 9959226154 of Rathifile bus station, 9959226150 of Jeedimetla, 9959226130 of Kachiguda, 9959226152 of Medchal depot.

New lease of life for Premature baby with abnormal weight

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A premature baby weighing 1.2 kg was given a lease of life following a surgery and efficient ventilator support on Tuesday.

With fast ventilator support through High-Frequency Oscillatory Ventilation (HFOV) and the administration of special gases like iNO, the baby's respiratory distress began to stabilise.

With HFOV commenced at the Rainbow Children's hospital, accompanied by meticulous monitoring and adjustments to maintain vital parameters, a successful flexible bronchoscopy in the operating theater revealed narrowing in the breathing passages. This crucial insight allowed for targeted treatment, with optimized antibiotic therapy based on Bronchoalveolar Lavage (BAL) samples.

The treatment required fourteen days of ventilator support, including five days of specialised care with HFOV and iNO. The doctors managed to wean the baby off advanced ventilation techniques onto simple nasal prongs for oxygen delivery.

The operation stressed the importance of a multidisciplinary approach, combining the expertise of senior pediatric intensivists, pediatric pulmonologists, and experienced anesthesiologists, all supported by robust infection control measures and a well-trained medical fraternity.

After six months of battling against the odds, the baby, now weighing 3.3 kg, was discharged from the hospital, heading home for the first time with a smile. Equipped with low-flow home oxygen and full feeding, this tiny champion embarked on a new journey.

Two-day 'Global Teens Meet' held in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Heartfulness Institute organised the first edition of Global Teens Meet, a youth-oriented inner transformation and leadership drive for ages between 15 and 20 at Kanha Shanti Vanam on Tuesday. Over 500 students from across India participated in the week-long teen campaign.

The campaign was inaugurated by Rev Daaji, Global Guide of Heartfulness and President of Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

The purpose of the campaign is to mould today's youth through introspective techniques, Heartfulness cleansing and meditation, leadership training and communication building, developing sensitivity towards nature, and cultivating compassion, and creativity. The participants are being offered free food and accommodation.



Heartfulness cleansing workshop

The main highlights of the event were sessions on 'Need for teen ages to be the change makers', 'Towards the integrated self' and 'Identifying intuition'. Apart from this, the youth were collectively guided during the Heartfulness cleansing and meditation sessions.

Rev. Daaji said, "Youth is the backbone of this country. India has the highest population of youth today and it is necessary that we make them strong individuals with integrity and holistic wellness who will lead our country towards true all-round progress. This campaign is designed to transform them into such extraordinary men and women."

The rest of the six days of the Global Teens Meet will involve educating youth on plants and their importance, story-building sessions, being in touch with nature, Heartful communication sessions, and guided meditation sessions. Other areas of modern-day know-how on financial literacy and social media ethics are also included in the campaign so that the youth derive the maximum training in conducting themselves in the real world. Free registrations for the event are ongoing at http://hfn.li/gtm2024.

DCA raids quack's 'clinic' in Suryapet; seizes unauthorised medicines worth Rs 1.5 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Drug Control Administration (DCA) on Tuesday raided a clinic operated by a quack in Suryapet and seized unlicensed medicines worth Rs 1.5 lakh from the clinic.

The accused was identified as Thota Prasad Babu who operated the clinic under the name," 'Sai Ram Poly Clinic'. The DCA officials detected huge stocks of medicines found on the premises without any drug license. As many as 87 varieties of medicines, including antibiotics, analgesics, anti-ulcer drugs, antihypertensive, etc., were found stocked on the premises.

Officials found several 'antibiotics' at the clinic during the raid. Indiscriminate sale of antibiotics by unqualified persons may have disastrous consequences on the health of rural public, including emergence of 'Antimicrobial Resistance'.

G Surender, Drugs Inspector, Suryapet carried out the raid under the supervision of K Dass, Assistant Director, Nalgonda.samples of the medicine were taken for analysis.

Dealers who supplied medicines to such unqualified persons, who are stocking and selling drugs without a drug license, are also punishable under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, and stringent action shall be taken against such wholesalers/dealers. wholesalers/dealers shall mandatorily ensure that the recipient entities hold a valid drug license before supplying medicines to them.

Etala promises Metro expansion to Malkajgiri constituency if elected

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Minister and BJP candidate for Malkajgiri Lok Sabha constituency Eatala Rajender on Tuesday expressed confidence that Prime Minister Modi would return to power for the third straight term.

Speaking at a meet-the-press programme at the Press Club on Tuesday, he promised to give a boost to infrastructure in the Malkajgiri area by developing roads, extending metro rail systems, and constructing flyovers if he is elected. He also promised to establish Information Technology and Industrial corridors along with skill development centres, aiming to create peace, improve education, and enhance healthcare services.

He said that he has been carefully analysing surveys, stating his capability to understand their accuracy. He said he was receiving support from various communities.



BJP candidate for Malkajgiri Lok Sabha constituency Eatala Rajender speaking at a meet-the-press programme in Hyderabad on Tuesday

He also said throughout his tenure, he has consistently supported workers' rights, including ASHA, Anganwadi, RTC, municipal, and healthcare workers, while they were protesting. He expressed gratitude for the support received from gated communities, government employees and minorities, stating that they are ready to vote in his favour.

He criticised his opponents, particularly Revanth Reddy, accusing him of failing to fulfil promises. He has given many promises with 6 guarantees and 66 promises in his manifesto. But he did not implement any other scheme except free bus travel for women.

He also mentioned issues such as phone tapping and infrastructure challenges of Kaleshawaram and claimed that no action has been taken by the administration against the guilty. He urged voters to support the BJP, promising stability under Narendra Modi's leadership.

Etela condemned the misuse of Artificial Intelligence, mentioning examples where the video of Amit Shah was manipulated to falsely claim he had opposed reservations.

Hyd records decline in ghost shopping centre stock by 19%

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad is the only city to record a decline in the Ghost Shopping Centre stock by 19 per cent Year on Year to 0.9 mn sq ft in 2023 as per the Think India Think Retail 2024 - Shopping Centre and High Street Dynamics across 29 cities released by Knight Frank India on Tuesday.

The survey records a sharp rise in low performing retail assets with approximately 13.3 million square feet (mn sq ft) of retail shopping center space categorized as 'Ghost Shopping Centre' across 29 cities.

There has been an increase of 59 percent year-on-year in Ghost Shopping Centre by Gross Leasable Area (GLA) since 2022 in the prime markets while the number of shopping centres that moved to 64 shopping centres by the end of 2023 over 57 in 2022. As a result of the rise in Ghost Shopping Centres, Knight Frank India estimates that loss of value to be at INR 67 billion (bn) or US $ 798 million in 2023.

According to Knight Frank Research, as of 2023, India has a total shopping centre stock of 125.1 mn sq ft. The top eight Indian cities constitute 75 percent of the total Gross Leasable Area (GLA), measuring 94.3 mn sq ft across 263 shopping centers while Tier 2 cities constitute 30.8 mn sq ft. Of the top eight cities, NCR (31.3 mn sq ft), Mumbai (16.3 mn sq ft) and Bengaluru (15.6 mn sq ft) were the top three cities in the pecking order of GLA available in the shopping centers. Hyderabad falls in sixth place with 6.7 mn sq ft in regards to GLA available in shopping centres.

For KCR, it is a struggle for political existence

PIN POINT

The regime change in Telangana following the 2023 Assembly elections is attributed to a strong anti-incumbency factor, though KCR, with his party renamed as Bharat Rashtra Samiti(BRS), had been confident of playing a larger role in national politics. Therefore, BRS began expanding its footprint in Maharashtra and Karnataka, to begin with. But KCR failed to read the writing on the wall.



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

It is indeed a turbulent period for Kalvakuntla Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR), who ruled India's youngest state for a decade after having successfully spearheaded the movement for a separate state of Telangana for 13 long years! With the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) being the ruling and the principal opposition parties at the Centre then, KCR had tactfully realised his dream of having a separate administrative unit for the region comprising Telangana in the undivided state of AP under the banner of his party originally called Telangana Rashtra Samithi.

The regime change in Telangana following the 2023 Assembly elections is attributed to a strong anti-incumbency factor, though KCR, with his party renamed as Bharat Rashtra Samiti(BRS), had been confident of playing a larger role in national politics. Therefore, BRS began expanding its footprint in Maharashtra and Karnataka, to begin with. But KCR failed to read the writing on the wall. Moreover, the arrest of KCR's daughter and party MLC K Kavitha by the Enforcement Directorate in the Delhi liquor scam cast a shadow over the pink party. After all, she had been the face of women empowerment in the state. Some circles believe that the TRS could retain power in 2018 only by raking up 'anti-Andhra sentiment' as the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief and former chief minister of undivided AP N Chandrababu Naidu had arrived at an electoral understanding with the Congress party. KCR had then raised the bogey of Telangana State coming under Naidu's proxy rule should the Congress come to power.

In his second stint, KCR knowingly or unknowingly allowed the intervention of his family members in administrative matters. So, he could not wash his hands off the stigma of endorsing 'Kalvakuntla family rule'. Subsequently, serious charges were leveled against his government that phones of prominent leaders were being tapped, including that of then TPCC president and present chief minister A Revant Reddy. Above all, Telangana, despite being financially sound at bifurcation, piled up debts running to Rs. 5 lakh crore.

No wonder, people responded positively towards the Congress' appeal to grant it an opportunity to rule the new state, which after all was granted by the grand old party.

Today, KCR is facing the Lok Sabha elections with his back to the wall. On the whole, it is now a question of political survival him as well as his party BRS. Today, BRS cannot afford to cling to regional sentiments that had given TRS a boost in the past, though the renamed party has decided not to contest in the Lok Sabha polls outside Telangana.

Today, amidst intense political campaigning, with the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party projecting it as mere fight between themselves, KCR and his son and political heir KT Rama Rao are hoping that their party would win at least eight seats out of the 17 LS seats in TG. Hyderabad has been unofficially left to the Majlis by both Congress and BRS, despite their presence in the electoral fray.

The Congress is focused only on BJP, its rival at the national level. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has preferred a number of visits to TG to leave his own mark on the state. Likewise, the brother-sister duo from the grand old party, Rahul and Priyanka, are engaged in making it look like a direct fight between the BJP and the Congress. The Congress is expecting to win a dozen Lok Sabha seats in TG, whereas the BJP is hopeful of getting at least one more seat in addition to its previous tally of four seats.

Amid desertions by party leaders and cadre, the BRS has an uphill task. Giving regionalism another twist, KTR has posited that Hyderabad could become a Union territory soon, probably before 2nd June 2024, when the city ceases to be a joint capital under the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014. So, KTR has urged people to give at least 12 Lok Sabha seats for BRS to 'save Hyderabad' and retain it for TG permanently.

The saving grace for BRS is that it managed to get impressive results in and around Hyderabad. Although the Congress had emerged victorious in various parts of Telangana, it could not wrest even a single seat in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corportion area that accounts for 24 seats (more than 20% of the total 119 seats). But the charges of graft relating to the Kaleshwaram project and the phone tapping issue will haunt the BRS.

In this backdrop, for both KCR and BRS it appears to be a struggle for political existence in TG, where two national parties are battling it out with a pitch for a national outlook.

NIA charge-sheets 3 Maoists for conspiring to spy, attack forces

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



They have been charged under the Indian Penal Code, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Explosive Substances Act, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said in a statement

The National Investigation Agency on Tuesday charge-sheeted three members of the CPI (Maoist) for allegedly supplying explosives and other items to the banned outfit for attacking and spying on security forces, according to an official statement.

In its first supplementary charge sheet filed before the NIA special court in Telangana's Nampally, the anti-terror agency has charged arrested accused Kamala and absconding Communist Party of India (Maoist) members Hidma and Bade Chokka Rao alias "Damodar" in the matter, it said.

They have been charged under the Indian Penal Code, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Explosive Substances Act, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said in a statement.

Kamala and the other accused -- Hidma and Rao -- were arrested while attempting to deliver explosives and other items to Maoists, who had financed the purchase of a drilling machine and a lathe machine in order to make firearms, drones for keeping surveillance on security forces and explosives for attacking security personnel, it said.

"The NIA on Tuesday field a supplementary charge sheet against the three accused, including two absconders, in a case relating to the seizure of drones, explosive materials and a lathe machine from cadres of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) in Cherla in Telangana," the statement said.

In August last year, the agency had charge-sheeted eight accused in the case relating to funding by CPI (Maoist) for the purchase of the various arms and equipment to spy on and attack security forces, it said.

The case, initially registered at the Cherla police station on June 5 last year, was taken over by the NIA on August 3. The agency, which had filed its original charge sheet on December 1 last year, is continuing with its investigations in the case, the statement added.

Congs LS nominee Kiran Kumar promises funds for development

PNS ■ YADADRI BHUVANAGIRI



Congress party's Bhuvanagiri Lok Sanbha candidate Chama Kiran Kumar Reddy said that the Congress would score an impressive victory in Bhuvanagirit once again. The region witnessed development under the leadership of the Komatireddy brothers, he said.

He said that the previous governments had formed committees for the cleaning of the Musi, but no action was taken. The BRS government had failed to clean up. "We have request CM Revanth Reddy to set up a dry port in Chityala area."

"If I win as an MP, I will fight for the funds due from the Centre," he said. The Regional Ring Road (RRR) to Chathuppal will be completed soon. The construction has also started. We will implement these proposals with a comprehensive project report (DPR) after the elections.

He said that the focus will be on full-fledged services in AIIMS.

The previous government had changed the name of Yadagidigutta to Yadadri and it will be changed to Yadagirigutta again.

After the elections, a high-level review will be conducted with the CM and all the facilities will be provided in Yadadri and it will be converted into Yadagirigutta.

The Congress party has fought on every front for full service in AIIMS. Four years later, construction is still underway.

"We had said that a high-level review of AIIMS will be done within 150 days of our government." As soon as the election code is over, we will review the AIIMS and talk to the central government and take steps to complete the work as soon as possible.

"Our government is giving priority to infrastructure and urban development and I urge the state government to take the metro up to Choutuppal," "he said."

He said he would talk to the authorities concerned to stop the express trains at Bhuvanagiri.

Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy has taken up the construction of six-laning of the Hyderabad-Vijayawada national highway up to Malkapur.

Along with him, I will work with the state and central government to build underpasses in areas like Chotuppal and Chityal.



Marijuana worth Rs 25 L seized in temple town

PNS ■ BHADRACHALAM

The excise department sleuths on Tuesday seized 100 kg of ganja in the temple town of Bhadrachalam.

The excise personnel were inspecting vehicles on account of elections and found 100 kg of ganja worth Rs 25 lakh being smuggled. The police arrested one person called Gugulotu Nanda Raju.

They seized the ganja, the car used in smuggling of it and two mobile phones from him.

Excise authorities Karamchand, Raheemunni Begum and others were present.

Congress intensifies campaign in Ranga Reddy district

PNS ■ RANGA REDDY



MLA Veerlapalli Shankar (left) and former MLA Choulapalli Pratap Reddy (right) addressing rural doctors

In a bid to bolster support for Congress party candidate Challa Vamsichand Reddy, MLA Veerlapalli Shankar and former MLA Choulapalli Pratap Reddy appealed to rural doctors in Dhanwantari village to secure a resounding victory for the party in the upcoming elections.

The duo addressed a gathering of rural doctors in Shadnagar town, discussing various issues concerning the healthcare sector at the grassroots level.

They emphasised the importance of rural doctors in addressing the healthcare needs of the community and urged them to mobilise support for the Congress party.

During the meeting, MLA Shankar and former MLA Pratap Reddy acknowledged the services rendered by the rural doctors They also noted the challenges being faced by rural doctors, particularly in terms of government recognition, and promised to address these concerns.

Shankar assured the rural doctors that he would discuss their issues with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to seek solutions.

As a token of appreciation, the rural doctors of Dhanwantari honoured Shankar and former MLA Pratap Reddy with shawls.

The event was attended by block Congress President Balaraju Goud, Mandal Congress Party President Challa Srikanth Reddy, and other party members, signifying a unified effort to support Vamsichand Reddy's candidate.

Politicians hosting parties for party workers in farmhouses

PNS ■ GAJWEL

Political parties have been throwing feasts to their respective party workers in the afternoons and reviewing the progress of the election campaign, besides discussing future strategies with them.

The farmhouses, built by the traders belonging to Hyderabad and other towns and cities for them to relax during weekends, have become political platforms because of the current Lok Sabha elections.

There are many farmhouses in Gajwel, Siddipet and Dubbaka and they are very close to road. The political activists are keen to relax amidst sylvan surroundings in hot summer. Moreover, they are useful to ensure the secrecy of the political strategies. When the politically significant persons reach the area, they will stay at the farm houses. The political activists call on them.

Politicians have been spending lakhs of rupees to throw parties. Almost on daily basis, the party workers are enjoying feasts. In connection with birthday of a political leader, fruits and bread were distributed among the patients. Later, a party was thrown for the workers at the leader's farm house. The locals say that the political activists relaxed till late in the night.

Similarly, small parties are being organised at the constituency level with each activist contributing a small sum to the party. The party members taking advantage of the elections the members have been meeting at the farm houses once in two days and reviewing the progress of the election campaign.

Because of the sweltering heat, there is shortage of liquor in some shops. A shop here used to get 120 cases of liquor, but now it gets only 40 per day. The liquor is being supplied to those who have placed orders with it.

According to a hotel owner, the hotel daily sells 40-60 biryani parcels. However, it is selling 120 parcels of biryani per day.

Farmers suffer losses as onion prices crash

PNS ■ DEVARAKADRA

The drop in prices for onions in Devarakadra agricultural market yard has brought tears to the eyes of the farmers. The crashing prices made the farmers feel that they may not be able to realise at least the input costs let alone earning profits. They appealed to the government to come to their resscue.

A month ago, a quital of onions fetched Rs 3,000. Now the price crashed to Rs 1,200 a quintal. The farmer incurred an expenditure of Rs 45,000 per acre to grow onions and reaped a harvest of 35 quintals an acre. With the prevailing price, the farmer is able to realise only Rs 42,000 per acre.

According to onion farmer Kondanna of Gurakonda village, he reaped a harvest of 42 quintals of onion in 1.5 acres. He incurred an expenditure of Rs 50,000. When he sold the onions in the market, he could realise only his investment and failed to earn at least Re 1 towards profit.

Works worth Rs 1000 cr stalled in SCCL

PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM

In spite of Election Commission of India making it clear earlier that the activities of the SCCL, which is an essential service sector can go ahead with its activities. The Model Code of Conduct is not applicable to it. Still works worth nearly Rs 1,000 crore have been stalled.

Processing of tender schedules, purchase of machinery and spare parts and other activities are put on hold on the pretext of the code of conduct.

The SCCL targeted to produce 72 lakh tonnes. To achieve the products, the SCCL management should procure the necessary vehicles and machinery spare parts needed for use in coal mines. The coal miners are angry at non-availability of several safety equipment and spare parts for the machinery. As if it is not enough, the management is not procuring the spare parts on the pretext of the election code of conduct.

The tenders pertaining to OB removal, sand transport, bottom ash clearing and other works have been suspended because of the election code of conduct.

Ever since the BRS came to power in Telangana, political intervention in the SCCL has increased. Even though the Congress came to power in Telangana replacing the BRS, some of the SCCL officers have been following old methods.

NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

CM JAGAN's POSER TO PM MODI

Will NDA grant SCS to AP?

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA



Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, questioning the National Democratic Alliance's commitment to grant Special Category Status (SCS) to Andhra Pradesh.

Addressing an election rally at Gajuwaka on Tuesday, Jagan remarked on the shift in alliances, noting that while PM Modi once criticised former CM Chandrababu Naidu, he now aligns with him. He urged the public to ponder over such political manoeuvres.

Warning against the privatisation of the Vizag Steel Plant (VSP), CM Jagan urged voters to support YSRCP to safeguard State assets. He criticised Chandrababu Naidu's tenure, highlighting alleged failures in implementing significant schemes. Accusing the TDP of obstructing the distribution of welfare benefits, Jagan emphasised the importance of the upcoming election in preserving ongoing welfare initiatives.

Detailing educational reforms, Jagan outlined initiatives such as school renovations, English medium instruction, digital classrooms, and various educational programmes.

Enumerating welfare schemes like 'Aasara', 'Sunnavaddi', 'Cheyutha', and 'Kapu Nestam', CM Jagan underscored the empowerment efforts undertaken by the YSRCP government, including the distribution of house title deeds.

CM Jagan juxtaposed TDP's unfulfilled promises from their 2014 manifesto with the YSRCP's achievements, urging voters to consider the track record of both parties.

Addressing the people in Ichchapuram, Jagan stressed the importance of the electorate's voice in shaping the State's future.

Regarding developmental projects, Jagan highlighted initiatives such as the Mulapeta port, fishing harbours, and the Bhogapuram Airport, illustrating the government's commitment to infrastructure development.

Govt moves HC against EC for stalling DBT schemes

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA



The Jagan-led government has taken legal action against the Election Commission of India's (ECI) decision to postpone the disbursement of financial aid to farmers and students under Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes. This move comes after the EC directed the deferment of Rs 847.22 crore for agricultural input subsidies and Rs 610.79 crore for post-matric scholarships under the 'Jagananna Vidya Deevena' scheme until the conclusion of the State's election process.

On Tuesday, the Jagan government filed a petition with the AP High Court, contesting the EC's directive. It argued that these schemes are ongoing initiatives, and halting the distribution of funds would adversely affect the beneficiaries. The government said that if the funds were not disbursed by the end of May, they would expire.

In response, the EC's counsel clarified that the Commission had merely requested a postponement of the payments until after the upcoming elections, scheduled to conclude next Monday. They asserted that there was no urgency in releasing the funds at this moment.

The High Court noted that there is still considerable time until the end of May and advised the government to exercise patience. It directed the government to provide clarification to the EC and scheduled further hearings for Thursday, contingent upon the EC's response.

INDIA CORNER

Entrepreneur booked for molesting woman in building lift

Police have registered an FIR against a Mumbai-based entrepreneur partner of a firm for allegedly molesting a 43-year-old woman in a building lift, an official said on Tuesday. The FIR was registered against the 38-year-old man on a complaint lodged by the woman, who works as a wedding planner, claiming he had groped her in the lift on April 29 this year. No arrest has been made so far, the official said. The accused and the victim know each other as they are the residents of the first and second floors of the highrise, situated in Khar, according to the FIR. "He allegedly followed the woman in the lift. He spoke to her in obscene language and groped her, which left her shaken and scared. She started crying. After coming out of the lift, she narrated her ordeal to her family members," police said. A case was registered under sections 354 (outraging the modesty of a woman), 509 (word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) and 506 (Punishment for criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code and investigation is underway, the official said.



'Olive oil linked with lower risk of death from dementia'

About a teaspoon of olive oil a day is linked with lowering the risk of death due to dementia by roughly 30 per cent, particularly in women, according to a new research. Replacing five grams a day intake of mayonnaise and margarine ('vanaspati') with olive oil in equal amounts was found to be associated with a 14 per cent and eight per cent lower risk of death due to dementia, respectively. An international team of researchers, including those at Harvard University, US, observed over 92,000 adults in the US for 28 years to study the effects of olive oil intake on the risk of dementia-related death. Dementia refers to an impaired ability to remember, think and make decisions, and thus, impacts daily activities and quality of life. "Consuming at least 7 grams per day of olive oil was associated with a 28 per cent lower risk of dementia-related death compared with never or rarely consuming olive oil," the authors wrote. They also found that the results held good regardless of diet quality.



Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra not political, Centre to Delhi HC

The Centre on Tuesday told the Delhi High Court its 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra', which aimed to "reach the unreached", was devoid of any political reference or insignia and the PIL alleging "political propaganda" wants to "turn it on its head". The central government, while responding to the PIL by E A S Sarma and Jagdeep S Chhokar against the alleged use of public servants and defence personnel in the yatra as well as installation of selfie points with the prime minister's placard, said the yatra, which is now over, was an "agglomeration" of various government schemes for the benefit of the masses and merely sought to spread awareness in the public. It stated that there was also an endeavour to spread awareness through the selfie points and several crore people participated in these programmes. "Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is to draw the last man standing, to make him feel proud of the achievement," said Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma.



SCHOOL JOBS SCAM IN WEST BENGAL

SC stays HC order annulling appointment of teachers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the Calcutta High Court order invalidating the appointment of 25,753 teachers and non-teaching staff made by the state's School Service Commission (SSC) in state-run and state-aided schools.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, however, permitted the CBI to continue with its investigation and probe even members of the state cabinet.

The top court, however, asked the CBI not to take any precipitate action like arresting a suspect during the investigation.

Earlier in the day, it termed the alleged scam as a "systemic fraud" and said the state authorities were duty-bound to maintain digitised records pertaining to the appointment of teachers and non-teaching staff.



The top court was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the Calcutta High Court's April 22 decision that invalidated the appointment of 25,753 teachers and non-teaching staff.

"Public job is so scarce.... Nothing remains if the faith of the public goes. This is systemic fraud. Public jobs are extremely scarce today and are looked at for social mobility. What remains in the system if their appointments are also maligned? People will lose faith, how do you countenance this?" the CJI asked the lawyers representing the state government.

The bench said the state government has nothing to show that relevant data was maintained by the authorities and asked about its availability.

"Either you have the data or you do not have it.... You were duty-bound to maintain the documents in digitised form. Now, it is obvious that there is no data. You are unaware of the fact that your service provider has engaged another agency. You had to maintain supervisory control," the bench told the state government's lawyers.

The state government had challenged the Calcutta High Court order, saying it cancelled the appointments "arbitrarily".

Ex-Cong leader Radhika Khera, actor Shekhar Suman join BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress leader Radhika Khera and actor Shekhar Suman joined the BJP on Tuesday. Khera, the former national coordinator of the Congress's media department, resigned from the party's primary membership on Sunday, days after her altercation with another leader at the party's Chhattisgarh office.

In her resignation letter to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Khera also claimed she was facing opposition in the party for her visit to the Ram temple in Ayodhya. Suman, a popular TV actor who also worked in many Bollywood films, has returned to politics after a gap of about 15 years. He had fought the 2009 Lok Sabha elections from Patna Sahib seat in Bihar on a Congress ticket but came third in the contest which was won by Shatrughan Sinha, who was then with the BJP.

Misleading ads: Public figures must act with responsibility: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

It is imperative for celebrities and public figures to act responsibly while endorsing a consumer product, the Supreme Court said on Tuesday as it clamped down on misleading advertisements.

The apex court directed that before an advertisement is permitted to be issued, a self-declaration be obtained from advertisers on the line of the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994. Rule 7 of the 1994 law stipulates an advertisement code that says advertisements carried should be designed to be conformity with the laws of the country.

A bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah also directed the Union ministries concerned to apprise it of misleading advertisements and the action taken or proposed to be taken against them by the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA).



The apex court directed that before an advertisement is permitted to be issued, a self-declaration be obtained from advertisers on the line of the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994.

"Endorsements by celebrities, influencers and public figures go a long way in promoting products and it is imperative for them to act with responsibility while endorsing any product in the course of advertisement and taking responsibility for the same," the bench observed.

The apex court was hearing the case related to misleading advertisements by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd.

It is hearing a plea filed in 2022 by the Indian Medical Association alleging a smear campaign by Patanjali and yoga guru Ramdev against the Covid vaccination drive and modern systems of medicine.

The bench has been critical of misleading advertisements about Patanjali products that have now been prohibited being still available on various internet channels.

India withdraws 51 military personnel from Maldives

PNS ■ MALE

India has withdrawn 51 of its soldiers from the Maldives so far, the government here has said ahead of the May 10 deadline set by President Mohamed Muizzu for the complete withdrawal of Indian military personnel from his country. The Maldivian government earlier announced that two batches of Indian soldiers had left the country. However, the exact figure was not disclosed previously. The Chief Spokesperson of the President's Office Heena Waleed, in response to questions regarding the issue, said on Monday, that a total of 51 Indian soldiers have been repatriated so far.



"All Indian military personnel in the country will be withdrawn from the Maldives by May 10. As of now, 51 soldiers stationed at two platforms have been repatriated," Heena was quoted as saying by the Edition.mv news portal.

She however refused to disclose the exact figure of the Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives, stating the details would be shared at a later date, Sun.mv. news portal reported.

According to previous announcements by the Maldives government, 88 Indian soldiers were stationed in the country to operate two helicopters, a Dornier aircraft and at the Senahiya military hospital. The two helicopters and the Dronier aircraft were gifted by India.

President Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, had set May 10 as the deadline for the withdrawal of the Indian military personnel from his country. Repatriation of Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives was a key pledge of Muizzu during his presidential campaign.

WEST NILE FEVER IN KERALA

State govt orders all districts to be vigilant

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government on Tuesday said West Nile fever cases have been reported from Thrissur, Malappuram and Kozhikode districts of the state.

State Health Minister Veena George, in a statement, confirmed that cases of the viral infection have been reported in the state and that all the districts have been asked to be vigilant.

While the health officials confirmed five cases of the infection in Kozhikode, no details regarding the number of cases in Thrissur and Malappuram districts were provided by the authorities.

As part of the preventive measures against the viral fever, spread by the Culex species of mosquitoes, the Minister has ordered that steps be taken for mosquito control by destroying their breeding grounds, the statement said.



The minister said there was no need to be concerned, but requested anyone showing signs of fever or other symptoms of the West Nile infection to seek treatment immediately.

The main symptoms of West Nile infection are headache, fever, muscle aches, dizziness and loss of memory, but most patients do not experience these, she said.

Some people experience symptoms like fever, headache, vomiting and itching and in one per cent of the cases, it can lead to brain damage resulting in unconsciousness and sometimes death, the minister's statement said.

But the death rate is relatively low compared to Japanese encephalitis which shows similar symptoms and is more dangerous.

It said that instructions to begin pre-monsoon cleaning activities were already given in a high-level meeting held last week and now the District Medical Officers (DMOs) have been directed to further intensify the same.

As there is no medicine or vaccine available against West Nile virus, symptomatic treatment and prevention are key, the minister said.

As part of the preventive measures, she suggested wearing clothing that completely covers the body, use of mosquito nets and repellants and keeping one's home and surroundings clean.

Earlier in the day, Kozhikode district health officials confirmed reports of five cases of West Nile fever there.

Vote for Congress for bright, more equal future: Sonia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday appealed to the people to reject the proponents of lies and hatred and vote for her party for a "brighter and more equal future" for all.

Her appeal came on the day of the third phase of polling for the Lok Sabha polls.

She said the Congress and the INDIA bloc members were committed to defending the Constitution and democracy.

"Reject the proponents of lies and hatred and vote for the Congress for a brighter and more equal future for all. Press the hand button and together let us build a stronger, more united India with peace and harmony for all," Gandhi said in a video message. She alleged that youth unemployment, crimes against women and discrimination against Dalits, Adivasis, and minorities have reached unprecedented levels.



Model Code of Conduct turned into 'Modi code of conduct': Mamata

PNS ■ PURULIA (WB)

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday alleged that the Election Commission has turned a blind eye to the allegations against BJP leaders that they indulge in hate speeches during campaigns, converting the Model Code of Conduct to "Modi code of conduct".

Addressing an election rally at Purulia, the TMC supremo also claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other top BJP leaders consider only themselves as Hindus, and they do not think about other communities.



Modi and other BJP leaders by their "hate-filled speeches" are intimidating lower caste Hindus, minorities and other marginalised sections, but the Election Commission is silent, she alleged. "The Election Commission's Model Code of Conduct has turned out to be a mockery and should be rechristened as Modi code of conduct. But we will continue to flag every incident of violation of rights of citizens of this country," Banerjee said. Continuing her tirade at Modi, Banerjee said she has not seen another PM who utters so many lies.

She asked, "What happened to his 2014 promise of giving Rs 15 lakh in the bank account of every citizen? What happened to his promise to give free LPG gases? What happened to his 'Beti Banchao Beti Padao' project?"

"In every village, BJP leaders are making a false promise of giving Rs 3000 to every poor woman under the 'Annapurna Bhandar' scheme. Remember, the BJP has withheld 100 days wage to the poor in Bengal for three years. The BJP is also not releasing a single paisa for rice, we have shouldered the entire amount so that our poor don't feel the crunch," she added.

BJP will provide pension to journalists if voted to power in Odisha: Pradhan

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday said the BJP will provide pension to journalists if the party is voted to power in Odisha. "We believe in the motto of 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vishwas'. In accordance with it, we will make a provision of pension for journalists," Pradhan told reporters at Sambalpur. The journalists' accreditation policy will be modified to expand its purview so that individual scribes, working at the subdivision level, are also included, he said. Certain restrictions on the entry of media persons in various government offices will be lifted, too, Pradhan, the Minister of Education, said. "A proper guideline will also be issued so that journalists can report on the performance of the government," he said. Simultaneous Lok Sabha and assembly elections will be held in Odisha in four phases, starting May 13.

Patna most vulnerable to floods in India, finds new research

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Patna experiences the worst floods in India, followed by West Bengal's Murshidabad and Maharashtra's Thane, according to a district-level flood severity index (DFSI) developed by researchers at IIT-Delhi and IIT-Roorkee.

The index takes into account the historical severity of floods based on the number of affected people, the spread and duration of floods.

The researchers said the top 10 districts where flood severity is the highest are: Patna, Murshidabad, Thane, North 24 Parganas (West Bengal), Guntur (Andhra Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), Ballia (Uttar Pradesh), East Champaran (Bihar), and East Medinipur (West Bengal).

These are followed by Muzaffarnagar (Bihar), Lakhimpur (Assam), Kota (Rajasthan), Aurangabad (Maharashtra), Malda (West Bengal), Rajkot (Gujarat), Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh), Aurangabad (Bihar), Bahraich (Uttar Pradesh), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Jalpaiguri (West Bengal), Darjeeling (West Bengal), Dibrugarh (Assam), Azamgarh (Uttar Pradesh), Chamoli (Uttarakhand), West Champaran (Bihar), Amravati (Maharashtra), Medinipur West (West Bengal), and Samastipur (Bihar).



Though Chamoli in Uttarakhand does not face recurrent floods, it appears on this list because of a few isolated highly damaging flood events.

Among the 30 districts facing the highest risk of floods, 17 are in the Ganga basin and three are in the Brahmaputra basin.

Among all the Indian river basins, the Ganga basin has the highest population, and its high flood proneness is worrisome, said the researchers, including Manabendra Saharia, an assistant professor at IIT-Delhi.

Assam experiences the highest number of floods in India, having faced more than 800 flood events over 56 years.

The other flood-prone states, in descending order of flood events, include Kerala, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra. Data from 1967 to 2023 shows that Thiruvananthapuram has experienced more than 231 floods or more than four events per year on average. Five districts -- Thiruvananthapuram, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Kamrup, and Nagaon -- have been categorised as "severely flood-prone," having recorded more than 178 floods, or more than three events per year on average.

The researchers said localised intense rainfall events are likely to rise in the future due to climate change, and therefore, more flash floods are expected.

Modi govt neglected MP's Adivasi communities: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress accused the BJP-led Centre on Tuesday of "neglecting" the Adivasi communities of Madhya Pradesh and alleged that the saffron party's allocation for Adivasis in the central budget has consistently fallen short of the 8.2-per cent target set by the NITI Aayog.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh posed questions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of the latter's rallies in Madhya Pradesh.

"Why has the BJP failed to improve rail connectivity in MP's tribal districts? Why are Adivasis unwelcome in 'Modi ka Parivar'? Why does the Modi sarkar continue to neglect migrant workers?" Ramesh asked on X. Elaborating on what he said were "jumla (rhetoric) details", the Congress leader said even after being in power for 10 years, the Modi government has "failed" to complete the Dahod-Indore and Chhota Udaipur-Dhar railway lines.



HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | MAY 8, 2024

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PAPER WITH PASSION

The die is cast

The pivotal third phase of the elections concluded with a low turnout, featuring prominent contenders

Yesterday, Prime Minister Modi exercised his voting right. He was vocal about India's exemplary democratic process on the global stage. Indeed, the complexity of Indian elections, given the vastness of the nation and its electorate, makes their execution a challenging feat. As the 2024 Lok Sabha election reaches midway, India's political arena brims with fervour, anticipation, and meticulous scrutiny. The third phase of voting holds particular significance, especially for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with voting taking place in Gujarat, the home turf of Prime Minister Modi, and Amit Shah, the Home Minister. The presence of both leaders casting their votes amplifies the importance of this phase, shaping the election's narrative thus far. The third phase encompassed 11 States and Union territories, witnessing 93 constituencies participating in the electoral process. Notably, the BJP secured victory in the Surat constituency in Gujarat uncontested. With voting in 283 Lok Sabha seats (52 per cent of total Lok Sabha seats) complete, the election is less than a month away from its logical conclusion. After four more phases, the results would be out on June 4. What set the third phase apart was the presence of several constituencies where notable figures were contesting. This phase hosted several prominent candidates, including Amit Shah (BJP) from Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat; Digvijaya Singh (Congress) from Rajgarh, Madhya Pradesh; Shivraj Singh Chouhan (BJP) from Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh; Dimple Yadav (Samajwadi Party) from Mainpuri, Uttar Pradesh; Supriya Sule (NCP - Sharad Pawar) from Baramati, Maharashtra; Jyotiraditya Scindia (BJP) from Guna, Madhya Pradesh; Pralhad Joshi (BJP) from Dharwad, Karnataka; and KS Eshwarappa (BJP) from Shimoga, Karnataka, among others.



The Election Commission reported a turnout of 66.14 per cent and 66.71 per cent for the first and second phases, respectively. The third phase was no different in terms of voter turnout. With the completion of the third phase, the fate of 283 Lok Sabha seats has been sealed, marking the election's midpoint with 52% of seats voted upon. The persistently low turnout across all phases raises concerns for both democracy and political parties, each grappling with the challenge of ensuring voter participation. For the BJP, the third phase holds immense significance. As a party entrenched in power since 2014, it faces the daunting task of not only maintaining its stronghold but also expanding its influence across diverse regions of the nation. As the Lok Sabha election unfolds, discernible trends and dynamics offer insights into the nation's pulse. Despite facing formidable challenges, the BJP leverages its organisational strength, robust campaign machinery, and Modi's charismatic leadership to maintain its competitive edge. However, navigating through economic concerns, social tensions, and regional disparities presents formidable obstacles. The outcome of this phase serves as a litmus test for the BJP's policies and leadership shaping the trajectory of Indian politics.

PICTALK



Women show their ink-marked finger after casting votes for the 3rd phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Bareilly PTI

Global South's cultural diplomacy



CHAITANYA K **PRASAD**

Cannes transcends its role as a mere film festival; it serves as a beacon of cultural exchange, artistic exploration, and industry innovation

As we inch closer to the second week of May, excitement for the forthcoming 77th edition of the Cannes Film Festival is reaching a crescendo. The Cannes Film Festival, since its inception, has been hailed as the platform celebrating the joy and creativity of cinema, the high point of confluence of cultures, and talents, and an assembly of masters of storytelling. In recent years, its stage has increasingly spotlighted the cinematic voices of the Global South, a trend underscored by the burgeoning presence of films from Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. Building on last year's diverse selection from Japan, China, and South Korea, Cannes in its 77th edition, from 14th to 25th May 2024, reaffirms its commitment to amplifying varied narratives and perspectives. This year's edition promises to continue this trajectory, featuring standout entries like "All We Imagine As Light" by Indian filmmaker Payal Kapadia, "Boku No Ohisama (My Sunshine)" by the acclaimed Japanese filmmaker Hiroshi Okuyama, "Viet And Nam" by Vietnamese filmmaker Truong Minh Quý, and "The Village Next to Paradise" by Somalian filmmaker Mo Harawe. These selections highlight the new creative talent spots for cinema.

With the evolving world, there is a deeper significance highlighted by the recognition of cinema as a potent tool of soft power by countries in the Global South. Across the continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, nations have increasingly acknowledged the power of storytelling through cinema as a means to amplify their cultural influence and enhance their global standing. Over the past two years Cannes Film Festival has seen a dynamic shift in programming, from a European narrative to a more perceptive Southern inclusion and interconnection. In the borderless world that we live in today, the prominence of the Global South as a group has risen despite being dominated by multipolarity. Enhanced communication and the growing effects of globalisation have blurred geographical boundaries, ushering in a new era where technology plays a pivotal role in shaping interactions. This transition has reverberated across various realms, including the cinematic sphere, where soft power finds expression on prestigious platforms. Cannes truly give the Global South a platform for creativity on the silver screen

Nomination and participation in prestigious festivals like Cannes are not merely accolades but recognition of the importance of soft power in the creative ecosystem. By showcasing their cinematic prowess and an amalgamation of their creative skills on a global stage, countries in the Global South seek to assert their cultural identity, foster cross-cultural dialogue, and bolster diplomatic ties. In an era where cultural diplomacy holds increasing sway, the Cannes Film Festival serves as a creative platform for nations to assert their soft power through the medium of cinema. Through their cinematic endeavours, these filmmakers become cultural ambassadors, bridging divides and fostering mutual understanding between nations.

At the helm of the 77th Cannes Film Festival jury stands Greta Gerwig, both an accomplished actor and a filmmaker. Gerwig's appointment signals a broader effort towards gender representation at Cannes, a realm historically dominated by male voices. Symbolising a step towards inclusivity and recognition of the invaluable contributions of women in shaping cinematic discourse. As the jury list for this year awaits announcement, anticipation brews for a lineup that mirrors the festival's commitment to diversity, echoing last year's eclectic mix of talents from Argentina, Afghanistan, Morocco, Zambia, and beyond.

> BY SHOWCASING THEIR CINEMATIC PROWESS AND AN AMALGAMATION OF THEIR CREATIVE SKILLS ON A GLOBAL STAGE, COUNTRIES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH SEEK TO ASSERT THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITY, FOSTER CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE, AND BOLSTER DIPLOMATIC TIES

Amidst the glitz and glamour, the Marché du Film emerges as a vital nexus for industry professionals, offering a platform for networking, dealmaking, and creative exchange. With its finger firmly on the pulse of evolving industry dynamics, the Marché du Film embraces innovation and adaptation. Recognising the need to cater to the ever-changing landscape of filmmaking, it champions emerging trends, technologies, and voices, fostering a conducive environment for the flourishing growth of the global film industry. As over 14,000 industry professionals converge in Cannes annually to present and explore nearly 4,000 films and projects, the Marché du Film serves as a catalyst, urging professionals to elevate their business acumen and seize new opportunities.

Indeed, Cannes itself is a reflection of society's evolution, a microcosm of shifting cultural paradigms and technological advancements. Embracing the ethos of change, the Festival de Cannes introduces innovative elements to its programming, staying at the vanguard of storytelling in the digital age. One of the nominations for this year's Immersive Competition includes 'Maya: The Birth of a Superhero', an XR experience created by Poulomi Basu, an Indian artist and CJ Clarke.

The announcement of eight projects as part of the Immersive Competition heralds a bold foray into uncharted territory, encompassing location-based virtual reality, mixed reality experiences, projection mapping, and holographic works. Amid these shifts, India shines bright with the participation of Payal Kapadia, Sandhya Suri's "Santosh", FTII's "Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know" and the screening of Shyam Benegal's "Manthan".

As the global cinematic landscape continues to evolve, Cannes remains steadfast in its mission to celebrate the myriad voices that enrich the tapestry of world cinema.

(The writer is former additional director general, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI; Views are personal)

Evolution of monetary policymaking in India



KAJLEEN **KAUR**

With the changing nature of inflation and macroeconomic turbulence, remaining committed to inflation-targeting seems daunting

The history of monetary policymaking in India dates back to the pre-independence era, but it gained significant momentum and structure post-independence. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established in 1935, as a private shareholders' bank and was nationalized in 1949, giving the Government greater control over monetary policy and credit system. With the establishment of the Planning Commission in 1951, emphasis was laid on the direct and active role of Central banking.

A breakthrough year was 1969 when 14 private sector banks were nationalized. It led to transforming monetary policy into 'credit planning' and taking up a 'command approach' (Khatkhate, 1990). Soon the economy suffered due to the two oil price shocks (1973-75 and 1979-81) leading to critical economic crises, which led to large-scale monetary expansion in the form of Government debt to support fiscal policy. It badly hit the inflation situation when it reached 23% in 1974-75. The condition worsened and became dismal when India had to borrow largely from the IMF and also faced a critical BOP situation. Hence, the revision of the monetary policy framework was the way ahead. This was done by appointment of a committee (which came to be known as the Chakravarty Committee (1985) chaired by Sukhmoy Chakravarty) to review the functioning of the monetary system by the then Governor of RBI, Dr Manmohan Singh.



The RBI Governor, C Rangarajan, introduced the Multiple Indicator Approach (MIA) in 1998, incorporating various macroeconomic factors like interest rates, inflation, exchange rates, output growth, employment, foreign trade, capital flows, banking stability, among others, into the monetary policy framework, moving away from the unreliable M3 target due to economic liberalisation's unpredictability. This provided monetary authorities the flexibility to cater to a broad forum of economic disruptions. The economy was coordinating well with the MIA till the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 dawned, and a high-order expansionary fiscal and monetary policy was floated to capture the receding economic growth. This jeopardised inflation management by the RBI with the inflation gliding into double digits in 2009-10. The RBI became hawkish and between March 2010 and October 2011, the repo rate was increased by 325 basis points. It started preparing for inflation as the primary goal of monetary policy. Finally, in May 2016, the RBI formally adopted inflation-targeting (IT), the target being a 4 per cent inflation rate, with a relaxation of 2 per cent on both sides, to handle unforeseen macroeconomic disruptions. Taming inflation helps counter investor uncertainty and business sentiments, anchors inflationary expectations, unfavourable exchange rates and balance of payments, besides supporting receding purchasing power.

The IT did not get a fair chance to prove itself due to economic disturbances like Demonetisation and the Pandemic, and the current geo-political unrest has led to supply-side inflationary pressures that are difficult to control with IT, which is more efficient against demand-side inflation.

With the changing nature of inflation from demand to the supply side, macroeconomic turbulence, and burgeoning uncertainties, remaining committed to IT seems daunting. The RBI needs to frame a comprehensive policy to make determined efforts to address and supplement IT with prudent actions to counter supply-side disruptions especially, affecting food prices.

(The author is assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

JP AGGARWAL'S COMMITMENT

Madam — Apropos the news article, "I have not lost touch with Chandni Chowk people: Aggarwal," published on May 6, this is my response. In a political landscape rife with rhetoric and rivalry, Jai Prakash Aggarwal emerges as a steadfast figure, deeply rooted in Chandni Chowk's tapestry. Despite electoral setbacks, his commitment to constituents remains resolute. Aggarwal's recent critique of Prime Minister Modi's language underscores a concern for decorum in public discourse, a sentiment often lost in the cacophony of contemporary politics.

His indictment of the BJP's alleged misuse of investigative agencies reflects a broader apprehension about democratic norms and the rule of law. Beyond partisan skirmishes, Aggarwal's focus on local issues—traders' welfare, infrastructure, and healthcare—reveals a genuine concern for Chandni Chowk's residents. His vision for the area, encompassing tourism, urban renewal, and social welfare, speaks to a holistic approach to governance. Amidst shifting political alliances, Aggarwal's unwavering commitment to his constituency stands out as a beacon of stability. As he embarks on his eighth electoral campaign, his pledge to serve remains unyielding, a testament to the enduring spirit of public service.

Zoya Chatterjee | *Chandigarh*

VOTERS' DISILLUSIONMENT

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Narendra Modi introduces India to its Ashtalakshmis," published on May 4, this is my response. The narrative of electoral promises, unfulfilled commitments, and regional disparities echoes through the decades of Indian politics. From the inception of the democratic process to contemporary times, the saga persists. The cyclical pattern of pledges made during elections, often forgotten once power is secured, perpetuates a sense of disillusionment among the populace. Despite significant milestones like the Green Revolution, persistent challenges like hunger and malnutrition endure, revealing systemic failures in addressing agricultural productivity. The poignant juxtaposition of floods ravaging the North while droughts parch the South underscores the urgent need for holistic solutions, like river interlinking.

However, bureaucratic inertia and political apathy have impeded meaningful progress. Amidst this backdrop, the Northeast emerges as a beacon of transformation, propelled by visionary leadership and concerted efforts to integrate the region into the national fabric. The narrative of Modi's North East Story encapsulates this metamorphosis, beckoning readers to witness the evolution firsthand and embrace the region's vibrant culture and potential.

Amaira Singhania | *Bengaluru*

WORK FROM HOME CHALLENGES

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Mastering self-leadership during work from home," published on May 6, this is my response. The transition to remote work has been a mixed bag, with some relishing newfound flexibility while others struggle to delineate between work and home life. Blurred boundaries breed conflicts, taxing individuals' energy and focus. Boundary theory sheds light on these dynamics, emphasising the impact of role transitions on work-home conflicts.

Employers must support employees, but self-leadership is equally vital. As remote work becomes ubiquitous, individuals must proactively manage their roles. Yet, challenges persist, from lacking managerial support to battling distractions. Self-leadership emerges as a beacon amid these complexities. Its principles empower individuals to adapt, innovate, and thrive in remote environments. As remote work becomes the norm, mastering self-leadership will be indispensable for professional success and personal well-being alike.

Reyansh Joshi | *Mumbai*

Make mistakes to learn something new



Apropos the news article, "'Oops, I Dropped The Lemon Tart'," published on April 28, this is my response. Gyaneshwar Dayal's piece in The Pioneer paints a vivid canvas of Chef Massimo Bottura's recent culinary odyssey in New Delhi. Bottura, not merely a chef but a maestro of gastronomy and a beacon of philanthropy, brought the essence of Osteria Francescana to India's capital once more. His partnership with The Leela Palace New Delhi illuminated the culinary scene, offering an unforgettable experience steeped in innovation and sustainability.

The narrative delves into Bottura's culinary philosophy, highlighting his penchant for turning mistakes into masterpieces, epitomised by the iconic "Oops! I Dropped the Lemon Tart." His interactive session at The Leela, where he shared the genesis of this dish, revealed profound insights into creativity and embracing imperfection. Through his culinary prowess and philanthropic endeavours, Bottura transcends the role of a chef, becoming a global inspiration. His anticipation for a simple breakfast with underprivileged children reflects his humility and dedication to making a difference beyond the kitchen. In essence, Bottura's visit not only tantalised taste buds but also stirred hearts, leaving an indelible mark on India's culinary landscape.

Neha Gupta | *Delhi*

Send your feedback to:
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FIRST COLUMN

OVERCOMING BONDAGE OF THINKING

God's grace frees us from anguish, guides us on the right path



AJIT KUMAR **BISHNOI**

This is a cruel fact. We are hopelessly tied down by our thinking, especially negative. What do you see on roads? Older folks are engrossed in thoughts. What happened? They realized that they were not so great after all. But the obstinate ego would not allow them to seek help where it is available. If a solution to a problem is to be found, it must be; this is their thinking. Sure, but how long would you meditate on it? There should be a time limit. No, that is why obsession is a very common problem.

Other ages are no better. The younger ones are guilty of lusty thoughts. With the advent of cell phones and the internet, age is no longer a bar. What a shame when one is supposed to be in the 'brahmacharya' (celibacy) stage. As one gets older, thoughts of earning the maximum amount of money capture the imagination. There is nothing wrong with it except our expectations should be based on reality. Otherwise, there will be a lot of pain. What is common to all ages is fear of different kinds. This is a real problem, which causes all kinds of mental diseases. This particular problem requires help at the highest level, that is from God, but will we turn to Him? Also common to all ages are hate, anger, enmity, etc. There is hardly any chance of relief when we think that we are the centre of the universe, even though there are eight billion of us. If that were true, there would be eight billion centres of the universe. See, how silly such thinking is. This is what is the basis of our thought process. The frog mentality of thinking one's limited knowledge is everything leads many to dismiss spiritual practices as simplistic, when in fact they are meant to be easily accessible to all.

Let us get to the bottom of this all-pervasive problem. What is this mind? It is a faculty given to us for thinking, willing and feeling. It is subtle, i.e. far more strong than the gross body. The mind affects the body, as we all have experienced. When we are disturbed, our bodies get affected; their working is disturbed. Why has God given us a faculty, which can hurt us so much? He had to to give us free will, which can bring bliss, as indicated by Lord Krishna, 'A person, having consciousness, unattached to external sense objects, enjoys that happiness within, which is extraordinary. He who, with consciousness united to Brahman, finds eternal joy. God's kindness lies in our return to Him, part of the Cosmic Design, where independence is limited, and control rests with God.

So we must turn to God to control our uncontrolled and negative thinking. Lord Krishna States, "Undoubtedly the mind is very difficult to control due to its fickle nature, but it can be brought under control by practice and by detachment from inappropriate sense objects." (6.35) This practice has to be with help from God. Otherwise, there will be partial success only. As we age, our focus shifts towards God, as our physical pleasures diminish, highlighting the purpose of the "Ashram" system for spiritual growth in later years.Therefore, God has made provisions for unlimited mental enjoyment. But we have to seek shelter from God for that. We should not be turning to drinks, etc. for compensation to get over our woes, because they send us deeper into more suffering. Fear is a defence mechanism but only in the limited sense. It should alert us to take curative action. But if it overtakes our thinking, fear becomes a serious problem, as all mental diseases point to.

The conclusion is: that we must turn to God with determination sooner than later. Then God will not only free us from the bondage of painful thinking but will also help us in all matters with His guidance and help. This is the way the System has been designed.

(The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

Elected leaders need to rethink



JS **RAJPUT**

It is time that elected representatives live up to the expectations of their electors as responsible, honest and devoted community leaders



These are election times and each one of us is a part of the process. These are also times of model code of conduct in the shape of guidelines for political parties and candidates. There are restrictions imposed by the election commission on the maximum expenditure a candidate could incur. Everyone knows what happens to it! In general, people are no more worried about spiralling high expenses that the spread of elections imposes on the candidate and State exchequer.

The spread of elections leads to avoidable wastage of manpower and other resources required to conduct and complete the process. The worst sufferers are the schoolchildren, as teachers are the most easily available manpower for elections at every stage! Once elected, no one is willing to pave the way for the generation next! Election times also reveal the behavioural decline amongst those who had tasted the fruits of power earlier but were dethroned by the people.

Their frustrations even bring forth utterances that may be blatantly unsocial, personal and not acceptable in a civil society. The elders have created conditions that demand innovative action by the young 'millennials' who must realize how their elders have decimated the basic principles of democracy by taking recourse to caste combinations, igniting regional and linguistic sentiments, and creating communal antagonism at the cost of deteriorating social cohesion! Independent India began its new journey at around 18% of literacy, today its boosts to nearly 80% of it despite the population increase of over 100 crores. We are a learning society. Our international standing is at its best after independence. One wonders why the language used by politicians against each other should become so coarse and uncivil. It could put to shame any decent educated person.

Respect for the learned, committed and experienced is one of the most liked of the treasures of our heritage which unfortunately stands torn to tatters. India shall never be in a position to ignore the presence of great luminaries of contemporary times like Gandhi, Patel, Subhash Bose, Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and others. How could anyone who wishes to understand India do so without getting familiar with Swami Vivekananda, Ramkrishna Paramhans, Tagore or Sri Aurobindo? Hope lies only in those who were in schools a couple of years ago, and were mesmerized by a saint-scientist; the indomitable APJ Abdul Kalam.

> ARTICULATING THE NORMAL EXPECTATIONS FROM THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE, APJ ABDUL KALAM WAS GIVING VOICE TO EVERY SANE INDIAN: "IT HAS BECOME CRUCIAL FOR US TO BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT WE CAN RIGHTLY EXPECT FROM OUR LEADERS, FROM PANCHAYAT MEMBERS TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT"

I had personally witnessed on numerous occasions how children of India fell in love with him. It was not because of his position or the Pokhran II, it was because of the love his persona emanated for every child, every Indian! India stands blessed with numerous such luminaries who could make a change in the area around their place. One wishes political aspirants learn from APJ, and other luminaries how to deal with people! APJ Abdul Kalam was one of the most admired and loved celebrities during the millennial transition to the 21st century. He was a professional leader who led by example, through heart-to-heart connections with one and all. His dedication and devotion to the national cause were of the highest order. He inspired, he motivated and he achieved his target with gusto.

He could win over every Indian irrespective of their socio-economic station in life, his profession or his ideological leanings. APJ endeared himself particularly to the children of India in whom he could see the emerging India, the future Inda! He ignited the curiosity and creativity of millions of children. He gave them 'wings of fire'. He entered the Rashtarpati Bhavan with two bags and left with the same after five years. India needs people with such personalities right from the panchayat level to the Parliament with whom every individual could feel connected, who may be acknowledged as 'approachable'.

All this, and much more; reverberates in one's mind as various inputs concerning the general elections float before everyone. Each one of us who has voted over a dozen times in general elections would love to talk about the drastic change that has occurred in the quality of leadership on a larger scale, the deterioration in mutual respect and regard amongst those in public life, in power or opposition.

We are witness to the usage of a language for the opponents that would have shamed everyone some five decades ago. Today, no one seems to be worried about it. The only encouraging sign is that all this is being noted by the voters, and they are despising it. In the long run, one could say with confidence that it would not work in favour of the truants. Sadly enough, the defects of elections about whom Gandhi had written as early as 1922, have reached every stage of elections, including even those of panchayat Raj bodies

One must not give up hope. And there is always hope for the better after having reached the bottom. Articulating the normal expectations from the elected representatives, APJ Abdul Kalam was giving voice to every sane Indian: "It has become crucial for us to be clear about what we can rightly expect from our leaders, from panchayat members to local councillors of a municipal corporation to members of parliament." In other words, there has to be ownership. Whether it is the panchayat member, development officer, councillor, MLA MP or minister, they have to at least try to be the best of their ability to do what they are elected to do. We need a Parliament with a vision, one that has the larger picture in mind and can rise above petty party politics.

How would such a parliament perform? What are how it can play a far more constructive role than it has in the last Lok Sabha?" I would also expect that the Hon'ble members of the next Lok Sabha shall firmly and sincerely resolve not to present before the nation any spectacles that disturb the functioning of the August House, and present a poor example before the young of India. What was happening till now, was a matter of serious concern for the last couple of decades. It was precisely articulated with great concern by the veteran politician C. Subramaniam: "The indiscipline that marks the proceedings of parliament and legislatures is a matter of great concern. Not only pandemonium is created obstructing the proceedings of the legislatures but also acts of violence among the members inside the legislatures are becoming common and an almost everyday occurrence. Nobody is prepared to observe the rules of the game. Then how can we expect the masses of the people to observe discipline and respect the laws and regulations?"

It is time that future MPs and other elected representatives live up to the expectations of their electors as responsible, honest and devoted community leaders. They have to be a source of inspiration to generations ahead. Let them resolve not to let even a minute of parliament's time be wasted! It would be a great gift to the nation!

(The author works in education, social cohesion and religious amity, views are personal)

Benevolent hearts: Dynamics of begging and household donations

Despite legal prohibitions in many States, begging persists with beggars being one of the highest recipients of household donations

Begging is a ubiquitous phenomenon in India and is hidden in plain sight. Perceptions of 'persons engaged in Beggary' may vary but it is also evident that many households donate to them. 'Persons engaged in Beggary' are largely missing from the discussions on public policy in the country. A recent study by the Centre of Social Impact and Philanthropy (CSIP) at Ashoka University showed that 'persons engaged in Beggary' are one of the highest recipients of household donations, ranking only after 'religious organisations'. This leads us to question, what are the motivations that lead households in such a large proportion to donate to 'persons engaged in Beggary'. Who are the biggest donation-makers to 'beggars' with respect to gender, geography and age? And in what 'form' donations are received by the 'persons engaged in Beggary'?



SHAIVYA **VERMA**

Even though begging is not a crime it is legally prohibited in more than twenty States and Union Territories and can invite punishment for one year to 10 years and even beyond under special circumstances. The pros and cons of the existing laws are another debate.

The study by CSIP showed a 14% increase in total 'cash' donations by Indian households from INR 23.7 thousand crores in 2020-21 to INR 27 thousand crores in 2021-22 of which 'persons engaged in Beggary' are one of the preferred recipients of household giving among 'religious organisations', 'non-religious organisations', 'family and friends', 'household staff', and 'supporting a cause or signing a petition'. They are the second highest recipient of household donations both in terms of overall market size and the proportion of households who made donations to them among other recipient groups in the study. The report further notes that the market size and the average cash payments to the 'persons engaged in Beggary' have increased from 2020-21 to 2021-22.

While 'persons engaged in Beggary' are one of the preferred recipients, households do not trust them with their money but with materials. Despite a high proportion of households who donated to 'persons engaged in beggary' they received the lowest value of 'cash' donations from households (under INR 100).

While 'persons engaged in Beggary' were least preferred for 'cash' donations as compared to other recipient groups in the study, a clear preference to donate 'in-kind' was noted for this recipient group. More than half of those donating to 'persons engaged in Beggary' donated 'in-kind' which is starkly different from 'in-kind' donations received by other recipient groups.

Households are mostly driven by their intrinsic motivations when giving to the 'persons engaged in Beggary'. 'Religious beliefs' are one of the top motivators. It guided 55% of households that gave to the 'persons engaged in Beggary'. Religious beliefs can be understood as 'helping others is a way to serve God', and 'good karma/ Almighty rewards good deeds'.

Furthermore, 'family traditions' play an important role in motivating households to give to the 'persons engaged in Beggary'. They are also affected by the visible hardship due to poverty and are driven to donate in order to support someone in financial distress. Rendering 'seva' or service also emerged as a significant motivation for giving to 'persons engaged in Beggary'.

Households also find it easier to give in smaller amounts in 'cash', which leads many households to offer some money to 'persons engaged in Beggary'. About 60% proportion of households responded to have donated to them. The study also found that donations made to 'persons engaged in Beggary' were in the range of smaller amounts 'under INR 100'.

It was intriguing to find that the givers who are more empathetic to the 'persons engaged in Beggary' are the people who have a 'vulnerable' position in society and are mainly dependent on others for social and economic security. Older women and households from rural areas and from lower socio-economic categories are primary givers to 'persons engaged in Beggary'.

More households from rural India donate to 'persons engaged in Beggary' than households from large towns. In fact, the proportion of households making offerings to 'persons engaged in Beggary' in rural India was higher than the national average of the proportion of households who gave to 'persons engaged in Beggary'.

Similarly, 'giving' by lower socioeconomic category (SEC D/E) to 'persons engaged in Beggary' was higher than the national average. While about 53% of households from higher and middle socio-economic categories (SEC A, SEC B and SEC C) contributed, more than 65% of households contributed towards 'persons engaged in Beggary' from the lower socioeconomic groups (SEC D/E). In terms of gender and age, older women between the ages of 46 to 60 years are the biggest and primary donation-makers to the 'persons engaged in Beggary'.

Beggary in many forms has been in existence for ages. Due to the hardships faced, persons engaged in Beggary usually suffer from negativity, hopelessness, low self-esteem and stigma. In India, 'people engaged in Beggary' are often seen outside religious places.

The writer is Senior Research Manager at the Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy (CSIP), Ashoka University. Views expressed are personal

MONEY MATTERS

Japan's SMFG invests Rs 1,300 cr in SMFG India

Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group (SMFG) on Tuesday announced a Rs 1,300 crore investment in domestic non-bank lender SMFG India Credit Co (SMICC) through a rights issue. Pankaj Malik, the chief financial officer of SMICC, said the Rs 1,300 crore should be seen as a "strategic move" which underscores its commitment to fortify expansion efforts. SMICC has invested Rs 150 crore in its wholly-owned subsidiary SMFG India Home Finance Co, known as SMFG Grihashakti, a statement said. SMFGICC, an NBFC - Investment and Credit Company (NBFC-ICC), was acquired by SMFG in 2021 for a deal reported at USD 2 billion. Its investment in Grihashakti will help it amplify the market presence by taking affordable housing finance solutions to the underserved population in India and drive sustained growth, Malik added. SMICC's assets under management (AUM) stood at Rs 42,487 crore as of December 31, 2023, while the April-December 2023 disbursements were higher by 46 per cent compared to the year-ago period at Rs 28,790 crore. It has 990 branches in the country at present, as per the statement.

INOX Air Products to set up 190-tonne green hydrogen project

INOX Air Products on Tuesday said it will set up its first green hydrogen project with an annual capacity of 190 tonnes at Chittorgarh in Rajasthan. The clean energy will be supplied to Asahi India Glass Limited (AIS) under a 20-year offtake agreement, the company said in a statement. "This will be India's first-ever green hydrogen plant for the float glass industry. The plant will have a capacity to generate up to 190 tonne green hydrogen per annum through the electrolysis process," it said. The project will be powered by solar energy. INOX aims to commission the project by July 2024. The project is expected to reduce carbon emissions by around 1,250 metric tonnes (MT) annually and 25,000 MT over the 20-year period. Siddharth Jain, Managing Director of INOX Air Products, stated, "We are proud to begin our green hydrogen journey as we partner AIS for their Chittorgarh facility, and giving shape to our first green hydrogen plant.



JSW Energy profit rises 29% to Rs 351 crore

Sajjan Jindal-led JSW Energy on Tuesday posted a 29 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 351 crore in the March quarter compared to a year ago mainly on the back of higher revenues. The company had reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 272 crore in the quarter ended on March 31, 2023, according to a BSE filing. "Profit after Tax (consolidated net profit) increased by a robust 29 per cent YoY (year on year) to Rs 351 Crore," it stated. During the quarter, total revenue increased by 3 per cent YoY to Rs 2,879 crore from Rs 2,806 crore in Q4 FY23, it stated. The profit after tax increased by 17 per cent YoY to Rs 1,723 crore in fiscal year 2023-24 crore compared to Rs 1,478 crore in FY23. For FY24, total revenue increased 10 per cent YoY to Rs 11,941 crore from Rs 10,867 crore in FY23, it said. The board has also recommended a dividend of Rs 2 per equity share of Rs 10 (20%) to the members of the company for declaration at the forthcoming 30th Annual General Meeting.



EO data can generate $3 tn in economic benefits: WEF

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Earth observation data can generate over US$ 3 trillion in economic benefits globally and help eliminate two gigatonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually by 2030, according to a new report by the World Economic Forum.

Earth observation data refers to the collection, analysis, and presentation of information about the Earth's physical, chemical, and biological systems using remote sensing technologies.

The report, created in partnership with Deloitte and endorsed by industry and climate leaders, emphasised that EO data is a crucial tool for economic growth and sustainability. While certain sectors like agriculture, energy, and finance are expected to benefit the most from EO data, nearly all industries can gain insights to improve operations and reduce environmental impact.

For example, farmers can use EO data to enhance crop yield and sustainability practices, while insurance companies can better understand and mitigate environmental risks.

The report predicted that the global value of EO data could grow from US$ 266 billion at present to over US$ 700 billion by 2030. This could lead to a cumulative US$ 3.8 trillion contribution to global GDP and help eliminate 2 gigatonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually – equivalent to the estimated combined annual emissions of 476 million gasoline-powered cars.

The Asia Pacific region is poised to capture the largest share of EO's value by 2030, reaching a potential value of US$ 315 billion, while Africa and South America are positioned to realise the largest percentage growth.

However, challenges such as limited awareness, talent shortage, and fragmented standards hinder the widespread adoption of EO data. To fully realise its potential, collaborative efforts and informed policies are needed to stimulate demand, advance technology, and establish key standards, the report said.

"Earth observation is a vital component of the Fourth Industrial Revolution," said Jeremy Jurgens, Managing Director and Head of the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution at the World Economic Forum.

Centre to meet e-commerce firms to curb fake online reviews

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The government has called a meeting of e-commerce players and organisations engaged in publishing online reviews for consultation on quality control order in the works to check fake reviews, according to a notice issued by the Consumer Affairs Ministry.

The consumer affairs ministry has also floated a draft of the Online Consumer Reviews (Quality Control) Order, 2024 (QCO) which proposes to accept reviews from verified purchasers and users of the product.

"This QCO mandates all the e-commerce aggregators and organisations engaged in publishing online reviews to declare self-compliance to the essential requirement prescribed in the order...

"An organisation is required to register with BIS and declare compliance to essential requirements. In this regard, a stakeholder consultation, chaired by Secretary (CA), to discuss the draft QCO has been scheduled on May 15, 2024," the notice said.

The draft QCO mandates that the organisations shall not publish reviews that have been purchased and written by individuals employed for writing review by itself or the supplier, seller, or by a third party.

The consumer affairs ministry has proposed that all organisations managing and publishing online consumer reviews shall conform to the essential requirements, including bar on publishing fake reviews and register themselves as 'Review Administrator' with BIS declaring self-compliance to the essential requirements prescribed in this order.

The proposed QCO bars platforms from rewarding consumers based on the content, edit reviews, prevent publishing of negative reviews and accepting reviews from individuals who have not used or experienced the good or service.

"An organisation is required to register with BIS and declare compliance to essential requirements. In this regard, a stakeholder consultation, chaired by Secretary (CA), to discuss the draft QCO has been scheduled on May 15, 2024," the notice said.

Sebi rejects NSE's proposal to extend trading hours

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Capital markets regulator Sebi has rejected a proposal by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) to extend the trading hours in the equity derivatives segment citing a lack of feedback from the stock brokers community.

"Currently, there is no plan to extend the timings as Sebi has returned our application as the stock brokers have not given the feedback that Sebi wanted. So, as of now, the extended time frame (plan) is shelved," NSE MD and CEO Ashishkumar Chauhan said in a post-earnings analysts call.

This came after the NSE had urged Sebi to extend trading hours in the equity derivatives segment in a phased manner. This was aimed at potentially curtailing the overnight risk arising from global information flow. Sriram Krishnan, Chief Business Development Officer of NSE, had told PTI in September that the bourse was planning a session from 6 pm to 9 pm after a break from the closure of the regular session from 9.15 am to 3.30 pm. Based on the response, a gradual extension of the market timing till 11.55 pm was proposed on the lines of commodity derivatives.

To begin with, only index derivatives in phase 1 were proposed to be available followed by single stock options and others.

In 2018, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) allowed stock exchanges to set their trading hours in the equity derivatives segment between 9 am and 11.50 pm. This was similar to the trading hours for the commodity derivatives segment, which are currently fixed between 10 am and 11.55 pm.

Household savings dip over Rs 9 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Net household savings declined sharply by Rs 9 lakh crore to Rs 14.16 lakh crore in three years to 2022-23, according to the latest National Account Statistics 2024 of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The net household savings peaked at Rs 23.29 lakh crore in 2020-21. These have been on the decline since then, the data showed.

The net household savings declined to Rs 17.12 lakh crore in 2021-22 and dipped further to a five-year low of Rs 14.16 lakh crore in 2022-23.

The previous low of net household savings was Rs 13.05 lakh crore in 2017-18 which increased to Rs 14.92 lakh crore in 2018-19 and Rs 15.49 lakh crore in 2019-20.

The data showed that the investment in mutual funds almost trebled to Rs 1.79 lakh crore in 2022-23 in three years from Rs 64,084 crore in 2020-21. It was Rs 1.6 lakh crore in 2021-22.

Equity markets end lower dragged by HDFC, ICICI Bank, Reliance

PNS ■ MUMBAI



Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty declined on Tuesday dragged by HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries and ICICI Bank amid concerns over rich valuation of equities.

Paring all its early gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex went lower by 383.69 points or 0.52 per cent to settle at 73,511.85. During the day, it tanked 636.28 points or 0.86 per cent to 73,259.26.

The NSE Nifty declined 140.20 points or 0.62 per cent to 22,302.50.

From the Sensex basket, Power Grid, IndusInd Bank, Tata Motors, JSW Steel, NTPC, HCL Technologies, Tata Steel, ICICI Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries were among the major laggards.

Among the gainers, Hindustan Unilever climbed over 5 per cent. Tech Mahindra, Nestle, ITC, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the other major gainers.

"Domestic benchmark indices opened higher on Tuesday, aided by favourable global clues. However, after some initial jitters, the market saw massive profit-booking," said Hrishikesh Yedve, AVP Technical and Derivatives Research, Asit C. Mehta Investment Interrmediates Ltd.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 1.90 per cent and smallcap index dipped 1.65 per cent.

Among the indices, realty dropped 3.41 per cent, utilities (2.85 per cent), commodities (2.18 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.73 per cent) and telecommunication (1.43 per cent).

Gold climbs Rs 200; silver jumps Rs 700



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Extending gains for second straight session, gold prices on Tuesday climbed by Rs 200 to Rs 72,450 per 10 grams in the national capital in line with firm trends in the global markets, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous session, the precious metal had closed at Rs 72,250 per 10 grams.

Silver prices also jumped by Rs 700 to Rs 85,000 per kg. It had settled at Rs 84,300 per kg in the previous session.

"Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 72,450 per 10 grams, up by Rs 200, taking positive cues from the overseas markets," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at US$ 2,319 per ounce, up by US$ 7 from the previous close.

"Gold moved higher on indications that the US Federal Reserve could cut interest rates this year. The dovish remarks from the US policymakers have boosted hopes for the interest rate cuts.

'Robust govt capex, improvement in biz confidence to push growth'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Robust capital expenditure by the government and improvement in business confidence will push the country's economic growth in 2024-25, an official said on Tuesday.

Chief Economic Adviser in the Ministry of Rural Development Kuntal Sensarma said that the focus areas in 2024-25 should be infrastructure growth, inclusive development and harnessing demographic dividend, among others.

"The major reasons cited for India's growth prospects in FY25 include robust public investment/ capex push by the government, sustained growth in business and consumer confidence, and strong services sector, among others," industry body PHDCCI said in a statement quoting Sensarma.



He was speaking at the chamber's conference on 'Economy: Inflation, Investments, Interest Rates and Inclusive Growth (EIIII) Perspective for FY 2024-25' here.

Speaking at the event, Sakshi Gupta, Principal Economist at HDFC Bank, said that despite the challenges of the global economy, India is consistently performing well and inflation is under the target band set by the monetary policy committee.

She estimated that going forward the Indian economy will grow at the rate of 8 per cent.

Presenting the interim Budget in February, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a Rs 11.11 lakh crore spending on infrastructure.

Toy exports marginally down; need strategy to push it: GTRI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The country's toy exports declined marginally to USD 152.34 million in 2023-24 from US$ 153.89 million in the previous financial year, according to a report by economic think tank GTRI.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that India's toy exports did not benefit much from the mandatory quality control orders.

It said that while the domestic measures were primarily aimed at boosting local industry and ensuring safety, they did not significantly enhance India's toy exports.

"From FY'2020 to FY'2022, exports increased modestly from US$ 129.6 million to US$ 177 million. However, by FY'2024, exports decreased to US$ 152.3 million," the report said.

Imports, however, increased to US$ 64.92 million in 2023-24 from US$ 62.37 million in 2022-23.

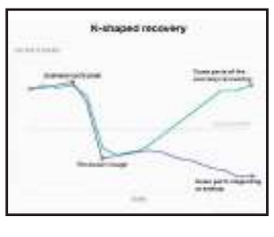
GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said that the QCO checked substandard imports from China but did not result in higher exports from India.

Though India has taken decisive steps since 2020 to curb the inflow of substandard toy imports, especially from China, and strengthen the domestic toy industry, but "India needs to take more comprehensive approach for development of the industry," he said.

The report proposes a comprehensive strategy aimed at developing India's toy industry and boosting exports.

Significant divide in India's consumption; K-shaped trend continues: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI



A Swiss brokerage on Tuesday said there is a "significant divide" in India's consumption story and that the K-shaped trend is likely to continue in the near-future.

"India's consumption story reflects a significant divide, driven by a resilient economy but characterised by a stark contrast in spending patterns," UBS India economist Tanvee Gupta Jain said in a note.

"...the divergence between affluent and broad-based household demand persists, accentuated by factors such as income inequality, increased consumer credit access, and declining household savings," she added.

The brokerage anticipates household consumption growth in FY25 to "remain subdued" at 4-5 per cent, which is below the trend observed in previous years.

It can be noted that after the pandemic, concerns have been raised about a K-shaped growth representative of deepening inequalities in the country. Some economists have gone public with their disapproval and called the pandemic as a 'leveller' for reducing inequalities as well.

The UBS report said India's household consumption nearly doubled in the past decade to US$ 2.1 trillion in 2023, with an annual compound growth rate of 7.2 per cent.

However, household consumption growth remained muted in the last two years, it said, adding that it is the affluent segment that witnessed a significant increase in demand.

The brokerage said the consumption growth recovery is "uneven", and pointed out that there has been faster growth in premium car sales, residential units of over Rs 1 crore, smartphones costing over US$ 300, or Rs 25,000, while entry-level and mass market goods have seen muted growth post-pandemic.

PREPARING FOR DISRUPTIONS

NSE, BSE to conduct special trading session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) and BSE on Tuesday said they will conduct a special trading session in the equity and equity derivative segments on May 18 to check their preparedness for handling major disruptions or failure at the primary site.

The special live trading session will have an intra-day switchover from the Primary Site (PR) to the Disaster Recovery (DR) site.

In separate circulars, the two exchanges said there will be two sessions -- the first from 9:15 am to 10 am from the PR, and the second from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm from the DR site.

During the special session, all securities, including those on which derivative products are available, will have a maximum price band of 5 per cent. Securities already in the 2 per cent or lower price band will continue to be available in the respective bands.

Exchange shall be conducting a special live trading session with intra-day switch over from Primary site to Disaster Recovery site on Saturday, May 18, 2024, in equity and equity derivatives segments," NSE and BSE said in separate circulars. Earlier, NSE and BSE conducted similar trading sessions on March 2.

the pioneer
Hyderabad

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Wednesday
May 8, 2024

DJ Kayan's 'FIERCENESS' embodying through her music



A true-blue breakout star, Ambika Nayak, a.k.a. Kayan in an exclusive chat with ***The Pioneer***, discusses embarking on a musical transformation, witnessing women defying norms, and more.

SUBODHINI PUROHIT

Ambika Nayak, popularly known as Kayan, is an Indian musician, vocalist, and DJ. Her stage name, Kayan, is a playful reversal of her surname, "Nayak". She is also a member of the group *Kimochi Youkai* and the electronic duo *Nothing Anonymous*, alongside Nirmit Shah. Nayak's musical roots run deep, with her family boasting a legacy of Hindustani classical vocalists and Kathak dancers, providing her with ample exposure and training.

As the saying goes, there are no shortcuts to success; Kayan's musical journey is certainly a shred of evidence of that. She has carved her own unique path, encountering challenges along the way. She begins, "My musical journey has been an exhilarating exploration of new sounds, melodies, and emotions, fuelling my evolution as an artist and inspiring stories that deeply connect with my audience."

Music provides peace and rhythm to everyday life, and each individual finds their own reasons to be captivated by music. "Music has been an integral part of my life from early childhood," shares the artist as she goes on to add, "Serving as my sanctuary, it's where I find solace, express myself authentically, and forge profound connections with others. My decision to enroll in the True School of Music approximately eight years ago was driven by this passion! Surrounded by kindred spirits who shared my aspirations to create and perform music, I embarked on a transformative musical journey that continues to shape me today."

Undeniably, inspiration surrounds us, and Kayan draws her inspiration from a diverse array of sources, including musicians, fashion designers, artists, and the individuals in her life. "Immersing myself in music allows me to explore different sounds and discover what resonates with me, although my musical style is always evolving. Currently, some of my inspirations include Jorja Smith, Kaytranada, and Avril Lavigne."

She believes that emerging music platforms like VH1, Spotify, Apple Music, and others have played a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of independent musicians, including herself. "These platforms offer an equal opportunity for artists to present their work to a broad audience, transcending geographical limitations and facilitating direct interaction with fans across the globe. This accessibility and visibility have revolutionised the landscape for independent artists, serving as a game-changer in terms of reaching wider audiences and fostering engagement."

She enjoys being on her own as more of a homebody or prefers to be out and about, we ask her, and she says, "I find myself embodying a blend of both worlds. Some days, I cherish tranquility and introspection, using it as a canvas for creative expression and personal development. Yet, on other days, I thrive on the vibrancy of social connections and the excitement of new experiences. It's about striking a harmonious balance that nurtures both my artistic soul and my interactions with others."

Music serves as a rhythmic vehicle for conveying stories and emotions in a soul-stirring manner. At times, it becomes the sole medium capable of articulating the depth of one's feelings. She further shares, "My music is deeply rooted in my journey, stemming from my experiences, emotions, observations, and inspirations. Each song serves as a mirror to moments, relationships, and thoughts that have influenced my path, translated into melodies and lyrics that strike a chord with myself and my audience."

In recent years, the music landscape in our country has experienced a remarkable phenomenon: a surge of immensely talented female musicians! Their emergence reflects a dynamic and vibrant scene spanning across diverse genres. She says, "The music scene in our country is witnessing a surge of talented female musicians, reflecting the vibrant and dynamic landscape across various genres. It's truly inspiring to witness women breaking barriers, defying norms, and leaving their mark on the industry. With an abundance of creativity and passion, female artists are making significant contributions, underscoring the importance of supporting and elevating their voices to nurture a more inclusive and diverse musical community."

Incorporating bold song titles serves as a method of expressing inner stories and sentiments, encapsulating the essence of each track with impactful clarity. She says, "For me, music is more than just a form of expression; it's a mirror reflecting my inner fire, thoughts, and emotions. Each song I create embodies my fierceness and captures the essence of my journey. Often, the titles of my tracks emerge from moments of inspiration, where a single phrase or concept encapsulates the bold and impactful message I aim to convey."

For many artists, fashion is not merely about clothing; it's a dynamic form of self-expression woven deeply into their identity. Within the realm of creativity, every garment becomes a brushstroke on the canvas of their persona. Ambika, who was recently a part of a fashion show as well, shares, "Fashion serves as a canvas for my creative expression, intricately woven into the fabric of my identity as an artist. Before each performance, I meticulously curate a style board, a visual testament to my creative vision and personal flair. Embracing individuality is paramount to me, as I revel in the freedom to experiment with diverse styles. For me, fashion is more than just adornment; it's a powerful medium through which I convey confidence and authenticity to the world."

The year ahead holds a wealth of opportunities and endeavours for her. With music at the forefront of her priorities, she is committed to channelling her energy into the creation process and bringing forth an album for the audience to experience. On a concluding note, she says, "There's a lot on the agenda for me this year. My primary focus is channelling my energy into music creation and releasing an album. I have upcoming songwriting sessions and collaborations in the pipeline, along with a lineup of exciting shows throughout the year."

'I harboured worries about whether or not audiences would notice any slips in my accent'

Actress Anushka Kaushik, who is currently enjoying the love she's received for her recent project *Patna Shuklla*, speaks to ***The Pioneer*** over an exclusive chat sharing some interesting in-depth insights working on the project, experience working with Raveena Tandon, and more.



SHIKHA DUGGAL

Patna Shuklla, a courtroom drama, does not have the comedic allure of *Jolly LLB*, where laughter erupts at the humour in legal professional banter. However, the Anushka Kaushik-led movie takes a more controlled approach, with a much more serious undertone, creating an effective narrative that captivated viewers.

In our exclusive interview, the co-lead exhibits all the in-depth details and how!

Anushka begins by expressing, "Throughout the series, I have not accomplished anything overly remarkable. However, I am delighted to have obtained massive attention and understanding for my character's development. I accept as true that this cognizance has come at the best second for me. This success is now mine, untouchable by any political impact or power. It has caught me off guard, and I am now enthusiastic to push myself even similarly in future roles."

Although the story had its flaws and started out to wander off the at times, it is Anushka's honest and compelling overall performance that lifted the plot and held our attention. Similarly, the *Crash Course* fame remarks, "While discussing with my director, I had several questions swirling in my head. Referencing information articles proved priceless in gaining a perception of my character's perspective. I delved past simply the examination scam, conducting an enormous non-public lookup on a range of associated subjects to enhance my personal understanding. I was once that interested! At the end of the day, I was solely feeling horrific about how many humans have been the victims, and no one empathised with them. I named the scamsters 'vultures'. I could not have fought a hostility like this in opposition to these vultures."

Portraying a *Bhojpuri* accent, she says, introduced a considerable venture for her. She further shares, "Emotionally severe scenes posed a specific concern as I naturally revert to my mother tongue all through such moments, complicating my capability to express thoughts authentically. Following the film's release, I harboured worries about whether or not audiences would notice any slips in my accent; however, to my delight, many approached me with compliments on my good portrayal. While I was once going through the reviews, this part actually stood out for me. I'd like to take a bow to the critics who appreciated me throughout."

The movie's plot surrounds around Tanvi Shukla (played by Raveena Tandon), a lawyer in Patna's lower court, who has her happy family life turned upside down when she decides to fight the case of Rinki Kumari (played by Anushka Kaushik) and sets out to expose a big scam in the education system involving youth icon Raghubir Singh (played by Jatin Goswami).

"Raveena Tandon generously shared her technical insights with me without any hesitation," shares the *Lust Stories 2* actress on her experience working with the OG Raveena Tandon. "She was once deeply engaged in supporting me as I held close to the nuances of working with the camera, which left me amazed. Moreover, she emphasised the significance of retaining a wholesome work-life balance and no longer letting my expert commitments overshadow my private life. I was once especially touched when she prompted me to prioritise spending time with my parents. This recommendation resonated with me so profoundly that I now make it a point to call my mother and father all through each and every break. Thank you, Raveena."

Then comes a revelation— "In the early ranges of my career, I rejected several scripts." However, with the upward shove of OTT platforms, she says she is now extra open to distinctive opportunities. "Eventually, I envision a time when I will prioritise ardour over pay and take on fewer projects. This is a transition that all actors experience. I have acquired heartfelt paragraphs in reviews that definitely resonate with me, as well as remarks asking for more of my presence on screen, which is pleasing as an actress. It suggests that viewers are related to my character's plight. More the merrier types."

Being on set except for make-up was a first for the *Maharani* fame. Growing up, she shares, "I usually admired glamorous roles. However, this film shifted my view. It taught me that you can captivate audiences even with heavy makeup. The true depth lies in the narrative, not our appearance. The movie centered on women's empowerment, which made it simply special."

Meanwhile, on the work front, she has a film by Maddock films, followed by a show produced by Reliance Entertainment, a music video, and then a few short films that have been getting selected and rewarded at various film festivals. So, a lot of good things are on the way!

HEADACHES IN CHILDREN: Common or cause of concern?

Picture this: a topic usually associated with grown-ups, headaches. We've all been there, right? The pounding, the pressure, the downright annoyance. But here's something that might surprise you: headaches aren't just for adults. It might seem unexpected, but headaches in children are more prevalent than one might think!

There is no hard and fast rule about when headaches might make their appearance.

So, what exactly qualifies as old enough for a child to start experiencing those awful head pains? The answer is not all too clear. In truth, virtually every person could begin to experience headaches but an infant has no clue or way to tell an adult what is going on. Toddlers and kids alike have these headaches, but they can't exactly express to us what is happening. As a person and child ages and grows the child will begin to realize they are in a lot of discomfort. Children really start to complain of different types of body pain (all of which are childhood headaches) around the age of 5 or 6.

Is it indicative of underlying illness?

Headaches in kids are not always an indication of something serious. Sure, some children might get headaches because of underlying illnesses, but plenty of others experience them for totally normal reasons. Headaches in children can come from all sorts of things. Maybe they didn't drink enough water, or they've been staring at screens too long stress from school, lack of sleep, or even skipping meals can also trigger a headache in a little one.

However, it's essential to pay attention to the location, severity, and accompanying symptoms of headaches in children, especially if they seem unusual or persist over time. Noticing these patterns can help get timely medical attention if it is something severe.

Certain dietary factors can also surprisingly contribute to headaches in children. These include consuming foods or beverages with caffeine, excessive sweets such as chocolate or cola, which can trigger headaches, particularly when consumed in large amounts. Artificial additives like MSG or nitrates found in processed foods may also be potential triggers. For children with food sensitivities or allergies, allergens like dairy, gluten, nuts, or certain additives can provoke headaches. Additionally, irregular eating patterns, dehydration due to inadequate fluid intake, and tyramine-rich foods such as aged cheeses or processed meats can contribute to headaches. Monitoring your child's dietary habits and keeping a food diary may help identify potential triggers.

When it comes to headaches caused by underlying illnesses in children, there are a few key symptoms to watch out for:

- **Migraines:** These can cause intense throbbing or pulsating pain, usually on one side of the head. Children experiencing migraines might also have sensitivity to light and sound, nausea, and vomiting. They might describe seeing flashing lights or experiencing visual disturbances, known as aura, before the headache sets in.



- **Tension headaches:** These headaches often feel like a dull ache or pressure around the forehead, temples, or back of the head. Kids with tension headaches might also feel tightness or tenderness in their neck and shoulder muscles. Stress, poor posture, or lack of sleep can trigger tension headaches in children.

- **Sinus headaches:** When the sinuses become inflamed or infected, it can lead to a sinus headache. Children with sinus headaches often experience pain and pressure in their forehead, cheeks, or the bridge of their nose. They might also have a stuffy or runny nose, cough, facial tenderness, and fever.

- **Cluster headaches:** These are less common in children but can still occur. Cluster headaches cause excruciating pain, usually around one eye or temple, often described as sharp or piercing. Children might also experience redness or watering of the eye on the affected side, stuffy or runny nose, and agitation or restlessness.

- **Brain tumours or intracranial pressure:** In rare cases, headaches in children can be a sign of a more serious condition like a brain tumour or increased pressure inside the skull. Headaches caused by these conditions might be severe and persistent, often accompanied by vomiting, changes in vision, balance problems, weakness, or seizures. The location of the pain can vary depending on the location of the tumor or pressure, but it might be generalised or focused in one area.

Finding the balance between when to rush to the emergency room and when to treat headaches at home in children is essential. The general rule is this: mild headaches that respond to rest, hydration, or an over-the-counter pain reliever after a few hours can be managed at home. However, if the headache lasts >24-48 hours or if your child's headache is unusual or severe, there are symptoms like vomiting, increased sleepiness, and confusion, changes in vision, or weakness in muscles, or upper or lower limbs or problems walking, then you should not hesitate to rush to the emergency to check, especially if these symptoms are accompanied by a headache.

In general, if your child often has headaches, more severe headaches, or if headaches follow unusual patterns, talk to your paediatrician about these symptoms and ask whether an evaluation or testing for headaches could be helpful. In the meantime, at home, after a headache, you can make sure that your child rests in a dimly lit environment, that they are well-hydrated, that they use cool compresses for 2-3 minutes, and that they have a massage of tense muscles and, if of appropriate age, over-the-counter pain relief for their weight and age. Every child is different, and what works for one may sometimes not work for another. If you're ever unsure or concerned about your child's headaches, always best to get a medical opinion.

(The author, Dr. Srinivasa Murthy C L, is a Lead Paediatrics, Consultant – Paediatrics and Neonatology, at Aster Women and Children Hospital.)

the pioneer
Hyderabad | Wednesday May 8, 2024

what's brewing?

PARTY


Ritika


Hamstech College hosted their first-ever Annual Design and Visual Arts Exhibition, Graphico 2024, on its Nagarjuna Hills Campus. The event was a rendezvous of design enthusiasts and industry experts to witness the fusion of creativity and technique.


Kashish


Vidhi


Tanya

Sayantani Pandit






Mamta Trivedi, Mrs Asia International World Winner, Regional Director Mrs India Telangana and Founder President SEWA, and Manoj Agarwal, Owner DSL Virtue mall and Director Annapurna Constructions, marked their presence at the one-year anniversary celebration of Lalas Herbal, held at DSL Virtue Mall in Uppal.




Bigg Boss fame Raj and Anil Raj recently attended the launch of automate tailoring machine for men, and also showcased the ethnic wear collection by Aadaran. The store has each floor dedicated to different styles and requirements with each floor having dedicated styling team and fashion advisors.





Photos by- SV Chary


Following the success of Exponus Insecticide, BASF strengthens its position by launching Efficon Insecticide to support Indian farmers. Efficon is an industry first, offering a unique class of chemistry (IRAC group 36) with novel mode of action for effective control of piercing and sucking pests.


Posing next to Biscuit, a dog up for adoption with World for All, in time for Be Kind to Animals Week (5 to 11 May), actor Diana Penty is drawing her fans' attention to the plight of dogs waiting in animal shelters for good homes in a new PETA India campaign aimed at urging people never to buy animals from pet shops or breeders.


American Brew Crafts Pvt Ltd (ABCL) recently acquired Denzong Brewery in Odisha. The brewery boasts a significant production capacity, capable of meeting high demands. This strategic move is a major milestone for ABCL, allowing for expanded operations in East and Northeast India. It underscores the company's dedication to delivering top-notch craft beers to enthusiasts nationwide.

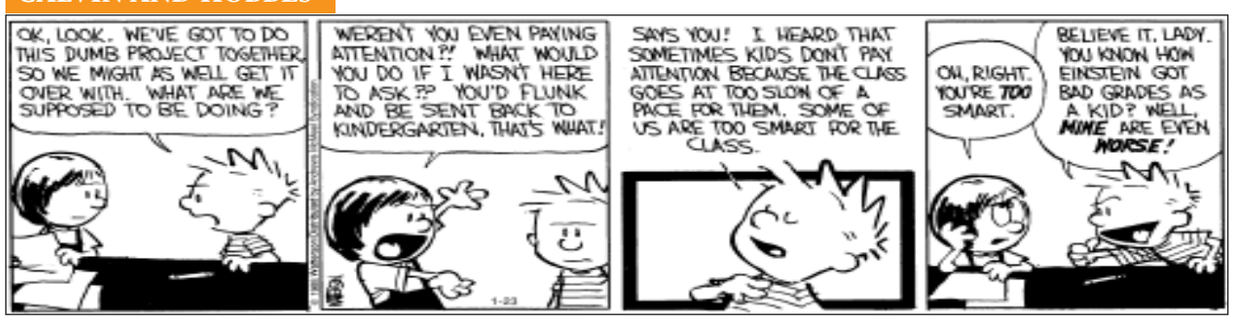

LANDCRAFT Retail by serial entrepreneurs Lalit Jhawar and Mayank Gupta announces an undisclosed funding round from prominent figures like supermodels Ujjwala Raut, Vartika Singh, designer Payal Singhal, digital creator and mom blogger Simone Khambatta and luxury fashion house, Purple Style Labs among other high net worth individual angel investors.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



GARFIELD



REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

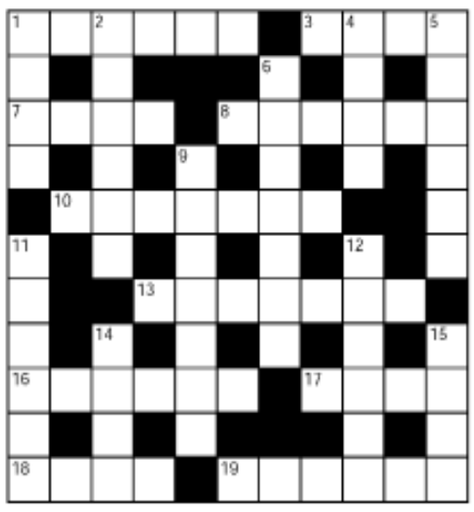
Yesterday's solution

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

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

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Bleeding injuries
3 Counts up
7 This heavy metal is used for making fishing sinkers
8 Took part in a game
10 Write this on an envelope
13 A two-wheeled ride-on you push along with a foot
16 Of greater height
17 Young female
18 Gritty stuff on beaches
19 A small river
5 Australia's largest city
6 A flower on a fruit tree
9 A game with bats and wickets
11 A prickly desert plant
12 Make up your mind
14 A map of a building
15 This fruit has a stone

DOWN

1 Go on foot
2 Ugandans live here
4 Parts of a week

SOLUTION

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SNIPPETS BY K. RAMYA SREE

NIKHIL'S *SWAYAMBHU* ACTION SET ERECTED FOR ₹8 CRORE!



Nikhil, the acclaimed actor who stole hearts with his performance in *Karthikeya 2*, is set to embark on another cinematic journey with the ambitious Pan India project, *Swayambhu*. Directed by the visionary Bharat Krishnamachari, this movie marks Nikhil's 20th venture, promising an epic tale of a legendary warrior.

In preparation for his role, Nikhil underwent rigorous training in weaponry, martial arts, and horseback riding, embodying the essence of his character. Produced by Bhuvan and Sreekar under the banner of Pixel Studios, with Tagore Madhu as the presenter, *Swayambhu* boasts high production values and technical finesse.

The current buzz surrounds an awe-inspiring action sequence being filmed, featuring a stellar ensemble cast. Spanning 12 days and involving 700 artists, including Vietnamese fighters, this grand spectacle is being meticulously crafted on two expansive sets. With a staggering budget of Rs 8 crore, this segment promises to be a visual feast, elevating the movie to new heights of excitement.

The released stills depict Nikhil exuding raw power, poised to enthrall audiences with his portrayal of a formidable warrior. Supported by an ensemble cast including Samyuktha and Nabha Natesh in lead roles, and with music by the maestro Ravi Basrur of *KGF* and *Salaar* fame, *Swayambhu* is poised to captivate audiences with its grandeur and intensity.

As anticipation builds for its release, *Swayambhu* stands as a testament to Nikhil's versatility and dedication to his craft, promising an unforgettable cinematic experience for audiences nationwide.



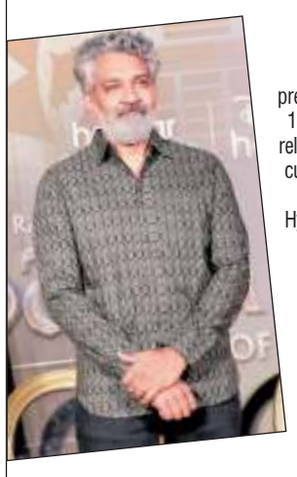
SKN bags the Dasari Film Award

Producer SKN is making a big name for himself in Tollywood as a successful young producer by producing films with diverse stories to please the audience's taste. Directed by Sai Rajesh and featuring Anand Devarakonda, Vaishnavi Chaitanya, and Viraj Ashwin, *Baby,* produced by him under the banner of Mass Movie Makers, became the biggest blockbuster hit last year.

SKN received the Dasari Film Award for 'Best Commercial Film of the Year' for this movie. It was a privilege for him to receive this award from ace producer Allu Aravind, whom he considers his mentor.

Baby was released as a small film last year and became a big hit. In Tollywood, where the trend is currently towards raw, rustic, and action movies, the success of the love story *Baby* stands out as particularly noteworthy. *Baby*, which grossed over Rs 100 crore, was a super success across the South. Known as a cult hit, *Baby* has become popular among audiences and within the industry. *Baby* is currently being remade in Bollywood.

'Baahubali: Crown of Blood will conclude on a cliffhanger,' REVEALS RAJAMOULI



Directed by renowned director SS Rajamouli, the animated series *Baahubali: Crown of Blood* will premiere on Disney Plus Hotstar on May 17. The Telugu trailer for the series was released by the makers recently, and it is currently receiving a lot of publicity. The group held a press conference at Hyderabad's AMB Cinemas on Tuesday. The complete cast, including Sharad Kelkar, who dubbed for Prabhas in Hindi, Shobu Yarlagadda, the producer of *Baahubali*, and show creator Rajamouli, attended the promotional event. In an interview with the media, Rajamouli disclosed that, similar to 'Why Kattappa Killed Baahubali,' the series will likewise conclude on a cliffhanger.

"It's a great idea to have Kattapa and Baahubali at odds," Rajamouli remarked. "I firmly feel that many people in India enjoy animation. In Hyderabad, audiences are fond of Japanese anime movies. I believe that viewers should not wear their film glasses when watching the series. Nine episodes of *Baahubali: Crown of Blood* will feature a cliffhanger akin to that of 'Why Kattappa Killed Baahubali.' With a cliffhanger, the series will continue, and it will be interesting," remarked the director.



Niharika Konidela turns singer for *Committee Kurrollu*

The eagerly awaited debut venture of Pink Elephant Pictures into feature films, *Committee Kurrollu*, takes another stride forward with the release of its first single, *Gorrela*. This vibrant track, launched amidst much anticipation, resonates with a powerful message that has struck a chord with audiences and critics alike.

At the grand unveiling ceremony, held with pomp and fervour, notable activist Jaya Prakash Narayana showered praise upon the makers for their bold and socially relevant approach. Commending the team for infusing entertainment with a thoughtful message, Narayana emphasised the importance of the youth's role in shaping the nation's future. He lauded the film's endeavor to inspire meaningful dialogue and introspection among its viewers.

Written by the talented Nag Arjun Reddy, *Gorrela* serves as a rallying cry for conscientious voting, urging listeners to weigh their choices carefully. The energetic musical composition by Anudeep Dev, coupled with spirited vocals from Anudeep Dev, Niharika Konidela, Yadhu Vamsi, and the ensemble chorus, infuses the song with infectious energy.

The teaser had already sparked intrigue, but the full release exceeds expectations, blending entertainment seamlessly with social commentary. An array of vibrant visuals, coupled with Anwar Ali's deft editing and Raju Edurolu's masterful cinematography, promises a visual feast for audiences.

Producer Niharika Konidela expressed her excitement at Pink Elephant Pictures' foray into feature films, collaborating with Sriradha Damodar Studios. Director Yadu Vamsi, supported by the dynamic duo of Venkata Subhash Cheerla and Kondal Rao Addagalla on dialogues, aims to deliver a narrative brimming with freshness and vitality. The entire cast and crew, including Sandeep Saroj, Yashwanth Pendyala, and Trinath Varma, contribute their talents to the project, underscoring the collaborative spirit driving *Committee Kurrollu* to success.

The audio release handled by the esteemed T-Series label, *Gorrela* marks a significant step forward for the film, building anticipation for its theatrical release in August. As audiences eagerly await the film's arrival, *Committee Kurrollu* promises to be an engaging cinematic experience that sparks both thought and entertainment in equal measure.

ALLU ARJUN EXPRESSES GRATITUDE FOR *ARYA*

National Award-winning actor Allu Arjun marked the 20th anniversary of his blockbuster movie *Arya* on Tuesday. The 2004 film was a major milestone in Arjun's career after he made his debut in Telugu cinema with 2003's *Gangotri*.

"Twenty years of *Arya*. It's not just a movie... It's a moment in time that changed the course of my life. Gratitude forever," the 42-year-old star wrote in a post on social media platform X.

Arya, in which Arjun played the role of the titular protagonist, a free-spirited guy who falls in love with a girl named Geetha, marked the directorial debut of popular filmmaker Sukumar.

The actor and the filmmaker later collaborated on *Arya 2*, the 2009 follow-up that also featured Kajal Aggarwal and Navdeep.

After the *Arya* films, Arjun and Sukumar reunited for the 2021 blockbuster movie *Pushpa 1: The Rise*, which went on to become one of the biggest money-spinners of the year, earning over Rs 350 crore. The film depicted the rise of a low-wage labourer (played by Arjun) in the smuggling syndicate of red sandalwood, a rare wood that grows only in the Seshachalam Hills of Andhra Pradesh state.

The duo is currently awaiting *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, which is currently slated for release on August 15.





SELVARAJ TALKS ABOUT *BISON KAALAMAADAN*

In a recent interview, acclaimed filmmaker Mari Selvaraj provided insights into his highly anticipated project, *Bison Kaalamaadan*, which recently commenced its first schedule shoot spanning 60 days. While the film revolves around the sport of Kabaddi, Selvaraj clarified that it is a work of fiction rather than a biography, promising audiences a fresh and compelling narrative.

Speaking about the creative direction of the film, Selvaraj highlighted the importance of a distinctive musical score to complement the script's unique vision. In light of recent controversies, Selvaraj opted for composer Niwas to helm the music, ensuring a seamless integration of sound and storytelling. The film's tagline, "Kalamadan," holds thematic significance, according to Selvaraj, hinting at deeper layers of meaning that will unfold as audiences delve into the cinematic experience. The decision to shoot the first schedule in Tirunelveli underscores the film's commitment to authenticity, with plans for the next phase of filming to take place in Chennai. An exciting addition to the cast is Anupama Parameswaran, who will portray the female lead, adding depth and complexity to the ensemble. Selvaraj expressed confidence in Parameswaran's ability to bring the character to life, citing her talent and dedication as valuable assets to the project.

As production progresses, *Bison Kaalamaadan* promises to deliver a thought-provoking and immersive cinematic experience, blending elements of sports drama with social commentary. With Selvaraj at the helm and a talented cast and crew, anticipation is high for this upcoming film that is poised to captivate audiences with its unique storytelling and thematic richness.



ence that resonates with audiences of all backgrounds. Director Bharani K Dharan, known for his prolific work behind the camera spanning over 40 films, expressed his enthusiasm for this maiden directorial venture, citing the compelling storyline as a driving force behind the project's allure. "At the heart of *Sivangi* lies a story of resilience and determination in the face of adversity," remarked Director Bharani, adding, "While the film navigates through unexpected twists and turns, it remains grounded in its exploration of family dynamics and moral complexities."



Cinematographer Bharani dons director's hat

A promising new venture is on the horizon as acclaimed cinematographer Bharani K Dharan steps into the director's chair for the first time with the upcoming film, *Sivangi*. With an ensemble cast featuring Anandi, Varalakshmi Sarathkumar, and John Vijay in leading roles, this project promises a captivating narrative that blends family values with the intrigue of a domestic crime thriller.

Produced by Naresh Babu P under the esteemed banner of First Copy Movies, *Sivangi* is set to deliver an enthralling cinematic experience that resonates with audiences of all backgrounds. Director Bharani K Dharan, known for his prolific work behind the camera spanning over 40 films, expressed his enthusiasm for this maiden directorial venture, citing the compelling storyline as a driving force behind the project's allure. "At the heart of *Sivangi* lies a story of resilience and determination in the face of adversity," remarked Director Bharani, adding, "While the film navigates through unexpected twists and turns, it remains grounded in its exploration of family dynamics and moral complexities."

Central to the film's narrative is a focus on female empowerment and the strength of familial bonds, ensuring that *Sivangi* strikes a chord with audiences on multiple levels. With renowned composer AH. Kasif collaborating with Ebenezer Paul to craft the film's musical score, and director Bharani himself assuming the dual role of director and cinematographer, *Sivangi* promises a seamless blend of visual and auditory excellence.

Music director Sai Karthic turns producer for *100 Crores*

There is special attention given to films based on real incidents. Meanwhile, a movie called *100 Crores*, which is inspired by real events in 2016, is getting ready to enthrall the audience. Popular music director Sai Karthic is venturing into production, with the movie being made entertainingly. Alongside Sai Karthic, Divija Karthik is producing the movie under the banner of SS Studios. The film is written and directed by Virat Chakravarthy. Kalyan Chakravarthi. G is the co-producer of this movie, while Venkat Sudhakar is the executive producer.

Rahul, Chetan, Yami, Sakshi Chaudhary, Lahari, Annapoornamma, Aishwarya, Bhadram, Inturi Vasu, and Sameer played key roles in this film. Freshly, the first look poster for this film was released at an event organised on Monday. Directors Veera Shankar, Mallik Ram, producer Harshith Reddy, and producer Damodara Prasad attended it as chief guests and also released the first look poster. Later, they extended their best wishes to the entire team.



The grey theme, the grand set-up, and the heavy truck in the first look poster generate a different atmosphere altogether. While the title *100 Crores* alone created curiosity, the first look poster further increased the excitement.

Sai Karthic said, "It's based on a true story that happened in 2016. We locked the script, after the Corona phase. This movie has come out well. Everyone who saw it appreciated the content. I am confident that this movie will be a big success."

Meanwhile, director Mallik Ram said, "I like Sai Karthic a lot. Even if you call him in the middle of the night, he has no hesitation to give tunes. He encourages new talent. This is Chetan's first film in Telugu. Telugu audiences should encourage this film's unit. I hope it will turn out to be a big hit."

The film has music by Sai Karthic himself. Charan Madhavaneni is the cinematographer. Editing is by SB Uddhav, and Wing Chun Anji is the fight master.



INCONSISTENT SRH TAKE ON LSG IN PUSH FOR PLAYOFFS SPOT

PTI ■ HYDERABAD



Sunrisers Hyderabad will be eager to move on from their underwhelming batting display when they host Lucknow Super Giants in a crucial Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

Both teams are locked in at 12 points from 11 games with SRH making the top four cut based on a slightly superior net run rate of -0.065 compared to LSG's -0.371.

The Sunrisers find themselves in a fierce competition for the top four spot with Kolkata Knight Riders (16), Rajasthan Royals (16) and Chennai Super Kings (12) stationed above them on the points table.

The winner of the duel will take a leap in the playoff race.

The Pat Cummins-led side has ample talent but has been unable to hold on to a winning run recently. Sunrisers have lost three of their last four matches, mainly because their destructive batting line-up hasn't delivered.

In their last match against Mumbai Indians, which they lost by seven wickets, they failed to put up a good target on the board, which has been their strong suit this season.

Barring Travis Head, who has been their stand out performer, the other batters in the side have faced a recent slump.

After displaying his power-hitting ability, young opener Abhishek Sharma has breached the 30-run mark just once in the last four games.

And while SRH head coach Daniel Vettori has conceded that the openers are not expected to do the job all the time, the middle order needs to step up.

The flamboyant Heinrich Klaasen has also been unable to strike the ball consistently and Nitish Reddy too has been patchy. The bowlers have fared better compared to their batting counterparts.

T Natarajan has been consistent with the ball while seasoned seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar also seems to have found his mojo after his incisive spell helped SRH eke out a one-run win against RR.

LSG, on the other hand, have to get over their overall lacklustre display against Kolkata Knight Riders, when they not only conceded the first-ever 200 plus score at the Ekana Stadium but also folded their innings at 137.

It was a day when skipper KL Rahul failed to anchor the innings while the likes of Marcus Stoinis and Nicholas Pooran were unable to get the big shots when needed. Ayush Badoni has had a subdued run in this IPL and the uncapped Indian player would be keen to shrug off the rustiness.

LSG's struggles with the ball have been majorly due to the lack of firepower in their pace-bowling department.

With tearaway pacer Mayank Yadav ruled out of the IPL and left-arm pacer Mohsin Khan also picking up an injury, the onus will be on Afghan quick Naveen-ul-Haq, young Yash Thakur, Stoinis and spinners Krunal Pandya and Ravi Bishnoi to deliver.



No plans to rest Bumrah yet: MI batting coach Pollard

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians have no plans to rest ace India pacer Jasprit Bumrah ahead of the T20 World Cup even though they are out of contention for the IPL playoffs, said batting coach Kieron Pollard.

MI defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad by seven wickets here on Monday after Suryakumar Yadav (102 not out) struck his second IPL century to help his team chase down a target of 174 with 16 balls to spare.

The win helped MI end their four-match losing streak and record only their fourth win in 12 matches. "I certainly haven't had any discussions about that," Pollard told media after the game when asked if there are any plans to rest Bumrah from MI's remaining two matches keeping in mind the upcoming T20 World Cup.

"I don't think that's my role and function at this point in time. But let's see what happens. We are all here to play an entire IPL. Sometimes when we think too far ahead of different things, thinking about World Cups, all these things could affect performances even from before the team was selected.

"For us and in our camp, the most important thing is finishing off the IPL and let's see what happens after that. When he leaves the IPL and he goes into the Indian team, I think that's where that concession will take place."

MI's last IPL game is against Lucknow Super Giants at home on May 17. The T20 World Cup, to be co-hosted by USA and the West Indies, will begin on June 1.

Pollard said as a batting coach the most difficult aspect of coaching an all-round batter like Suryakumar is to curb his attacking instinct.

"He's one, who, by nature, instinctively, is very aggressive. He wants to take the bowler's on more often than not. At times it's just a matter of understanding the situation and respecting the new ball when it's moving around," Pollard said.

"If the conditions are not suitable for a certain amount of shot making, having that discipline in order to be there for a period of time and they'll get into your work.

"I think that would be the hardest thing - to try to curb the attacking instinct. But it's not something you want to curb too much and get them in a defensive frame of mind because of the direction the sport is heading now in terms of the amount of runs being scored."

SRH'S ASSISTANT COACH HELMOT DOFFS HIS HAT TO SURYAKUMAR: SRH's assistant coach Simon Helmot said Suryakumar played an exceptional innings to take the game away from his side and the world No 1 T20I batter will have a lot of influence in the T20 World Cup.

"On some days you just have to take your hat off and say well played and well played to him. He's an exceptional cricketer and he's always going to demand a spot in the Indian team and I'm sure he'll have an influence in the World Cup," he said.

"It's very difficult (to bowl at Suryakumar) and you guys have seen him close up for many years as I have. He's a very difficult batsman to match up with when he's in that sort of frame of mind, that sort of mood."

Helmot said the conditions assisted swing bowling with the new ball in both the innings which forced the batters to adjust their game.

"Travis (Head) has been one of our best players this season at the top of the order. But even he found it difficult at times to time the ball out in the middle on this particular track and that will happen at different times during the season," he said.

Helmot said not losing their fourth spot in the IPL points table was the biggest positive for SRH in a resounding defeat.

"The positives are that we're still fourth in the ladder. It's a really tight competition; one of the tightest competitions we've had in IPL for years that I can remember," he said.

"For us, we've got our very first fly tomorrow (Tuesday) and then play the next day against Lucknow (on Wednesday). For us, it's (about) very quickly get through over this game," he added.

'Fatigued' Rohit Sharma needs break to freshen up ahead of T20I World Cup: Michael Clarke

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former Australia captain Michael Clarke does not read much into Rohit Sharma's string of poor scores, but suggests that the "fatigued" Indian skipper take a break to freshen up ahead of the T20I World Cup.

Rohit, who will lead India in the next month's 20-team global showpiece, has four single-digit scores in his last five outings for his franchise Mumbai Indians in the ongoing IPL.

The 37-year-old has had a busy season this year with an intense five-Test series preceding the IPL for Mumbai Indians, who are all but eliminated from the race to the playoffs this year.

"Rohit, being the wise judge of his own performances, will undoubtedly be disappointed, especially considering his strong start. In my view, he might be feeling a bit fatigued as well," Clarke told Star Sports.

"A break to freshen up could do wonders for him, but as the Indian captain and a key player for Mumbai Indians, you're not getting a break. He's going to have to find form," Clarke continued.

Rohit played as an impact substitute in their match against Kolkata Knight Riders last week, raising some concerns for the Indian camp.

However, he played a full game against Sunrisers Hyderabad three days later.



Clarke said it is only a matter of time before Rohit gets back to his usual elements as a batter.

"He was in a great mood. He's happy, which is a really good sign. He doesn't seem to be struggling with his timing; it's just a matter of getting out," he said.

"With someone like Rohit, it's only a matter of time before he finds his form again. Hopefully, he stresses less and focuses on his game because he's too talented to keep missing out. He's at his best when he's timing the ball, rather than trying to force it," he added.

Clarke, meanwhile, also had praise in store for Rohit's deputy for the World Cup and MI skipper Hardik Pandya, who returned with 4-0-31-3 in their seven-wicket win over SRH on Monday.



KKR players spend night in Varanasi after flight diverted multiple times due to bad weather

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Kolkata Knight Riders players had a harrowing experience as they were forced to spend a night at Varanasi after their flight from Lucknow to Kolkata was diverted multiple times due to bad weather.

Following their massive 98-run win over Lucknow Super Giants on Sunday, the Shreyas Iyer-led side left on Monday evening for Kolkata at 5:45pm. The team was scheduled to arrive at 7.25pm.

But the charter flight had to be diverted to Guwahati first and then to Varanasi after adverse weather conditions made it impossible to land the plane in Kolkata.

The KKR media team provided an update at 8.46pm, saying, "Due to inclement weather over Kolkata, the KKR charter flight has been diverted to Guwahati. We've just landed here."

Then another update at 9.43pm said, "We've got clearance to fly back to Kolkata now, from Guwahati. Estimated arrival: 11pm."

However, the ordeal was not over for the players and support staff as multiple attempts to land the flight failed, forcing the officials to divert the flight mid-air to Varanasi.

"Flight took off from Guwahati to Kolkata, was scheduled to land at 11 PM. Couldn't land once again due to bad weather, despite several attempts. Diverted mid-air to Varanasi now. Just landed here," said an update at 1:15 am.

The KKR team then spent the night at Varanasi and will be travelling to Kolkata this afternoon.

"The team would be checking into Varanasi hotel for overnight stay. Return flight to Kolkata TBD on Tuesday (7 May) afternoon," the KKR media team said in the final update at 3:00 am.

Fortunately, KKR's next game is against Mumbai Indians at Edens Garden on May 11. The two-time former champions will play Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad on May 13 and Rajasthan Royals in Guwahati on May 19 for their final two league matches.

OTHER SPORTS

Man United in crisis: Transfers, tactics and takeover helped lead up to 4-0 humiliation at Palace

AP ■ MANCHESTER (ENGLAND)

A bad season just keeps on getting worse for Manchester United.

The 20-time English champion was routed 4-0 by Crystal Palace on Monday and faces the prospect of its lowest finish in the Premier League era, as well as a season without European soccer.

Champions League qualification was already beyond Erik ten Hag's troubled team before its latest defeat. Now, sitting eighth in the standings, even the third-tier Conference League could end up out of reach.

On current form, United might need to beat Manchester City in this month's FA Cup final to secure a place in the Europa League. On current form, there is little chance of that happening.

One of the world's most storied clubs is in a mess and the humiliation at the hands of Palace was the latest evidence of that.

A record of 13 league defeats is the most United has suffered in a Premier League campaign. In all competitions that number rises to 18, including four losses in six games as United crashed out of the Champions League at the group stage.

Ten Hag's team has conceded 81 goals in all competitions, which is the most since 1976-77.

According to stats company Opta, United has also spent more time in a losing position in league games this season than a winning one.

Its only win in its last seven league games was against last-placed Sheffield United.

United's lowest finish in the Premier League era - which it long dominated, winning 13 titles under former manager Alex Ferguson - was seventh under David Moyes in 2013-14.

Here are some of the reasons behind United's fall this season.



INJURIES: United's substitutes' bench against Palace included six teenagers and two goalkeepers, such is the level of the injury crisis which has gripped Ten Hag's team. Jonny Evans, the veteran 36-year-old center back, was rushed back from injury to cover for the absent Harry Maguire and midfielder Casemiro had to play as a makeshift defender.

It has been the story of United's season with key players ruled out for long periods, including Luke Shaw, Lisandro Martinez, Mason Mount, Casemiro, Christian Eriksen, Rasmus Hojlund and Marcus Rashford. Yet United is not the only team to suffer from injuries, with Liverpool and Newcastle also seeing their squads decimated by absences. Even Ten Hag accepted there was no excuse for Monday's performance.

"The players who were available should do better. It's a deserved defeat," he said.

TACTICS: Last season United had one of the meanest defenses in the Premier League, with only treble-winning City and Newcastle conceding fewer goals.

It's been a very different story in Ten Hag's second season in charge, with the openness of his team a consistent problem.

To compound the issue, United has found goals hard to come by at the other end of the field.

A total of 52 scored is the joint lowest in the top half of the standings, level with 10th-place Bournemouth. Luton - which is in the relegation zone - has scored 49.

United is too open in midfield, too fragile in defense and not potent enough in attack. And it falls on Ten Hag to come up with the solutions.



Badosa shows signs of her old form in a win over Andreeva at Italian Open

AP ■ ROME

Paula Badosa showed signs of her former top-five form during a 6-2, 6-3 victory over 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva in the first round of the Italian Open on Tuesday.

Badosa was ranked as high as No. 2 before she missed the second half of last year due to a back injury that has also slowed her this season. She's now No. 126.

Badosa jumped out to a 5-1 lead in the first set before a 45-minute rain delay and then picked up where she left off against the 40th-ranked Andreeva, who was the WTA tour's newcomer of the year in 2023.

Badosa reached the quarterfinals in Rome last year but that turned out to be her penultimate tournament of the season.

It was Badosa's first win since beating Simona Halep at the Miami Open last month in Halep's return from a doping ban. It also ended Badosa's six-match losing streak against players ranked in the top 40 that had stretched back to Rome last year.

Also on the red clay at the Foro Italico, Shelby Rogers routed Italian wild-card entry Lisa Pigato 6-1, 6-0.

The only other matches scheduled on the opening day featured 2021 U.S. Open runner-up Leylah Fernandez against Ana Bogdan and Yulia Putintseva against Martina Trevisan.

Bengal, Haryana win women hockey nationals ties

PTI ■ RANCHI

Bengal and Haryana registered identical victories by margins of 2-1 over Odisha and Maharashtra respectively in the National Women's Hockey League 2024 here on Tuesday.

Bengal showed relentless attacking prowess and swift passing throughout the game. Their breakthrough came in the second quarter when Shanti Horo (23) manoeuvred past Odisha's defence before unleashing a thunderous shot into the net. The momentum swung further in Bengal's favour in the second half when Shanti Horo (39) capitalised on an unmarked opportunity in the D area, slotting home her second goal with precision. Odisha managed to score a goal in the final quarter through Dipi Monika Toppo (51), who converted a penalty corner. Nevertheless, Bengal held on to their lead to emerge winners. Despite the loss Odisha, remained on top of the points table with 12 points from six matches.



In the day's other match, Haryana dominated possession from the start.

The breakthrough came through Manju Chorsiya (12), who capitalised on an opportunity to score from open play, putting Haryana in the lead.

In the second half, Haryana strengthened their position with Pooja (37) converting a penalty corner.

Despite Maharashtra's efforts and multiple opportunities, including four penalty corners, they could only convert one, with Sukanya Dhaware (55) scoring a field goal in the dying minutes to narrow the deficit for her team.