



Shraddha Kapoor welcomes baby 'Stree' at her home
Bollywood diva Shraddha Kapoor, fresh off the success of her recently released horror comedy film 'Stree 2', shared an adorable update with her fans on Saturday, as she has welcomed a new pet.

SPECTACULAR SAUDI BRINGS ARABIA TO MUMBAI
Saudi's national tourism brand, 'Saudi Welcome to Arabia' will be hosting its first-ever immersive consumer event 'Spectacular Saudi', from September 25 to October 2, from 2:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. at R2 Ground in BKC, Mumbai.

CAN WE BE THE VISHVA-GURU?
The expression Vishva-guru is rather tricky. It is a compound word in Sanskrit which can mean 'the guru for the world, or 'one for whom the world is the guru'. We do hear claims that Bharat is the Vishva-guru, but we have to be conscious of the irony of language.

Anushka Sen honoured for strengthening India-Korea relations
Actress Anushka Sen was recently awarded for her contributions to enhancing the cultural relationship between Korea and India. The young star expressed her gratitude, sharing how this recognition motivates her to continue promoting meaningful cross-cultural collaborations.

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Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh to be new Chief of Air Staff

HANS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

AIR Marshal Amar Preet Singh, a fighter pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience, will take charge as the chief of the Indian Air Force after incumbent Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari retires on September 30. Air Marshal Singh is currently serving as the Vice Chief of the Air Staff.

"The government has appointed Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh, PVSM, AVSM, presently serving as Vice Chief of the Air Staff, as the next Chief of the Air Staff, in the rank of Air Chief Marshal, with effect from the afternoon of September 30," the defence ministry said. As Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Singh's priorities are expected to be the procurement of new fighter fleets and advancing the modernisation agenda of the force in view of the fast-evolving regional security landscape, including challenges along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China.

The number of the IAF's fighter squadrons has come down to around 30 as against the authorised strength of at least 42. The air warrior played a key role in the IAF's hosting of the multinational wargame 'Tarang Shakti' recently. Known as a fine strategist, Air Marshal Singh, in a message to the DRDO and other agencies apparently over delays in delivery of Tejas jets and other military systems, said publicly at an event in July that self-reliance in defence cannot be at the cost of national security.

Born on October 27, 1964, Air Marshal Singh was commissioned into the fighter pilot stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1984. In his long and distinguished service spanning nearly 40 years, he has served in a variety of command, staff, instructional and foreign appointments. An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Defence Services Staff College and National Defence College, the air officer is a qualified flying instructor and an experimental test pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience on a variety of fixed and rotary-wing aircraft. The officer has commanded an operational fighter squadron and a front-line air base.

Atishi sworn-in as Delhi CM

BECOMES YOUNGEST LEADER TO HOLD TOP POST

NEW DELHI

SENIOR Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi took oath as the Chief Minister of Delhi on Saturday. The oath of office and secrecy was administered to Atishi and her cabinet ministers by Lt Governor (LG) Vinay Kumar Saxena at the Raj Niwas. Before the swearing-in ceremony, all the ministers met AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal.

Atishi is the third woman to become Chief Minister of Delhi and also the youngest to hold the top post. Her succession to the CM post followed Kejriwal's resignation as the Chief Minister after his bail in the liquor policy scam by the Supreme Court.

Atishi, who represents Delhi's Kalkaji constituency was unanimously chosen as the leader for the top post at the AAP legislature party meeting on September 17.



Atishi takes oath as Chief Minister of Delhi during a ceremony at Raj Niwas, in New Delhi on Saturday

Apart from Atishi, Gopal Rai, Kailash Gahlot, Saunabh Bharadwaj, and Imran Hussain, who were part of the outgoing Kejriwal government, were sworn in as ministers. One post remains vacant.

Mukesh Ahlawat is a new entrant in the Atishi cabinet. Being a first-time MLA from Sultanpur Majra and also the only Dalit face,

Mukesh Ahlawat's elevation will enhance the AAP government's outreach to the backward communities.

Before the swearing-in, Ahlawat told IANS that there is some sadness within the party because of Kejriwal's resignation but despite the setbacks, he will remain the sole leader of the party.

The swearing-in ceremony remained a low-key

affair as the party didn't engage in either show of strength or making big boasts about the new AAP government taking oath, ahead of Assembly elections. Atishi was also one of the senior-most ministers in the erstwhile Kejriwal government as she held multiple portfolios and was also seen as 'filling in the gap' in the absence of Kejriwal and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

In the outgoing Kejriwal government, Atishi held 13 portfolios including finance, revenue, PWD, power and education among others. Rai held environment, development and general administration departments while Bharadwaj looked after the health, tourism and urban development departments among others. Gahlot was in charge of transport and Hussain of food and civil supplies.

Ruler must tolerate dissent in a democracy: Gadkari

PUNE: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has said the biggest test of democracy is that the ruler tolerates even the strongest opinion against him, and it leads to introspection. Writers and intellectuals should express themselves fearlessly, the senior BJP leader said at a book release function held at MIT World Peace University here on Friday.

"The biggest test of democracy is that the king tolerates the strongest opinion against him and introspects over it," he said. In India, there is no problem of difference of opinion but 'there is a problem of lack of opinion,' the Road Transport and Highways Minister said. "We are neither rightist, nor leftist. We are opportunists. It is expected from writers and intellectuals that they express their opinions without any fear," he added. Gadkari also said that as long as untouchability and notions of social inferiority and superiority persist, the work of nation-building can not be said to be complete.

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AP may hand over laddu row to CBI probe

Growing demand to book former TTD chairmen Karunakar Reddy and Subba Reddy



HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

WILL Andhra Pradesh Government seek a CBI probe into the irregularities in the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) and other temples that took place during the five-year term of YSRCP government which includes using of adulterated ghee in making of laddu prasadam and Annadanam Prasadams not only in Tirumala temple but in other important temples like Simhachalam and Annavaram.

If the fast-paced developments that are taking place at the Government level on one hand and the kind of illogical explanations that are coming from the YSRCP leaders as well the growing demand from the public and religious heads, points towards the possibility of the Government seeking a detailed probe by a central agency in next couple of days. There is also growing demand from public and leaders that cases should be booked against former TTD chairmen K Karunakar Reddy and Y V Subba Reddy.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday held a meeting with Executive Officer J Yamala Rao, additional EO and ministers to discuss about the preliminary reports they had presented to him and the way forward. The EO would be submitting a detailed report on Sunday. The EO also explained on the procedures to perform Samprokshana (purification) of the entire premises starting from Laddu Potu (Laddu kitchen). In addition, a three-day Mahasanti Yagam is also likely to be performed.

It is learnt that Naidu had told the Centre that he would be sending a detailed report not just on the irregularities that had taken place in laddu prasadam or the NDDP CALF report on adulteration of ghee but on various other aspects.

Naidu also directed the Endowments department to ensure there should be no place for any kind of adulteration in any temple across the state.

Quad emerged as key grouping to work for peace, stability in Indo-Pacific: PM

HANS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

THE Quad has emerged as a key platform of like-minded countries focusing on peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday as he embarked on a three-day visit to the US to attend a summit of the grouping and address a key conclave at the United Nations. Modi will also hold separate bilateral meetings with US President Joe Biden and other world leaders on the margins of the Quad summit in Wilmington, Delaware, and the 'Summit of the Future' at the UN General Assembly in New York.

The prime minister's other engagements include joining an Indian diaspora event at Long Island and participating in a roundtable with CEOs of American firms working on cutting-edge technologies such as AI, quantum computing and semiconductors. "I look forward to joining my colleagues President Biden, Prime Minister Albanese and Prime Minister Kishida for the Quad Summit," Modi said in a departure statement. "The forum has emerged as a key group of like-minded countries to work for peace, progress and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region," he said. "My meeting with President Biden will allow us



PM Modi being welcomed by members of the Indian community upon his arrival at Philadelphia airport on Saturday

Awaiting to meet diaspora

PM Modi will travel to New York to attend an Indian community event at Long Island on September 22 and address the Summit of the Future at the UN General Assembly the next day. "I am eagerly looking forward to engaging with the Indian diaspora and important American business leaders, who are the key stakeholders and provide vibrancy to the unique partnership between the largest and the oldest democracies of the world," Modi said.

Expansion of maritime pact to Indian Ocean possible: WH

WASHINGTON: The QUAD summit has plans to expand the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness initiative from South East Asia to the Indian Ocean Region, the White House said Friday. The maritime initiative which seeks to keep a check on illegal activities on seas was first launched at the QUAD Leaders Summit in Tokyo two years ago. Besides the expansion, the partnership will now include "new sophisticated technologies to improve the maritime domain picture", as well as new training programmes, the official said.

to review and identify new pathways to further deepen India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership for the benefit of our people and the global good," Modi said. The annual Quad summit in President Biden's hometown of Wilmington on Saturday is expected to roll a series of new initiatives to boost cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and explore ways to find peaceful solutions to the conflicts in Ukraine and

Biden set to host Modi in hometown Wilmington

PHILADELPHIA: US President Joe Biden will host Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Australian PM Anthony Albanese and Prime Minister Kishida Fumio of Japan at Archmere Academy, where he attended High school, at the sixth -fourth in-person - Quad Leaders Summit in his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday. It is for the first time that Biden will be hosting foreign leaders in Wilmington as President - including an "intimate leaders' dinner" at his private home - which the White House believes is "a reflection of his deep personal relationships with each of the Quad Leaders", and the importance of the Quad to all countries.

operation in areas of health security, climate change, emerging technologies, infrastructure, connectivity and counterterrorism.

Centre clears appointment of CJs of 7 HCs

HANS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

A day after the Supreme Court sought details of reiterated Collegium recommendations for the appointment of judges and questioned over delay in notifying these names, the Centre on Saturday cleared the appointment of Chief Justices of the High Courts of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, and Meghalaya.

In a post on X, Union Minister for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal announced that President Droupadi Murmu was pleased to appoint Justice Manmohan, the acting Chief Justice, as Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court.

Justice Rajiv Shukder of the Himachal Pradesh High Court, while its Chief Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao has been transferred as Chief Justice of the Jharkhand HC.

RG KAR INCIDENT

Junior docs resume duties partially

KOLKATA

JUNIOR doctors on Saturday rejoined their duties partially at various government-run hospitals in West Bengal after a hiatus of 42 days. They were on 'cease work' in protest against the rape and murder of an on-duty woman doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. The junior doctors rejoined their duties in essential and emergency services at all state-run hospitals but not in the outpatient departments (OPDs). "We have started rejoining duties today. Our colleagues have started returning to their respective departments since this



morning only in essential and emergency services, but not at the OPDs. Please do not forget that this is only a partial resumption of duties," Aniket Mahato, one of the agitating doctors, said. He said his other colleagues have already left for flood-hit districts of the state where they would start 'Abhaya clinics' (medical camps), to demonstrate their commitment to public health even amid ongoing protests. Emergency services returned to normalcy at various state-run hospitals, with the doctors rejoining work. "It is a

great relief for us. We support their cause but it had become very difficult for regular patients like us to get treatment for the last one month or so because of the 'cease work', Dipankar Jana, a patient at Bankura Medical College and Hospital, said.

Several patients were seen pouring in at an 'Abhaya clinic' in flood-hit Panskura in Purba Medinipur district. "We have received very good response in these clinics. Several people have visited the clinics and our colleagues have attended to them. We are ready to provide 24/7 service... it is our commitment," Abheli Chowdhury, a

junior doctor manning one such clinic, said.

The agitating doctors said that they would wait for another seven days for the administration to fulfill their demands for justice for the deceased doctor and the removal of state health secretary or else they would start another round of 'cease work'. The doctors have been protesting since August 9 when the body of a woman medic was found at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, demanding justice for the deceased doctor as well as removing key officials from their posts alleging their involvement in the case.

Borders peaceful as Pak fears Modi: Amit Shah

MENDHAR (J-K)

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said there is peace along the borders in Jammu and Kashmir as Pakistan fears Prime Minister Narendra Modi and would dare to open fire. Shah was addressing an election rally in this border area in the Union territory's Poonch district in support of BJP candidate Murtaza Khan. The Union Minister lauded the BJP-led Centre for wiping out terrorism by replacing guns and stones in the hands of youngsters with laptops and said his government would not allow guns to resonate in the hills of Jammu region. "We will construct more bunkers along the borders for the safety of the people. I want to remind you of cross-border firings in the 1990s... Is cross-border firing happening today? It is because

the earlier rulers here were frightened of Pakistan, but now, Pakistan fears Modi. They would not dare to fire but if they did, they would be given a befitting reply," Shah said.

The BJP leader is on a three-day tour and is scheduled to address four more election rallies in Surankote in Poonch, Thanamandi and Rajouri in Rajouri district and Akhnour in Jammu district. Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir are taking place for the first time after the abrogation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh - in August 2019. The first phase of polling was held on September 18. The second phase will be held on September 25, followed by the third and final phase on October 1. The election results will be declared on October 8.



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After 23 years, Punjabi man stranded in Lebanon returns home

CHANDIGARH

WHEN Gurtej Singh travelled to Lebanon to earn a better living for the future of his family in Punjab, little did he know that he would have to wait 23 years to reunite with them.

A native of Mattewara village in Ludhiana district, Singh moved to Lebanon in 2001 with five to six people from his village. While the others returned home following the outbreak of a war in the country in 2006, Singh became stranded af-

ter losing his passport.

"I went to Lebanon in 2001 for work to give a better life to my family," said Singh, now aged 55. "(When the war broke out) I also wanted to return to India. I went to the Indian Embassy several times but they wanted some proof (to issue a duplicate passport)," he told PTI on Saturday.

He finally returned to India on September 6 after AAP Rajya Sabha member Balbir Singh Seechewal raised the issue with the Ministry of External Affairs.



Seechewal said he took up the matter with the authorities concerned, following which a copy of Singh's lost passport was made available and he could finally return.

Singh admitted that, having lost his passport, he lived in constant fear of being caught. He said he used to think how he would return to India in the absence of a passport. His family in India also tried to facilitate his return but in vain.

Unable to get a duplicate passport, Singh said he thought he might never see

his family again. "I used to think how I would go back to India," he said.

Before moving to the Lebanon -- where he worked as a labourer at a vegetable farm -- Singh was employed in a factory manufacturing sweaters in Ludhiana.

When he went to Lebanon, Singh said his elder son was six years old and the younger one was three. "Now, my elder son has a six-year-old son," he said. His younger son is yet to get married. (PTI)

WBNDPWS

Man held for assaulting cop

HOSHIARPUR (PUNJAB): A man was on Saturday arrested for assaulting a police officer at the inter-state check post at Chak Sadhu here. Hoshiarpur Superintendent of Police (Investigation) Sarbjit Singh Bahia said the incident occurred when a police team intercepted a motorcycle with three occupants, who were coming from Himachal Pradesh on Friday. They were stopped for routine checking and for violating traffic regulations at the Chak Sadhu check post. Instead of cooperating with the police, the three individuals allegedly assaulted Assistant Sub-inspector Rakesh Kumar, tore his uniform, and attempted to snatch his service pistol before fleeing, Bahia said. One of the accused, Sukhbir of Maranaian, has been arrested in connection with the incident while raids are being conducted to apprehend his two accomplices, Amarjit of Maranaian and Jindri of Tanuli, Bahia added. (PTI)

AAP MLA

Kunwar bereaved, wife dies at 48

AMRITSAR: AAP's Punjab MLA Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh's wife Madhumeeta died on Saturday. She was 48. She was admitted to a private hospital on Friday after complaining of uneasiness. She is survived by Singh and their two daughters. Her cremation was attended by Cabinet minister Harbhajan Singh, AAP MLA Ajay Gupta, Congress MP Gurjeet Singh Aujla, and other political leaders and senior district administration officials. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann expressed grief over her death and said on X, "Received the sad news of the sudden demise of the wife of our Amritsar North MLA Kunwar Vijay Pratap ji... Heartfelt condolences to the family of Kunwar ji in this hour of sorrow..." Singh is the AAP MLA from Amritsar North. He joined the party after resigning from the Indian Police Service. (PTI)

Father, son arrested for defacing national flag

BAREILLY (UP): A man and his son were arrested for allegedly defacing the Indian national flag by removing the Ashok Chakra and replacing it with Arabic text, police said. Police received information about the incident from a photo shared on a social media platform, Station House Officer Sanjay Tomar said, adding that the flag was found on the roof of a house in Mohammadpur locality. Mohammad Qadir and his son Mohammad Fazil were arrested and charged under the the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971. They were sent to jail on Friday, he added. (PTI)

16 booked in two triple talaq cases in a week

GONDA (UP)

POLICE here have registered cases against 16 individuals in connection with two separate instances of triple talaq in a week, officials said.

Triple talaq was outlawed in India in 2019.

Superintendent of Police Vineet Jaiswal told PTI on Saturday that Hina Bano (22), a resident of Mauja Khanpur under the Katra Bazar Police station area, filed a complaint against her husband Lais Mohammad and eight of his family members.

"Bano has alleged that she was subjected to physical and emotional abuse as well as



demands for dowry after her marriage. She claims that her husband gave her triple talaq

in October 2023 after she refused his proposal for a mutual divorce," said the officer.

In the second case, Sobi (24), a resident of Mannipur Khorhansa of the Kotwali police station area, has accused her husband Dilnawaz and six of his family members of dowry harassment and triple talaq. She alleged that her husband gave her triple talaq on August 27, 2024, after she refused to meet their demands for dowry.

Police have registered cases against the accused in both instances under relevant sections of the Dowry Prohibition Act, and the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act. Investigations are underway in both the cases, said the officer. (PTI)

Only BJP can make tea seller country's PM: Rupani

BUDAUN (UP)

FORMER Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani on Saturday said only the BJP can make a tea seller the country's prime minister and no other party has this capability.

Rupani said this after inaugurating the 'NaMo Ex-

hibition' organised by the BJP here. Interacting with the students at Banke Bihari Law College in Budaun, he said the "BJP is the biggest party in the world".

Citing the example of Prime Minister Modi, Rupani said, "A person who puts up a poster, a tea-seller,

or a poor man's son can also become the prime minister (in this party)."

"Our party works in a democratic way. The BJP does politics of principles and values. All sections of the BJP have membership, in other parties membership is given by looking at casteism,

regionalism, dynasticism," he added.

Asserting the BJP "works in all directions", Rupani said, "Ram in Ayodhya, jobs for youth, fair prices for farmers, respect for women. This is our basic mantra. Our party works for the nation above all, other parties do vote bank politics." (PTI)

Defamation case against Rahul in UP court Hearing postponed to October 1

SULTANPUR (UP)

THE hearing in a defamation case against Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi in a MP-MLA court in this Uttar Pradesh district was postponed on Saturday due to a health camp organised by the bar council.

The matter will now be heard on October 1. Plaintiff Vijay Mishra's lawyer Santosh Kumar Pandey said his client's statement was to be recorded on Saturday, but due to the health camp organised by the Bar Association on the civil court premises, the lawyers were busy in it and no court work could be done.

"The court has postponed the matter to October 1," he said. Gandhi has been accused of making objectionable comments during the 2018 Karnataka polls about Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who was the BJP president then.

Mishra, a local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) politician, filed a complaint against Gandhi in August 2018. Since then, the matter has been going on in the court. Gandhi surrendered before



the court during the "Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra" on February 20 and was granted bail on personal surety bonds of Rs 25,000 each.

Subsequently, the court issued several notices to the Congress leader to record his statement, but he was unable to appear before it due to the Lok Sabha polls. Gandhi finally appeared before the MP-MLA court on July 26, got his statement recorded and said the case was filed to gain "cheap publicity".

The former Congress chief,

who appeared before Special Judge Shubham Verma, said he never gave a statement against anyone that could lead to a case of defamation, his lawyer Kashi Prasad Shukla had told reporters.

The matter was posted for further proceedings on August 12 but was deferred as the judge was on leave. On the next two dates on August 23 and September 5, the hearing did not take place as the plaintiff could not appear in the court due to ill health. (PTI)



Punjab to market state-produced silk products

CHANDIGARH

TO boost the income of farmers by selling products associated with agricultural allied occupations, the Punjab government has taken a step towards introducing state-produced silk products to the market under its own label.

During the state-level 'Silk Day' function here, Horticulture Minister Chetan Singh Jouramajra launched the department's logo for silk products, marking the commencement of the initiative.

He announced that every effort would be made to dou-

ble silk production by the end of 2025.

Jouramajra said sericulture is currently practised in approximately 230 villages across the sub-mountainous districts of Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Pathankot and Ropar, with 1,200 to 1,400 silk rearers.

The state primarily produces two types of silk: bivoltine mulberry and eri silk. Annually, 1,000 to 1,100 ounces of mulberry silk seeds are reared, yielding 30,000 to 35,000 kg of mulberry silk cocoons, while 200 ounces of eri silk seeds produce 5,000 to 8,000 kg of silk cocoons.

"This occupation is predominantly adopted by people living below the poverty line, landless individuals or those with small landholdings," said the minister, adding currently a silk rearer earns an annual income of Rs 40,000 to Rs 50,000, which is considered insufficient.

Jouramajra said the government would establish its own reeling units to process cocoons, ensuring silk farmers receive higher prices for their produce.

He said a reeling unit for converting cocoons into silk thread is being set up in

Pathankot. With the operationalisation of this unit, the income of silk rearers can potentially increase by 1.5 to two times.

Addressing the gathering, Special Chief Secretary (Horticulture) K A P Sinha said the state has 13 government sericulture farms and with the established infrastructure at these farms, the department's technical staff is providing necessary facilities to silk farmers, such as plantation assistance, distribution of silkworm eggs, rearing young silkworms and support for cocoon marketing. (ANI)

Amid Tirupati row, Raj govt to run special campaign for prasad quality check

JAIPUR

AMID the ongoing controversy over animal fat and fish oil found in Tirupati temple laddus, a special campaign will be launched by Rajasthan's Food Safety Department from September 23 to 26 to check the quality of bhog and prasad in temples.

Samples of Savamani and the prasad given regularly in temples will be tested under this campaign. Additional Commissioner of Food Safety Department, Pankaj Ojha

said: "This investigation will be done under the campaign 'Shuddh Aahar, Milawat Par Vaar' in Rajasthan on the initiative of the Chief Minister. In this, all the big temples where prasad is made daily in the form of bhog, the quality of various food items will be checked."

So far, 54 temples in the state have applied for a Bhog Certificate. Besides the quality of prasad, hygiene will also be inspected. The concerned departments of Rajasthan have been informed accord-



ingly. This campaign will be run by a special team.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched a certification scheme for Bhog under the 'Eat Right' initiative. Under this scheme, vendors selling prasad and food items at religious places are given certificates. This certificate is given to temples and religious places that follow food safety standards and hygiene standards. So far, 54 religious places and temples in Rajasthan have been registered

for the Bhog Certificate by the Food Safety and Drug Control Department, Jaipur. Moti Dungri Ganesh Temple of Jaipur is the first religious place to receive a Bhog Certificate. Prasad given at a religious place that has received this type of certificate vouchers for the standards and quality assurance of FSSAI. This certificate is renewed after an audit every six months. For the certificate, the team of FSSAI prepares a report after inspecting the standards of the temple kitchen.

Delhi court frames rape charge against self-styled godman Daati Maharaj

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

SETTING the stage for trial, a court here has framed the charges of rape, unnatural offences and criminal intimidation against self-styled godman and preacher Daati Maharaj and his brothers, Ashok and Arjun, on Friday.

"Order on charge passed and charges framed against accused persons accordingly," said the online daily status of Additional Sessions Judge (Special Fast

Track Court) Neha.

The court, meanwhile, discharged another of Daati's brothers, Anil, in the matter. After the court framed the charges on Friday, the accused pleaded not guilty and claimed trial. The court has posted the matter for submitting evidence for the prosecution on October 18.

Pradip Tiwary, the victim's counsel, said the court framed charges against Daati Maharaj alias Madan Lal Rajasthani and his brothers, Ashok and Arjun,

under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 376 (rape), 377 (unnatural offences), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 34 (common intention).

A complaint of rape was filed by a disciple of Daati against the self-styled godman and his three brothers -- Ashok, Anil and Arjun -- at the Fatehpur Beri police station in South Delhi on June 7, 2018 and an FIR was registered on June 11 for the alleged offences of rape, unnatural sex, molestation and common inten-

tion under the IPC.

On June 22, police questioned Daati, who was charged with raping the disciple at his ashrams in Delhi and Rajasthan. The case was later transferred to the crime branch, which filed its chargesheet on October 1.

On October 3, 2018, the Delhi High Court transferred the matter to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), saying the manner in which the Delhi Police carried out the probe "cast a shadow on the investigation".

Deprecating the Delhi Police's conduct, it said the accused was not arrested even after recording the complainant's statement before a magistrate under section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC).

On October 26, the agency registered an FIR against Daati and his three brothers for allegedly raping the 25-year-old woman at his Ashram in Fatehpur Beri on January 9, 2016 and for having unnatural sex with the victim.

The preacher's plea against the



October 3 order was initially filed in the Supreme Court, which had asked him to approach the high court with his grievance. The high court, however, dismissed the review plea on November 14, 2018.

A sessions court granted interim bail to the accused persons

in January 2019. The CBI filed a supplementary chargesheet in the matter on September 4, 2020. "Justice delayed is justice denied. The fast-track court began its proceedings in December 2019 and took almost five years to frame charges against the accused," Tiwary said.

ATISHI URGES DELHITES TO MAKE KEJRIWAL CM AGAIN

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

IN her first remarks after taking oath, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi hit out at the BJP on Saturday for hatching a "conspiracy" against her predecessor Arvind Kejriwal and urged the people of the capital to ensure that the AAP national convenor returns to the top post again after the Assembly polls due early next year.

Addressing a press conference here, Atishi said it is an "emotional day" for her as

Kejriwal will not continue to be the chief minister. "It is an emotional moment for me as he will not be the chief minister. He understood the pain of every person. He ensured free treatment for people, worked to improve the lives of the students of government schools, brought the provision of free bus rides for women."

"The BJP implicated him in a false case and did everything to break him," the chief minister said, as she referred to Kejriwal as her "guru" and thanked him for giving her

this opportunity.

With the Assembly polls due early next year, Atishi said the people of the national capital must ensure that Kejriwal becomes the chief minister again so that the free services like free electricity and water continue.

She accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of trying to stop the facilities being enjoyed by people under the Kejriwal government.

"I assure you that since Kejriwal has come out of jail now, we will not let any conspiracy of the BJP succeed,"



Delhi Chief Minister Atishi addresses a press conference in New Delhi on Saturday

she said. Atishi hailed Kejriwal for setting an example in morality by stepping down as

the chief minister despite getting bail from Supreme Court in the excise policy case.

13 portfolios for Delhi CM Atishi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

NEW Delhi Chief Minister Atishi will retain all the 13 portfolios, including education, revenue, finance, power and PWD, that she held in the previous government in the national capital headed by Arvind Kejriwal.

A proposal from the chief minister for allocation of work among the ministers of her cabinet has been approved by Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena, officials

said on Saturday.

Atishi's predecessor Kejriwal did not hold any portfolio. Atishi, the eighth chief minister of Delhi, has retained four ministers from the previous government -- Saurabh Bharadwaj, Gopal Rai, Kailash Gahlot and Imran Hussain.

First-time MLA from Sul-tanpur Majra Mukesh Ahlawat is a new member in her cabinet. Bharadwaj will retain his previous portfolios and also have the charge of the social welfare and co-

Bharadwaj in charge of 8 departments; Mukesh only new face, four ministers retained

operative departments that were earlier held by Raaj Kumar Anand, who resigned in April.

His other portfolios include health, urban development, irrigation and tourism. Bharadwaj will have eight portfolios under his belt, the highest after those held by the chief minister. Ahlawat has been given the



charge of the labour, gur-dwara elections, welfare of SCs and STs and land and building departments.

Rai has retained the development, general administration department, environment and forest portfolios that he also held

in the Kejriwal government. Gahlot has also been given his previous portfolios -- transport, home, administrative reforms, women and child development. Hussain will continue to hold the food and supply and election portfolios.



NSUI releases manifesto for DUSU polls

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE National Students' Union of India (NSUI) on Saturday launched its manifesto for the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections scheduled to be held on September 27.

NSUI national president Varun Choudhary, highlighting key points of the manifesto, said, "Our manifesto reflects a comprehensive approach to address all issues related to student welfare," as per an official statement.

We have carefully in-

cluded provisions that focus on the holistic development of students, their rights, and campus infrastructure, and the NSUI is committed to delivering on every promise, Choudhary added.

Congress-affiliated NSUI announced its candidates for the DUSU polls on Friday.

NSUI's Ronak Khatri, Yash Nandal, Namrata Jeph Meena, and Lokesh Choudhary are contesting for the posts of president, vice president, secretary, and joint secretary, respectively.

Varun Choudhary expressed confidence in the candidates saying, "We

are confident that NSUI will secure a 4-0 victory in these elections. Each of our candidates has fought relentlessly for student rights and is deeply connected with the issues faced by the student community. Their commitment and hard work will resonate with the electorate."

The manifesto emphasises a 'student-first' approach, focussing on improving campus facilities, securing fair opportunities for all students, ensuring transparent examinations, and amplifying student voices in the decision-making processes, the statement said.

200-foot Gokulpuri drain reduced to 20-25 feet due to lack of desilting

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

DELHI Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena, after visiting several areas in northeast Delhi, said the 200-foot Gokulpuri drain has been reduced to 20-25 feet due to lack of desilting for years.

During the inspection of Gokulpuri, Khajuri, Bhajanpura, Mustafabad and Karawal Nagar located in northeast Delhi, the same "messy face" of the country's capital was seen, he wrote on X. Another dimension of the helplessness of the people of Delhi was seen, he added.

"The 200-foot Gokulpuri drain has been reduced to 20-25 feet due to lack of desilting for years," he mentioned in the post.

"Damaged roads filled with potholes, heaps of garbage, back-flowing sewer, waterlogging - the attached pictures of the area reveal Delhi's truth. Hopefully, those responsible for this plight will look into the mirror," he said.

He instructed the departments concerned and officials to start the remedial work on 'war-footing'. Earlier this week, the LG visited west Delhi and claimed the "neglect and apathy" of the Delhi government forced residents of the city's western parts to live a life "worse than hell".

Plea against demolition of vending units HC asks MCD, police to respond to vendors' plea

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court has sought responses from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and police on a plea filed by 45 vendors challenging the demolition of their semi-permanent shops by authorities at a market here. A bench of Justices Vibhu Bakhru and Sachin Datta issued notices to the MCD, the Delhi Police and the Delhi government on the petition and asked them to file their replies within two



weeks. The court listed the matter for further hearing on October 14.

The petitioner vendors submitted that they have been vending at the 'Sheetla Mata Market' in south Delhi's

Madangir for the last several years and their units or semi-permanent structures were demolished by authorities on July 30 allegedly without following the due process of the law.

Auto driver caught masturbating near Delhi's Bengali Market, held

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

A 40-year-old man was held for allegedly masturbating inside his autorickshaw in full public view near central Delhi's famous Bengali Market, police said on Saturday.

Najakat, a resident of northeast Delhi's Mustafabad, was nabbed after a passerby submitted a complaint to the police regarding the incident that happened Friday morning, they said.

Police said that he has

two previous cases of petty thefts in northeast Delhi against him. Subhash, a resident of south Delhi's KM Pur, told police that an auto driver was masturbating inside his vehicle parked along a road at Sikandara Lane.

In his complaint, he said a lot of people were present around the area when it happened, police said. Subhash recorded a video of the incident on his phone, noted the auto's registration number and submitted to the police, an officer said.

Light isn't merely from lamps; daughters also illuminate the homes -Sanjeev Juneja

'International Daughters' Day' celebrated by the Roop Mantra family



Karun Sharma-New Delhi Chandigarh. On the occasion of 'International Daughter's Day', Divisa Herbs Pvt. Ltd. organized a program courtesy of their renowned product 'Roop Mantra'. The company's employees participated enthusiastically in the program and shared their views and thoughts on daughters.

On this occasion, entrepreneur and investor Dr. Sanjeev Juneja, famously known as Brand Machine, emphasized on the importance of having daughters in life and said that daughters are a precious gift given by God who brings immense happiness and love into our lives and fills our homes with happiness. Your princess deserves to know that how much you love her, even though she has grown up and is away from home, she is still your princess.

creams, and facial creams, which help enhance the natural glow of the skin and maintain its natural health. It works to protect the natural moisture on the face. Its amazing nutritional and anti-oxidant properties help in keeping the facial skin youthful.

He further said that if in today's world, daughters are to be considered inferior to sons or men of the society, it's wrong. Most people are committing female feticide in the desire to have a son, which is a heinous crime. In such a situation, every year International Daughters Day is celebrated which is dedicated to all daughters and stresses to protect daughters and their bright future. And this day should be celebrated by every person.

A daughter is one of the most beautiful gifts in this world. If the future of daughters is bright, only then the future of our society will be brighter. The daughters of our India are now no less than anyone. While some bring gold medals for India in sports, some have got their names registered in the Guinness Book with their



Dr. Sanjeev Juneja
Founder
SBS Group of Companies

impeccable talents. But, still, somewhere some girls are fighting for their rights. In the changing era, daughters should be given the same respect as sons, whether it is about education, jobs, or freedom to live life. Let us tell you that it is also a day for parents to reflect on the value of an equal and impartial upbringing, which will inspire daughters to have a strong and bright future throughout their lives. International Daughters Day focuses on the need to address the challenges faced by girls, and promote empowerment and the fulfillment of women's rights.

BJP slams AAP-led MCD over 'U-turn' on its pledge to clear landfill sites by 2024

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi BJP on Saturday slammed the AAP dispensation in MCD, claiming it had submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court stating that the three major landfill sites in Delhi would be cleared by 2028 but work is not progressing in this direction.

The BJP also accused the AAP of backtracking on its earlier promise to flatten the garbage mountains by January 2024.

At a press conference, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said the AAP had promised to clear the Ghaz-

ipur, Okhla, and Bhalswa landfill sites by early 2024, accusing the party of taking a "U-turn" on its election pledge. He also pointed out that the AAP's tenure in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) ends in 2027, raising concerns that the new 2028 deadline goes beyond its term in office.

"In November 2022, AAP won the MCD elections. Before coming to power, it promised to clear the landfill sites by January 2024. However, they have now submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court stating the work will only be completed by 2028," Sachdeva said.



Sachdeva further accused the party of using the landfill crisis as an electoral issue to gain power in the MCD but failing to deliver on its promises even after nearly 22 months in office.

"The AAP promised the people that the landfill sites would be cleared by 2024, but

22 months have passed, and nothing has been done. Now, they claim the work will be completed by 2028, conveniently after their tenure ends in 2027. This is a clear attempt to deceive the people of Delhi," the BJP leader added.

Referring to Kejriwal as a

"betrayer", Sachdeva said the BJP, during its tenure, had initiated the work of clearing the landfill sites, with specific deadlines for the Okhla site set for 2024 and others for 2026.

"Thirty per cent of the work at the Okhla landfill was already completed. But it's shameful that the man who calls himself the 'son of Delhi' has gone back on his promise," he said. Raja Iqbal, Leader of Opposition in the MCD, also addressed the media, accusing the AAP of failing to deliver basic civic services in key areas such as sanitation, education, and healthcare.

TG offers Vijaya ghee to Tirumala

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Government of Telangana has come forward to supply high-quality ghee to the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD).

The irregularities committed during the previous YSRCP regime when B Kaurmakar Reddy and Y S Subba Reddy were the board chairmen has shocked the people of Andhra Pradesh and all the devotees across the globe.

In the backdrop of this scenario, the Telangana Government-owned Vijaya Dairy wrote a letter to TTD authorities expressing its readiness to supply required ghee and also other milk products for regular use at the holy Tirumala temple.

Telangana State Principal Secretary Animal Husbandry department Sabyasachi Ghose has written to TTD Executive Officer J Syamala Rao offering to supply high-standard cow ghee for making laddus and other prasadam in Tirumala.

Sabyasachi Ghose in-



formed the TTD officials about the quality and hygiene maintained in the production of ghee and other dairy products. The letter said that the Telangana Vijaya Dairy Company is well-known in the field of milk and milk products across the country and has a history of supplying valuable and quality products to consumers. Besides ensuring quality in Vijaya Dairy products, the organisation is also supporting the livelihood of lakhs of dairy farmers.

The Secretary said that the Vijaya Dairy Company was ready to meet all the needs of ghee and other dairy products required by the TTD. He also said that the Vijaya Dairy being a government company would be fully transparent about the purity, quality and prices of the supplies.

Officials said that the state government was expecting a positive response from the TTD as the Vijaya Dairy product, mainly ghee, was already being used for mak-

ing laddu prasadam in the famous Yadagirigutta, Vemulawada, Basara and other noted temples in Telangana. Regular quality checking by the Telangana Dairy Development Cooperative Federation helped to produce quality dairy products and supply to temples for making prasadam.

"The federation is ready to supply ghee in bulk to meet the requirement of the TTD also," said a senior official of the Animal husbandry wing.

Creating 20 lakh jobs is our single agenda, says Lokesh

MD AMEEN VIJAYAWADA

IT minister Nara Lokesh said that creating 20 lakh jobs is the single agenda of the TDP-led NDA government in the state, which was given a massive mandate of 93 per cent seats in the 2024 elections.

He interacted with the industry heads at the Fourth Meeting of the CII Southern Regional Council organised in a hotel here on Saturday. Industry captains from six southern states participated in the regional council meeting. Interacting with the entrepreneurs Nara Lokesh said Andhra Pradesh is one of the fastest growing states in the country with a vision of Vikasit Andhra Pradesh.

"That is the single agenda (20 lakh jobs) with which your government is going to actually work here in the state of Andhra Pradesh," said Lokesh, adding that the southern state aspires to become one of the first three states to achieve a GSDP of 1 trillion dollars.

Observing that CII has always played a collaborative role, he said that Andhra Pradesh, which has been a hub for agriculture, MSMEs and other sectors, now aims to move faster in IT. He said the government will receive

IT minister says Andhra Pradesh, which has been a hub for agriculture, MSMEs and other sectors, now aims to move faster in IT

Notes that focus now shifted to 'speed of doing business' from 'ease of doing business' as delay in projects can delay the entire business plan since investments involved are huge

Urges industry to actively participate in the AI varsity project, which is close to CM's heart



HRD, IT and electronics minister Nara Lokesh interacts with the industry heads at the CII Southern Regional Council meeting in Vijayawada on Saturday

feedback from people for the Viksit Andhra Pradesh vision, which is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Viksit Bharat-2047 (developed India). In an apparent reference to Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP regime between 2019 and 2024, the TDP national general secretary said the last five years were not pleasant for the industry and vowed that the new government is in place to bring back trust. As investments nowadays are ranging in thousands of crores of rupees, Lokesh said the focus shifted to speed of doing business from ease of doing business, adding that a project

getting delayed by three to six months could derail the entire business plan now. According to Lokesh, the Skills Census was disrupted due to the recent Vijayawada floods but exuded confidence that it will be back on track to prepare a certified workforce for the industry. Delving on Artificial Intelligence, he underscored that futuristic technology would transform the manner in which business, politics and governance will be conducted. Further, he called on the industry to actively participate in the AI varsity project, which is close to Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, drawing parallels with the Hy-

derabad-based Indian School of Business (ISB) as it would be in a similar format.

"This (AI varsity) is designed on the ISB model. We expect the titans of the industry to support us in this journey and actually run the institution..." he said, noting that the government is good at policy making and giving land. Further, Lokesh underlined that he is looking forward to overhauling curricula from kindergarten to post graduation as the Human Resource Development Minister of the state.

He also said that there will be many new announcements in the next six months while highlighting that the Economic Development Board (EDB), which will be in place in the next 30 days, will be the single port of call for industry engagement with the government.

Lokesh highlighted that EDB will pursue industrialists until they commit investments in the state, among other initiatives.

BJP creates anarchy in name of Hinduism: CPI

Slams Union Minister for provocative remark against Rahul Gandhi

HYDERABAD

CPI state secretary and the party MLA Koonamneni Sambasiva Rao on Saturday alleged that the BJP government at the Centre was acting in an anarchic manner and added that it was shameful that BJP leaders were calling people to bring Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's head.

He asked the BJP to answer whose culture it is following.

"The BJP, which is creating anarchy in the name of Hinduism, is indeed a Hindu Taliban organisation," he alleged. Koonamneni Sambasiva Rao along with CPI state secretariat members Palla Venkata Reddy, Takkellapalli Srinivas Rao, N Balamalles, Kalavina Shankar and M Balanarasimha spoke at a press conference organised at the CPI state office Maqdoom Bhavan in Hyderabad on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, Sambasiva Rao said that those who are making cheap comments that incite cheap politics and terrorism were doing a lot of wrong.

He said that the CPI strongly condemned such



actions as the country is constantly on fire through such comments and people are doing dirty politics to divert attention from talking about their employment and other issues.

"If Rahul Gandhi has done anything wrong, then action should be taken as per law. Instead of doing so, Rahul Gandhi is being branded as a terrorist by the BJP minister and it is highly objectionable that the BJP is considering it a right to speak anything in the name of Hinduism.

No matter what the politicians say, it is not right for the BJP to act as if Hinduism belongs to only them," he said.

CM Revanth calls upon people to fight against simultaneous polls

HYDERABAD

RESPONDING to the proposal of simultaneous elections, approved by the Union Cabinet, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is hatching a conspiracy to show the hegemony in the country in the guise of One Nation One Election.

The Chief Minister said the BJP is trying to damage the spirit of the Union of States in the country and called upon that everyone should fight against the proposal.

Addressing a memorial meeting of CPM national leader Sitaram Yechuri, who passed away recently, at Ravindra Bharathi here on Saturday, Revanth Reddy said the passing away of Sitaram Yechuri was an irreparable loss for the Left party.

"Sitaram ignited the spirit of democracy in the national politics and also stood by the poor by raising their voice on all political platforms in the country. The departed CPM leader also spread the glory



of India on all democratic platforms in the world," he asserted. Stating that Sitaram Yechuri and departed Congress leader S Jaipal Reddy are highly respected national leaders, the Chief Minister said that he used to remember the CPM national leader whenever met Jaipal Reddy and two leaders were contemporary in the national politics.

"Sitaram Yechuri adhered to his party ideology till he breathed his last.

The Left party leaders fought to the cause of poor all through his life. The family members decision to donate the mortal remains to hospital is highly commend-

able, he said. The Chief Minister further stated that the demise of the national leader left a void which cannot be filled in the crucial times of safeguarding the states interests and it is very sad that Sitaram is not among us to give a direction to the country in the critical times.

He also criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence over BJP leaders' derogatory remarks against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and said that it is highly condemnable on the part of the Prime Minister for not controlling such foul language in the highly respected democratic country.

Laddu row triggers heartburn to devotees

PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI TIRUPATI

THE controversy surrounding the adulteration of cow ghee with animal fats has triggered outrage, resonating beyond the state in the entire country and even abroad, as it touches the sentiments of millions of devotees of Lord Venkateswara. The issue came to light when Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu revealed an NDDB CALF lab report confirming the adulteration, igniting strong reactions from the Hindu community.

While some believe the government should have taken corrective action privately instead of publicising the issue, others have expressed anger over the state of affairs within the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) in the past five years. The divide in public opinion reflects the deep emotional impact of the scandal on staunch devotees.

Political parties have seized on the issue, each taking a stand aligned with their interests. The NDA parties have sharply criticised the previous YSRCP government, accusing it of tarnishing the reputation of the revered religious institution. In contrast, YSRCP has denied the allegations and questioned the political motives behind the Chief Minister's statements.

Meanwhile, Congress and Left parties have raised concerns about why the report was withheld for two months.

Amidst the controversy, former TTD executive officer AV Dharma Reddy has come under scrutiny due to his close ties with former chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy. Dharma Reddy's



- With all parties demanding a full-fledged inquiry, which is imminent, the nature of probe is to be seen
- While some believe the govt should have taken corrective action without publicising the issue, others express anger over the state of affairs in TTD in the last five years
- CM directs TTD to cleanse the temple following Agama norms to instil confidence among devotees

influence over TTD's administration during the previous government's tenure is now a focal point of a recent vigilance inquiry into TTD's decision-making.

There is a growing perception that quality cow ghee cannot be priced at Rs 320 without being adulterated, given that the market price of pure ghee is closer to Rs 600 for all reliable brands. The previous TTD administration had controversially rejected Nandini ghee from Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF), known for its quality, due to its higher price, opting instead for a lower-priced alternative. The NDA government has since moved to reinstate KMF as the supplier.

Calls for a full-fledged inquiry are mounting, with

various parties demanding a transparent investigation. Some are advocating for a CBI probe, while others prefer an inquiry led by a sitting Supreme Court judge. As the Central government has now requested a report from the state, a decision on the nature of the inquiry is anticipated soon.

The upcoming meeting between the TTD executive officer and the Chief Minister, scheduled for Saturday evening, is expected to be crucial in shaping the next steps in this unfolding controversy. It was learnt that the CM has already directed the TTD to cleanse Sri Vari temple following all Agama norms to instil confidence among the devotees in a big way.

BJP leader launches party membership drive

HANS NEWS SERVICE KHAMMAM

FORMER MLC and BJP National co-incharge for Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Dr Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy launched the party membership drive here in Khammam city, Palair, Sathupalli, and Wyracconstituencies on Saturday.

He visited several places during the day and interacted with people requesting them to participate in the membership drive of the party. Speaking on the occasion, Ponguleti informed that youth and professionals across various groups were interested to join the



party. He said that people expressed happiness at PM Modi's rule.

Later, he conveyed special thanks to BJP leaders who participated in flood relief camps in the Khammam district.

KTR alleges Rs 8,888-cr corruption involving CM

Accuses CM of using his position to benefit his family and close associates

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

BRS working president K Taraka Rama Rao has claimed that a massive Rs 8,888 crore corruption scandal has occurred in the State involving Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

The alleged scam centered around mismanagement and fraudulent tender allocations under the AMRUT 2.0 scheme, KTR said, accusing the CM of using his position to benefit his family and

close associates. Addressing the media, KTR pointed out that in just three months after assuming office, Revanth Reddy orchestrated a colossal fraud by misusing his control over the Urban Development Department.

The scheme, according to KTR, involved the illegal allocation of large-scale contracts to companies that lack the requisite qualifications, many of which are closely connected to the Chief Minister's family.

The CM's brother-in-law S Srujan Reddy owned Shodha Infrastructure Limited was awarded contracts worth Rs 1,137 crore, despite its meager profit declaration of Rs 2 crore. "The only qualification this company seems to have is its family connection to the Chief Minister," KTR said.

The BRS leader also alleged that the public-listed Indian Hume Pipe Ltd was coerced into entering a joint venture with Shodha Infrastructure. Under this arrangement, Indian Hume Pipe was assigned only 20 per cent of the project

work, while Shodha Infrastructure was handed 80 per cent, further gives currency to suspicions of foul play.

Further, KTR criticised Revanth Reddy for withholding key information about the AMRUT 2.0 tenders, preventing public oversight and transparency. He demanded that all details related to the scheme be made public for scrutiny. The BRS leader demanded the Congress-led State government to release all relevant documents regarding the AMRUT tenders.



Claims Revanth awarded Rs 1,000 cr contract to in-laws

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE	
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRMs Office, Stain Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender for the under noted work:	
1 Name of Work with its location	Replacement of Contact wire over Delhi Division.
2 Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 11,40,24,093.36/-
3 Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 7,20,100/-
4 E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period	01.10.2024 (00:00 Hrs.) to 15.10.2024 (15:00 Hrs.)
5 E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time	15.10.2024 (15:00 hrs.)
6 Fund Allocation	RRSK & DF-3 (PH-36)
7 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in
E-Tender No.: 30-TRD-NDLS-2024-25 Dated: 20.09.2024 2949/2024	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

NORTHERN RAILWAY OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE	
Sr. Divisional Engineer-Northern Railway, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India invites e-tender on the prescribed form for the under noted work:	
Name of work with location, cost of work and Earnest money	Elimination of Level Crossing No. 10 at Km. 14/29-31, Level Crossing No.14 at Km.21/19-21 and Level Crossing No. 15 at Km.23/25-27 by construction of RUB/HS in the section of SSE/W/SNP under ADEN/PNP. Approx. Cost: Rs. 17,46,92,691.56 Earnest Money: Rs. 10,23,500/-
Earnest Money should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. Note: FDR or Demand Draft will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter No. 2015/CE-4/CT/S/1 dated 31.08.2016.	
Completion Period	12 Months
Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs on 15.10.2024 opening of e-tender at 15.00 hrs. on 15.10.2024
Website particulars, published tender, notice location etc complete details of tender can be seen and website where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e www.ireps.gov.in
Similar Nature or work	Construction of bridges/Limited High Subway with Box Pushing /P/ Pushing method.
NOTE: All attachments must be self attested by the tenderers and the affidavit should be submitted in the new format attached with tender conditions as per Annexure-XXIV is compulsory.	
No.: 128-W/230/Tender Notice/24-25-W-1 (NT-44) Dated: 20.09.2024 2937/2024	
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From Homemaker to Bestselling Author

Reecha Agarwal Goyal's transformation from a homemaker to a bestselling author exemplifies the power of dreams and determination. Her journey, shaped by late-night writing sessions and the chaos of daily life, is a story of inspiration for aspiring writers and dreamers alike

ASKARI JAFFER

In the quiet corners of her home, amidst the chaos of daily life—life dictated by the clinking of dishes and the laughter of her two children—Reecha Agarwal Goyal dared to dream. A mother, a homemaker, and now a bestselling author, her journey is one of defiance against the odds, a testament to the power of storytelling and perseverance.

Reecha's life, like many mothers, was centered around her family. The daily routine of school runs, household chores, and taking care of her children filled her days. But underneath the surface, a longing stirred. "I've always loved my family life, but I couldn't shake this feeling that I wanted something more," she shares, reflecting on her transition

from homemaker to writer. Reecha says, "Writing was something I'd been passionate about since childhood. It was my way of expressing myself, but I had put it aside for so long."

Finding time for herself was a challenge, especially while raising two kids. Yet, Reecha found solace in the late hours of the night and early mornings. Reecha says, "Those quiet moments, when everyone else was asleep, became my creative time. I would sit at my laptop, often sacrificing sleep, just to get the stories in my head onto paper." But the struggle wasn't only in finding time. Reecha admits, "I had a lot of self-doubt. I wondered if I was chasing a dream that wasn't meant for me. But then I realised, the stories inside me were demanding to be told, and I couldn't ignore them anymore."

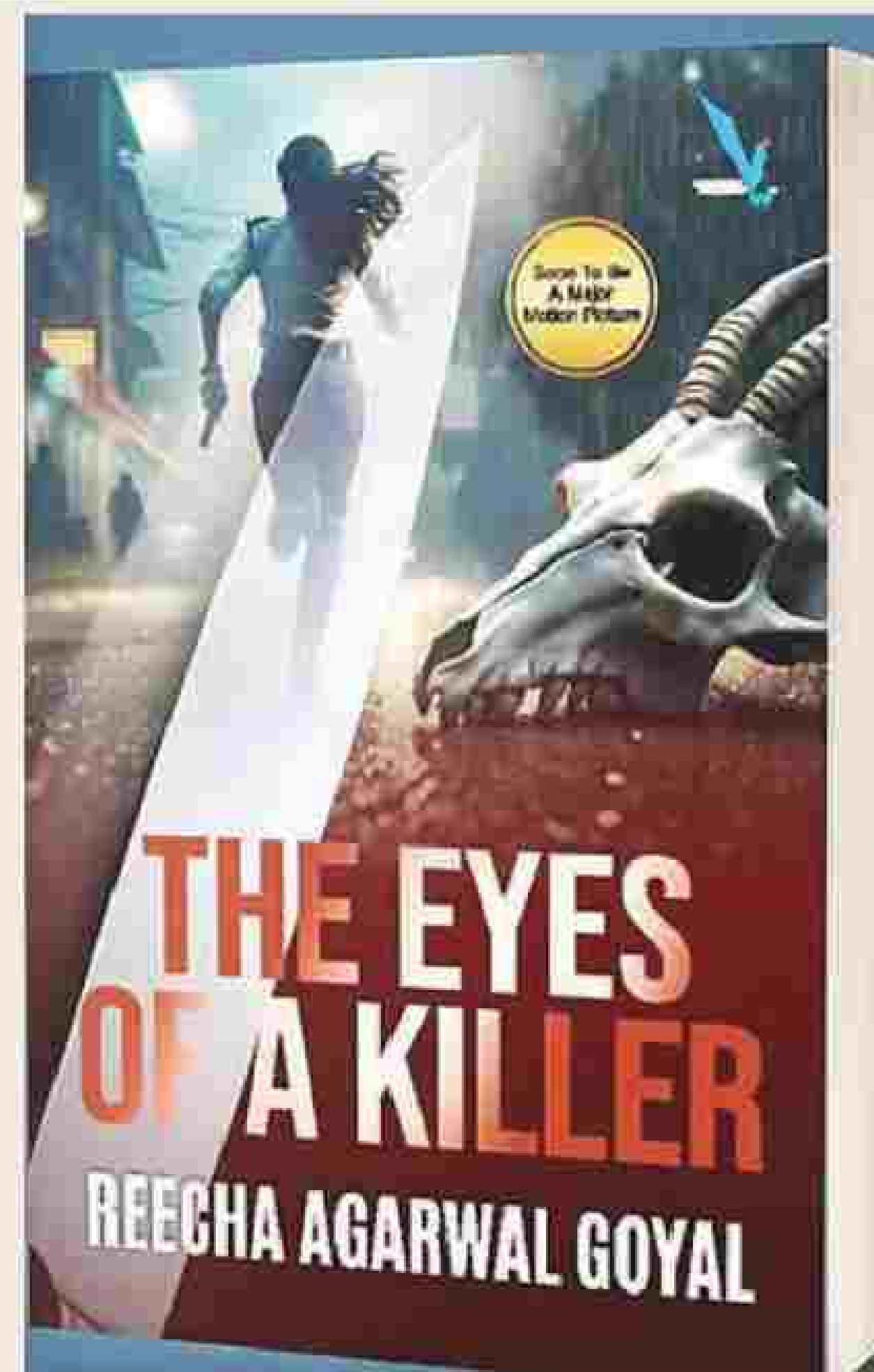
Her persistence paid off. Reecha's debut book, 'Such is Her Life', became an unexpected hit. The poetic narrative, which traces a woman's journey from cradle to grave, resonated deeply with readers. Reecha says, "When I saw how people connected with

it, I was blown away. I wrote it from a very personal place, so to see it reach so many hearts was both humbling and surreal."

With her newfound success, Reecha's life transformed. Invitations to literary festivals, book signings, and speaking engagements followed. "It was all so new to me," she recalls. "One day I was just a mother trying to write in the middle of the night, and the next, I was standing in front of audiences, talking about my journey. It was overwhelming in the best possible way."

Her success didn't stop with her first book. Reecha recently ventured into a new genre with 'The Eyes of a Killer', a crime thriller that explores themes of abuse, trafficking, and empowerment. "I wanted to push myself as a writer," she explains. "Writing a thriller was outside my comfort zone, but I felt compelled to tackle these difficult subjects. It's important to tell these stories, not just for entertainment but to bring awareness to the issues."

The novel's success has led to an even greater milestone—its adaptation for the



screen. "When I first heard that my book was going to be turned into a movie, I couldn't believe it," Reecha beams. "I wrote this story from my heart, and seeing it come to life in a new medium feels like a dream." She's heavily involved in the adaptation process, ensuring that the essence of her story remains intact. Reecha says, "It's so exciting to be part of the casting and production discussions. I want to make sure that the message of the book, the empowerment of the characters, stays true in the film."

For Reecha, this journey has been more than just about success; it's been about finding her voice and inspiring others. Reecha says, "There

were so many times I doubted myself, but I pressed on. I want other women, especially mothers, to know that their dreams are just as important as anyone else's. You don't have to choose between family and passion—you can do both."

Today, Reecha stands as a shining example of resilience and creativity. From the quiet confines of her home to the excitement of book tours and movie adaptations, she continues to inspire with her words and her journey. Reecha says, "I've realised that there's no limit to what you can achieve if you just keep going, even when it's hard. Dreams are attainable, no matter the circumstances."

PCOS awareness month

Tips for managing PCOS naturally

SHEELA KRISHNASWAMY

PCOS Awareness Month is celebrated in September to raise awareness and educate the public about Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), a condition affecting many women in India. Characterized by irregular periods, elevated levels of male hormones, and ovarian cysts, PCOS can lead to symptoms such as weight gain, acne, excessive hair growth, and fertility issues. To help manage these symptoms, Sheela Krishnaswamy, a seasoned Nutritionist and Wellness Consultant, shares practical advice emphasizing the importance of maintaining a well-balanced and clean diet, incorporating natural foods like almonds, leafy greens, pulses and whole grains, which provide essential nutrients and enhance overall body functioning and well-being.

Prioritize Balanced Meals: One of the most important steps in managing PCOS is maintaining a balanced diet rich in nutrient-dense foods like fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, whole grains, pulses, dals, and nuts such as almonds. Almonds are beneficial due to their healthy fats, protein, and fiber, which promote satiety, and aid in weight management. Additionally, almonds provide magnesium, a nutrient that plays a role in blood sugar control. In fact, the Indian Council of Medical Research, National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN) Dietary Guidelines for Indians also recognize nutritious nuts like almonds that can be consumed daily for good health.

Focus on Low Glycemic Index Foods: Opting for low glycemic index foods, like legumes, whole grains,



seeds, and nuts such as almonds, is essential for managing PCOS. Almonds play a vital role in lowering the blood sugar impact of carbohydrate-rich foods that they are eaten with, thereby helping to regulate fasting insulin levels. In fact, incorporating a handful of almonds into your daily diet not only helps control blood sugar but also supports weight management and reduces LDL cholesterol, all of which can help to alleviate PCOS symptoms and improve overall health.

Regular Physical Activity: Integrating regular exercise into your routine is crucial for managing PCOS. Engaging in activities such as brisk walking, swimming, playing a sport or yoga can help regulate weight and enhance insulin sensitivity, both of which are important for effectively managing PCOS symptoms.

Stay Hydrated: Drinking plenty of water is essential

for maintaining overall health. Proper hydration supports various bodily functions, including metabolism and digestion. Aim to drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water each day to help your body stay hydrated, which can alleviate symptoms such as bloating, and fatigue commonly associated with PCOS.

Stress Management: Managing stress is vital for managing PCOS, as elevated stress levels can exacerbate symptoms. Incorporate stress-reducing techniques into your routine, such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or mindful practices, to help keep stress levels under control and support overall well-being.

Seek the help of a healthcare professional (endocrinologist or gynaecologist) to help you manage PCOS and give you specific guidance. A qualified dietitian will be able to help you with your daily diet plan.

Tina Datta reveals her obsessions: Clouds, sun & mom



Television actress Tina Datta on Saturday delighted her fans by sharing nostalgic throw-

back glimpses from her unforgettable vacation in the Maldives. In her heartfelt post, she revealed her three greatest obsessions: the stunning clouds, the warm sun, and her beloved mother.

The diva, known for her captivating role in the show 'Uttaran', took to Instagram, where she has 4.7 million followers, to share a series of enchanting photos from her Maldives getaway.

In the mesmerising tropical paradise, Tina poses in a chic white co-ord set, her hair elegantly styled in a bun. The snapshots beautifully capture her enjoying

the serene blue sea alongside her mother, Madhumita Datta, highlighting the special moments they shared against the stunning backdrop of their idyllic surroundings.

The post is captioned as: "Meet my obsession- The (cloud emoji), the (sun emoji), and my mom... Maybe the sky is meant to teach us that we are beautiful in every shade #nature #sky #sea #sun"

Born in Kolkata, Tina, who is an avid yoga and pilates enthusiast, made her debut at the age of five with the show 'Sister Nivedita'.

She made her film debut as a child artist with the Bengali film 'Pita Maata Santan'.

Tina has been a part of Bengali films like 'Dus Number Bari', 'Chirodini Tumi Je Amar', 'Sagarkanya'. She also featured in Rituparno Ghosh's film 'Chokher Bali', alongside Aishwarya Rai.

She essayed the role of young Lalita in Vidya Balan and Saif Ali

Khan's movie 'Parineeta'.

Tina has been a part of shows like 'Durga', 'Fear Factor: Khattron Ke Khiladi 7', 'Daayan', and most recently 'Hum Rahe Na Rahe Hum'. The 32-year-old was also a part of the controversial reality show 'Bigg Boss 16', in which MC Stan emerged as the winner.

Shraddha Kapoor welcomes baby 'Stree' at her home

Bollywood diva Shraddha Kapoor, fresh off the success of her recently released horror comedy film 'Stree 2', shared an adorable update with her fans on Saturday, as she has welcomed a new pet.

The actress introduced her charming 'nanhi stree' named 'Small', adding a delightful new member to her family. With her vibrant spirit and love for animals, Shraddha's latest addition has already captured the hearts of her followers.

Taking to Instagram, Shraddha delighted her 93.1 million followers by sharing a series of heartwarming pictures featuring her new furry friend. In the photos, she wears a casual baby pink tee and black trousers, sitting on the floor while lovingly cradling her adorable pet, 'Small'.

Next to them, her other pet can be seen, albeit looking a bit less than thrilled about the new addition.

In the caption, she wrote: "Mere ghar aayi ek nanhi stree!!! Miliye 'Small' se. Humari nayi family member Meri dildaar dost @lizza_s6 ne is choti si khushi ko mujhe gift kiya. Ab ye hua na sabse best tareeka jashn manane ka... Woh toh alag baat hai ki is celebration mein ek koi hai jo kaafi na khush hai... Swipe karke dekho woh shaqs kaun hai!". The post is liked by Varun Dhawan and Ananya Panday. Ananya commented: "Small has become soooo big... post the chat pictures also!!!" Moreover, with 'Stree 2', Shraddha has become the first female lead to achieve such record-breaking success. 'Stree 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank' directed by Amar Kaushik, written by Niren Bhatt, and produced jointly by Maddock Films and Jio Studios, is the fifth installment in the Maddock Supernatural Universe and serves as the sequel to the 2018 movie 'Stree'.

The film stars Rajkummar Rao, Pankaj Tripathi, Abhishek Banerjee and Aparshakti Khurana. Meanwhile, Shraddha, who is the daughter of actor Shakti Kapoor, made her acting debut in the 2010 thriller 'Teen Patti', alongside Amitabh Bachchan, Ben Kingsley and R. Madhavan.

She essayed the role of Arohi in romantic musical 'Aashiqui 2' directed by Mohit Suri. The film starred Aditya Roy Kapur in the lead.

The beautiful diva has appeared in movies like 'Ek Villain', 'Haider', 'ABCD 2', 'Half Girlfriend', 'Haseena Parkar', 'Stree', 'Batti Gul Meter Chalu', 'Chhichhore', 'Street Dancer 3D', 'Baaghi 3', and 'Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar'.



Punish the guilty strongly for sacrilege at Tirumala

Sub: BOLD TALK - V Ramu Sarma - Get to the bottom of most sacrilegious act at Tirumala (Sept. 21, 2024). One should not play on the sentiments of the people who believe in the sacred Prasadam. One should not blame unnecessarily for the political mileage. It should be thoroughly investigated before making any allegations on the sacred prasadam. It is clear that any ingredients including ghee comes to Tirumala with proper lab reports and even after the TTD people also check three samples before approving. It looks like there is a perfect mechanism at Tirumala to check the adulterations. There is no way to enter the Tirumala with adulterated Ghee. The sample from where they have taken and tested in Gujarat. The Hyderabad has NIN and other national agencies to check such adulteration. On the other hand, the agency AR supplied the ghee ascertains its purity. We should not spread false propaganda to defame other political parties.

-Kanagiri SN Prasad, Hyderabad



the laboratory. The matter is of great concern that the Tirupati laddus are made of animal fat instead of ghee. Both Central and State governments need to protect the sanctity of the revered temple and thorough inquiry should be conducted and culprits should be punished severely if the allegations proved to be genuine.

Zakir Hussain, Kazipet

THE laddu prasadam of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala when subjected to chemical analysis seemed to have contained animal fat (tallow, fish oil, lard) of all other things; except pure 'ghee' to be used in the making of the sacred prasadam. The report announced by the TDP cannot be wrong as the TDP has been steadily raising the issue of gross mismanagement in the goings on at the Tirumala temple - from the appointment of the TTD chairman, who is the close relative of YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, and the diminishing quality in the annadanam and laddu prasadam. This leaves no scope for YSRCP to cover up this serious faux pas blatantly playing with Hindu sentiments; and Sanatan believers of the world, callously feeding the devotees with varieties of animal fat is despicable and nauseating. The Centre must look into the allegations and punish the guilty most severely.

- S Lakshmi, Hyderabad

THE adulteration of ghee used to make laddu in Tirupati temple has erupted into a massive row. Reports emerged that a testing lab had found the presence of "beef tallow", "lard" relating to pig fat, and "fish oil" in the ghee used to prepare the laddus. AP CM Chandrababu Naidu alleged that ghee contaminated by "animal fat" had been used to make the laddu during his predecessor Jagan Mohan Reddy's tenure but there is lack of clarity on what Reddy's role was in the alleged contamination. The temple management claimed that its ghee suppliers might have taken advantage of lack of in-house adulteration testing facility but did not come clean on who they might be and if they had a connection to Reddy. The lab called the Centre for Analysis and Learning in Livestock and Food (CALF) of the National Dairy Development Board had issued an important caveat with its report - that there can be chances of a false positive result in cases of overfeeding of cows with feeds rich in vegetable oils or milk technologically treated and so on. But this barely landed on the public consciousness given the heightened emotions. There are uncomfortable questions such as why a lab in Gujarat ran the tests when Hyderabad has venerated labs.

- N Sadhasiva Reddy, Washington

THE Lord of Seven Hills - Sri Venkateswara Swamy - is Sathyanarayana who brooks no injustice to his beloved devotees, when blatant adharm is seen to be happening at Tirumala temple. YS Jagan Mohan of YSRCP is squarely responsible for feeding Hindu devotees with varieties of animal products in the place ghee, in the Laddu Prasadam at Tirumala temple thus severely hurting the sentiments of innumerable Balaji bhakths across the world and in the country. This sacrilegious act on his part can never be condoned. Let the incident be a warning to all those who undertake the management of TTD. If the government is incapable of doing it; this must be handed over to the devotees to manage, as similar arguments are fast spreading in the country with regard to management of Hindu temples in the country.

- K R Parvathy, Mysuru

THE AP government has to lay more focus on ensuring qualitative laddu. It should consider steps like enhancing stricter quality control measures and checks on the ingredients used to prepare laddu. To check any adulteration, the TTD should pull up socks and conduct regular tests on the purity of ghee and other ingredients. The people concerned will work to improve the supply of chain management to ensure that only high-quality ingredients are used in the laddu preparation. The TTD will ensure transparency in its procurement and testing process to prevent any adulterations indeed.

Sridevi Tejaswari K, Kakinada

THERE several offerings to Tirupati Balaji, but laddu offering is the most revered among them. So, getting laddu and distribute it among friends and relatives of a devotee is the end of pilgrimage to Tirupati. But the recent remark made by none other than the AP Chief Minister that Laddu was adulterated by using non vegetarian ingredients in ghee like beef tallow, fish oil and pig lard has disturbed conscience of millions of devotees across the globe. It is a big blow on sentiments of devotees. It is better to constitute a judicial committee headed by a sitting judge. It must study why has the contractor agreed to supply cow ghee at ₹ 350 to ₹400 per litre as against market price of ₹1000? Why hasn't TTD got its own lab to test ingredients quality from time to time so far? The committee should recommend measures that reduce the government interference in day to day rituals of temples.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru, NTR dt

THE sentiments of Hindus are at stake. Why are we Hindus so tolerant and accommodative? If this were to happen with any other religious community, there would be widespread protests in our country by now. Even our religious leaders and prominent politicians have not raised their voice and have been silent. This revelation has opened yet another can of irregularities perpetrated under the YS Jagan rule in AP. Even after the report is made public, the YSRCP is accusing the TDP government of using it for political gains and is not owning up any accountability for such a heinous act. The former TTD Chairman should be questioned regarding the decision to stop procuring Nandini Cow Ghee from Karnataka.

Parimala G Tadas, Hyderabad

THE Naidu government in July this year is reported to have sent the ghee supplied by a firm in Dindigul for testing its quality. The Gujarat-based livestock laboratory NDDB CALF Ltd is reported to have confirmed that the ghee supplied contained animal fats. I am at a loss to understand why the purity of ghee was not properly tested by quality control wing of the temple? It is highly an atrocious act. Why didn't Naidu make this allegation public two months ago? He too is a Hindu and should have acted instantly. Jagan doesn't want Naidu to politicise the issue. There seems to be something fishy. Anyhow the Hindus stand insulted and assaulted. A high-level CBI probe monitored by the SC should be constituted to find out the truth and the guilty should be punished for the sanctity of the temple is at stake. Posting of only Hindus in famous temples like Tirumala should be made compulsory. Hindu temples should be managed by Hindu committees as is done by the Muslim and Christians in India.

Snavana Ramachandran, Chennai

THOUGH the timing of Chandrababu Naidu's revelations raises suspicion that the issue is being exploited for political gains, still the issue cannot be buried after the facts of inferior ghee containing animal fats coming into the open undermining Hindu traditions and violating Agama Shastra rituals. By and large, when Jagan's faulty administration of TTD was relentlessly criticised not only by TDP but other parties, this delicate issue needs a high-level probe to unearth the truth and persons involved in the shady activities to be followed by stringent action against all guilty who indulged in sacrilegious act that is unforgivable in order to preserve the sanctity of the abode of Lord Venkateshwara and restore the confidence of devotees.

In the final analysis, ideally, it is justified that religious institutions like the TTD and temples across the country be freed from government control and similarly time has also come for establishment of 'Sanatana Dharma Rakshana Board' at the national level to look into the issues of temples by overseeing their functioning.

- K R Srinivasan, Secunderabad



Is One Nation, One Poll a game-changer?

FORMER Chief Election Commissioner Shahabuddin Yaqoob Quraishi has thrown light on the facts that the mandate of simultaneous elections all over the nation is not flawless in the sense that panchayat elections are put off and over 30 lakh representatives are ignored and similarly it is a colossal waste of money that 40 lakh EVMs are required in addition. The government banks on former President Ramnath Kovind's recommendations in this regard, but is it beyond comprehension that RSS/BJP has no vested interests and unfortunately Kovind was voted to power at their mercy. The opposition is ignored on account of its lack of required numbers and the merit is not a concern to the treasury benches.

Right from the perspective of recent elections, the BJP would have lost its very survival in AP had they not got into alliance with TDP and JSP tieup and even the arch-rivals against saffron party on the count of non-secular stigma, leave alone the practicality, the voters were bound to vote for them with a heavy heart and it was the only option like MLA and MP got to be voted in bunch while NOTA has not gained that momentum. Maybe, this is a long run benefit for the saffron party not to lose the 4th term.

Dr T Ramadas, Visakhapatnam

THE Centre has proposed 'one nation one election' pattern wherein one electoral process will elect representatives to Parliament, state legislatures, and local self-governing bodies. It will take numerous constitutional amendments to actualise the proposal. But, does the Modi government have neces-

sary numbers in Parliament for this? The current practice of electing various democratic entities through separate elections takes prolonged honoring of Election Commission's code of conduct, compromising effective governance, as important welfare measures will need to be placed on hold. Moreover, separate electoral processes will add to poll expenses. Promulgation of 'one nation, one poll' would logically result in drastic reduction in poll-related expenses, which could be utilised for people-friendly welfare measures, expeditiously initiated due to an abbreviated code of conduct.

Confidence of the opposition, which sees red in the Centre's proposal fearing denudation of federalism, must be boosted through deliberation and consultation.

Dr George Jacob, Kochi

THE future of our democracy will be determined by whether the policy of holding simultaneous elections now passes the test of Parliament, constitutional courts or public opinion. The notion of simultaneous elections was never part of the original constitutional scheme that was set up when India became independent. There was no mention of simultaneous elections, even when the Constituent Assembly discussed extraordinary powers - under Emergency Provisions of the Constitution - providing the President of India with the authority to dissolve elected state governments. It is only fair to conclude that simultaneous elections did not seem logical, prudent or in consonance with our democratic architecture, even for a fledgling republic in 1950.

Calicut Krishnan Subramania Iyer, Bengaluru

A tribute to MS Amma

16TH September marked the 108th birth anniversary of the musical prodigy M.S. Subbulakshmi, or MS Amma as she was and is lovingly referred to by her fans and rasikas (a fan, supporter and connoisseur). She is a legend who re-defined the stage with her ragas and saris.



MS blue is always a top-seller in kanjivarams across seasons and is almost like a timeless, nostalgic weave people come back to with a sense of pride and to carry it as a souvenir in memory of the legend in their wardrobes too.

Even today, many temples and homes around the world including mine wake up to her voice of Suprabhatam, Vishnu Sahasranamam and the numerous chants and kritis that she has lent her voice to.

Muthu Chetty - a Kanjivaram weaver - is credited with weaving the original MS Blue saree for the legend.

MS Amma was known to be "Dressed to the T" at all times, as if ready for a concert. She stopped dyeing her hair as she grew older, but the flowers in the hair, Kohl-rimmed eyes, double Jager diamond nose rings, diamond earrings, red bindi and the kumkumam remained. Truly, a woman who defined her own signature style in music and fashion, and did not try to fit in!

MS Subbulakshmi is an icon on so many fronts - a fearless woman who conquered the stage with her talent, stage presence and her commitment to her art!

On 23rd Oct 1966, MS brought the UN to standstill followed by a standing ovation with her rendition of Mairim Bhajatha, a song on universal love and peace.

- Anandambal Subramaniam, Chennai

Culling wild animals for humanity sake

CULLING elephants (for us here in India they are iconic and majestic animals) and other wild animals to feed citizens left hungry by severe drought and famine in Namibia and Zimbabwe has got a lot of international attention and a mixed reaction. Using wildlife, in a manner amounting to cruelty, to alleviate hunger in a part of the world is a sad commentary on the state of the world. The failure of crops in the South African countries and the failure of the international community to supply foodgrains to the needy in the drought-hit areas do not justify the mindless mass butchering of elephants,

hippos, buffaloes, impalas, blue wildebeests, zebras and elands (antelopes). Supporters of culling of wild animals try to justify it by citing man-animal conflict and the need to decongest wildlife parks. There must be better ways to deal with them. The 'overpopulation' problem of wild animals cannot be looked at in isolation from human encroachment of their natural habitats. Botswana has the world's largest elephant population; it also suffers from severe drought. Still, it has not chosen to slaughter its elephants to provide meat to its people. Drought-stricken people need food for survival. But couldn't it have been made

available to them without culling wildlife and offending our ecological sensitivity and sensibility? We are aware of what humans would do in the face of acute scarcity of food. In the Gold Rush, Charlie Chaplin and his starving friend Big Jim were eating a cooked shoe. Lord Alfred Tennyson's description of nature as 'red in tooth and claw' reflects reality and 'sums up our modern understanding of natural election'. Still as an advanced species endowed with intelligence and sagacity, we have a moral obligation to conserve wildlife. Don't we?

G David Milton, Maruthancode, TN



BENGALURU ONLINE

Over 200,000 seedballs made for reforestation projects across India

BENGALURU: Infosys Foundation, the philanthropic and CSR arm of Infosys, has kicked off its 'Month of Gracious Giving' initiative this September across Infosys Development Centers in India. As part of this inaugural initiative, Infosys employees participated to produce over 200,000 seedballs in an hour. These seedballs will be used for reforestation projects across more than 20 locations in India, helping restore native flora, promote biodiversity, and support local ecosystems.

A wide variety of native plant seeds such as Neem, Tamarind, Sandalwood, Teak, and Mahogany, will be planted in designated reforestation areas across India, including Bannerghatta National Park in Bengaluru, Utkalmani Gopalbandhu Ashram Grounds in Bhubaneswar, and the Yeoor Hills in Mumbai.

This record-setting achievement marks the start of a month-long series of employee-focused volunteering activities at Infosys dedicated to community engagement and environmental sustainability.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

India may miss 2030 child health targets

NUSHAIBA IQBAL

INDIA is likely to miss the 2030 deadline for achieving sustainable development goals (SDG) related to children's health – reducing the prevalence of stunting, and under-five and neonatal mortality, according to the Goalkeepers 2024 report released by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The report is based on estimates from the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation, United Nations Children's Fund and the World Bank. Malnutrition is the most pervasive health crisis facing the world, and is the cause of half of all childhood deaths in the world, the report says. This will only be aggravated by changing climate, it added.

"Stunting [where a child is short for his/her age] is a proxy for overall cognitive and physical underdevelopment," according to a September 2017 report by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, as IndiaSpend reported in January 2018. "Stunted children will be less healthy and productive for the rest of their lives, and countries with high rates of stunting will be less prosperous."

Increased funding for nutrition and innovative solutions such as fortifying food, providing better prenatal supplements and investing in agriculture could help the world to meet the SDGs like reducing child mortality, infant mortality and maternal

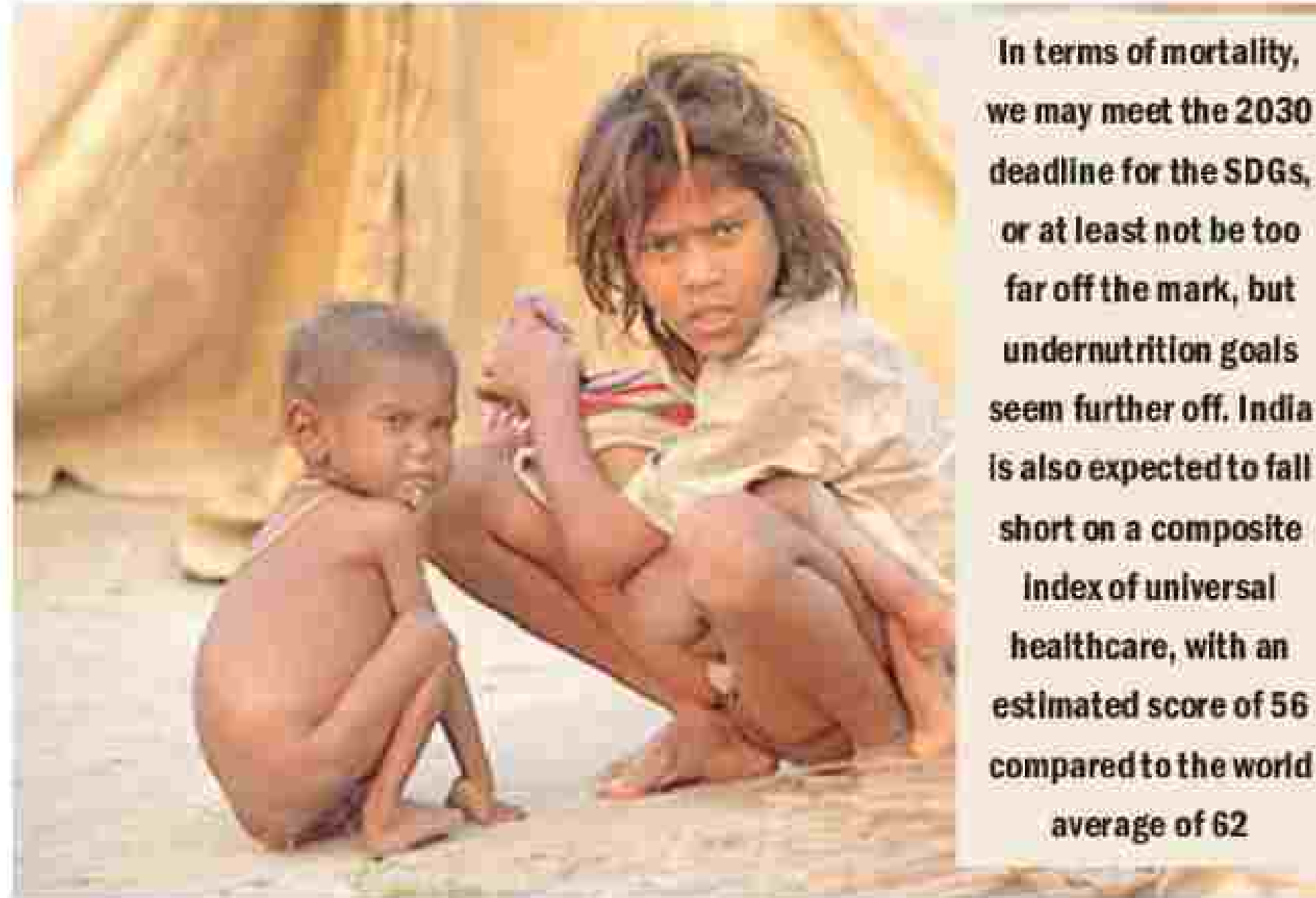
mortality, said the report.

Further, India is on track to meet SDG targets on reducing maternal mortality, and has already met the target on reducing malaria incidence, data from the report show.

Estimated improvements not enough to meet targets: Nine years after world leaders agreed to the 2030 deadline to end poverty, fight inequality and stop climate change, the world is off track, said the report. As of 2023, India's neonatal mortality i.e., deaths within 28 days of birth is 22 deaths per 1,000 live births. By 2030, this is estimated to decline to 18 deaths per 1,000 live births, 50% more than the target of 12. Globally, by 2030, neonatal mortality is expected to be 15.

Similarly, India's early childhood mortality or deaths within five years is estimated to decline from 35 deaths per 1,000 live births to 29, which is 16% more than the target of 25. The global average is estimated to fall to 31 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Worldwide, 23% of children will be stunted in 2030, about 1.5 times the target of 15%. India's figure is expected to be 35%. "India's targeted approach to improving child health through nutrition programs and vaccinations provides a hopeful outlook," a spokesperson for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation told IndiaSpend, adding



In terms of mortality, we may meet the 2030 deadline for the SDGs, or at least not be too far off the mark, but undernutrition goals seem further off. India is also expected to fall short on a composite index of universal healthcare, with an estimated score of 56 compared to the world average of 62

that initiatives like Mission Shakti 2.0 are at the forefront of combating malnutrition, reaching over 95 million beneficiaries.

With more drought and heat, child malnutrition to increase: Worldwide, an additional 40 million children will be stunted and 28 million will be wasted – where a child has lower-than-expected weight for height – by 2050 because of climate change, found the report. "The kids who survive malnutrition never truly escape it," Bill Gates, co-chair of the Foundation, wrote in the foreword to the report.

A 1% loss in adult height due to childhood stunting is associated with a 1.4% loss in economic productivity, according to World Bank estimates. Stunted children

earn 20% less as adults compared to non-stunted individuals, we had reported. Further, experts say that early childhood malnutrition increases the risk of developing non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and heart disease in adult life, as IndiaSpend reported in October 2019.

"In terms of mortality, we may meet the 2030 deadline for the SDGs, or at least not be too far off the mark, but undernutrition goals seem further off," said Dipa Sinha, professor of economics at Ambedkar University in Delhi.

In the 90 days between June and August 2024, about 19.5 million Indians experienced above-average temperatures for at least

61 days. Children are vulnerable to climate change even before they are born: Climate-related hazards can increase the risk of low birth weight, increase the risk of death due to air pollution and extreme heat, and intensify infectious disease like malaria. Climate change will also increase food insecurity and contamination.

"Drought-like situations have impacted agriculture, leading to compromised nutrition for children," said Subhendu Bhattacharjee, Director, Research and Knowledge Exchange and Child Rights and You. "They are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat because their bodies heat up faster and cool down slower than adults."

Lack of nutrition and the risk of contracting TB are interrelated. The lack of nutrition makes a person more susceptible to TB, while having TB increases the chance of malnutrition. Malnourished patients also find it harder to recover from TB.

India's containment of TB is more or less on par with the 2% fall in the incidence rate globally, we had reported in May 2023. However, the decline is well below the 10% drop the World Health Organization had targeted to be achieved by 2025, and the 17% decline projected for the following decade, to end TB by 2035.

The SDG sets a target of universal access to family planning. India has a 76% demand for family planning, but it also has a 9% unmet need for family planning, according to the National Family Health Survey, 2019-21 (NFHS-5). Unmet need reveals the gap between a woman's reproductive intentions and her contraceptive behaviour. The gap could be caused by lack of access to contraceptives, but it could also reflect cultural, social and religious beliefs that forbid contraception or do not allow women to take independent decisions about family planning, as we reported in July 2019.

Women bear the brunt of contraception in India, as IndiaSpend reported in 2020. Female sterilisation

is the most popular form of contraception in India, we reported in July 2024. While two in three women reported using any form of family planning methods in NFHS-5, more than half of them – or 37.9% of married women in the reproductive age group – chose sterilisation. India is also expected to fall short on a composite index of universal healthcare, with an estimated score of 56 compared to the world average of 62.

Need to fund health, nutrition

Undernutrition causes \$3 trillion in productivity loss by stunting children's physical and cognitive capabilities, according to the report. Malnutrition costs low income countries 3-16% of their gross domestic product, which is equivalent to a permanent 2008-level recession for them.

More economists should track malnutrition because poor nutrition can hamper economic growth, the report said.

Covid-19 may have undone decades of progress on childhood nutrition, as we reported in December 2020. In January 2022, we reported that India under-spends on nutrition.

About 40% of all children in India live in severe food poverty, meaning that they eat two or fewer food groups out of the eight recommended.

India, along with Ethio-

opia, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania, can protect 109 million people from being stunted by increasing dairy productivity, found the report. Other solutions being implemented worldwide include double fortifying salt and other pantry staples and providing supplements that contain essential vitamins and minerals to pregnant women.

"Relying on fortification is a piecemeal approach. For sustainable improvement in nutrition we need more comprehensive interventions. Wages and livelihoods affect stunting much more than supplements and fortified food," said Sinha.

More recent research suggests that the gut microbiome can help with absorption of nutrients, according to the report. "Studies have found that providing pregnant women with micronutrient supplements can help babies gain additional weight and develop healthier gut microbiomes, preventing malnutrition and improving overall health outcomes," explained the spokesperson from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

IndiaSpend has written to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on the success of initiatives aimed at reducing child mortality, HIV incidence, TB incidence and the inclusion of UNICEF's multiple micronutrient supplements in the antenatal care programme. (Courtesy: indiaspend.org)

Challenges on path to a developed India

TEJ SINGH KARDAM

THE health of any complex system, whether the human body or a nation's economy, can't be determined by its size, what matters is the shape it is in. GDP growth has become the dominant measure of the health of all economies. Gross Domestic Product is total market value of goods and services produced by a country's economy during a specified period of time, including all final goods and services.

India is going to become a developed country within a decade or so as our rising GDP trends show. But there are certain impediments that need to be addressed towards realising a developed India.

Inequality
Economist Javan Jose Thomas said that lacklustre record of India's development strategy in the early decades after independence was not on account of the government doing too much in the area of technology building, but because the government couldn't intervene effectively to ensure social developments. Independent India didn't implement a successful programme of land reform. Ownership of assets continues to be very low among the socially backward communities, led them to disadvantages due to the lack of assets that translated into hurdles in acquiring education, and also the country under-invested in basic education for the masses. This consequently resulted in inequalities in the social spheres and better paying jobs going more to the social groups who have had greater access to higher education.

Economic growth
The persistence of inequalities has negatively impacted industrial and economic growth in India. Domestic demand has been lopsided, coming as it does largely from the upper income classes of the population. This has slowed down the growth of manufacturing of high-quality, mass consumption goods. In contrast with the East Asian countries like Japan and China, where by 1950s itself, land reforms and other measures had created a relatively egalitarian social structure, which formed the



basis for progressive economic and social changes in the later years. After independence, in the early decades, India's efforts in building IITs, IIMs, establishment of industrial production like steel, fertiliser, drug production etc., with state support was the right decision. The country should reinstate such efforts, if it has to stand a chance in fast growing economic fields.

Unaccounted ecosystem
The real economy of a nation includes its natural capital assets - all of the gifts from nature that we don't have to produce - are immensely valuable but not marketed, ecosystem services provide us with those assets. These services include climate control, water supply, storm protection, recreation etc. These natural assets have been estimated to contribute significantly more to the human well-being than all national GDP combined. But we are overlooking these contributions which has led to massive depletion of these assets.

Uneconomic growth
We are in the state of uneconomic growth. An ecological economist, Herman Daly is of the view that the country is increasing production at the expense of resources and well-being. The decline in well-being, associated with extended economic growth to arise as a result of the social and environmental sacrifices made necessary by growing encroachment on the ecosystem, is uneconomic and detrimental in long term.

Unemployment
A group of economists have mentioned that the country is facing serious problem of unemployment. Being developed is not enough, the wealth needs to be well dis-

tributed. Another economist mentioned that the organized sector is mechanized and automated and generates only few jobs. This resulted 94 percent of the labourforce is in unorganized sector, largely working at low wages. On eShram portal, 30 crore have been registered for employment in November 2023, and about 1.2 crore are new entrants for the jobs every year. The growth of organized sector at the expense of the unorganized sector results in rising unemployment.

Jobless growth
The country's GDP is increasing, but employment growth rate doesn't, it means we are having jobless growth. The employment challenge can no longer be met only through higher GDP growth, it has to be in consonance with the well-being of the whole society.

According to the First Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, Gita Gopinath, to make India the third largest economy by 2027, there is a need to create 148 million jobs by 2030, revamp higher education and improve skills of workforce. She emphasised the need to undertake land reforms, improve ease of doing business and the regulatory environment, implement labour code etc. in addition, to identifying key thrust areas and states and central governments work more diligently to implement growth-oriented policies for moving ahead on the vision of a developed nation.

According to the IMF, GDP of the US and China is in the range of thirty and twenty trillion dollars, which makes half of the world's GDP. Whereas Germany falls in the range of six and that of Japan is more than four trillion dollars. In-

India presently has skill mismatch in the workforce and needs a workforce which is much more skilled and has much higher level of education. There is need to take up land reform, a way forward to reduce social inequalities and to ensure women safety. One of the most important aspects the government should look into, to protect and conserve our natural assets

dia's GDP is nearing four trillion dollars. But India is the fastest growing economy in the world having overall growth rate of 7% and will be surpassing Japan within next few years, to become the third largest economy. There is need to keep the momentum of increased growth rate so that per-capita incomes in the country reaches on par with advanced countries.

India needs to revamp industrial growth, increase manufacturing, with the state support like the US and China are ravishing government support for their industries. This will help to reduce unemployment problem to a larger extent, including increasing export and reducing import, while reducing import tariff to become player in global supply chain.

In education, especially higher education should be made accessible to all including the dispossessed. The employment opportunities need to be provided based on their qualifications. India presently has skill mismatch in the workforce and needs a workforce which is much more skilled and has much higher level of education. There is need to take up land reform, a way forward to reduce social inequalities and to ensure women safety. One of the most important aspects the government should look into, to protect and conserve our natural assets. There is need to have space for advancement in technology but it should not be tilting the ground to favour automation, instead must develop safety nets and social security for its workforce.

To become a developed nation India needs to have economic growth, inclusive of all the important aspects which improve living standards of most of the population of the country, with a fair thought that developed nation is one which provides everyone with basic needs and the possibility of dignified life.

Exploring enchanting realm of Paris

VANAM JWALA NARASIMHA RAO

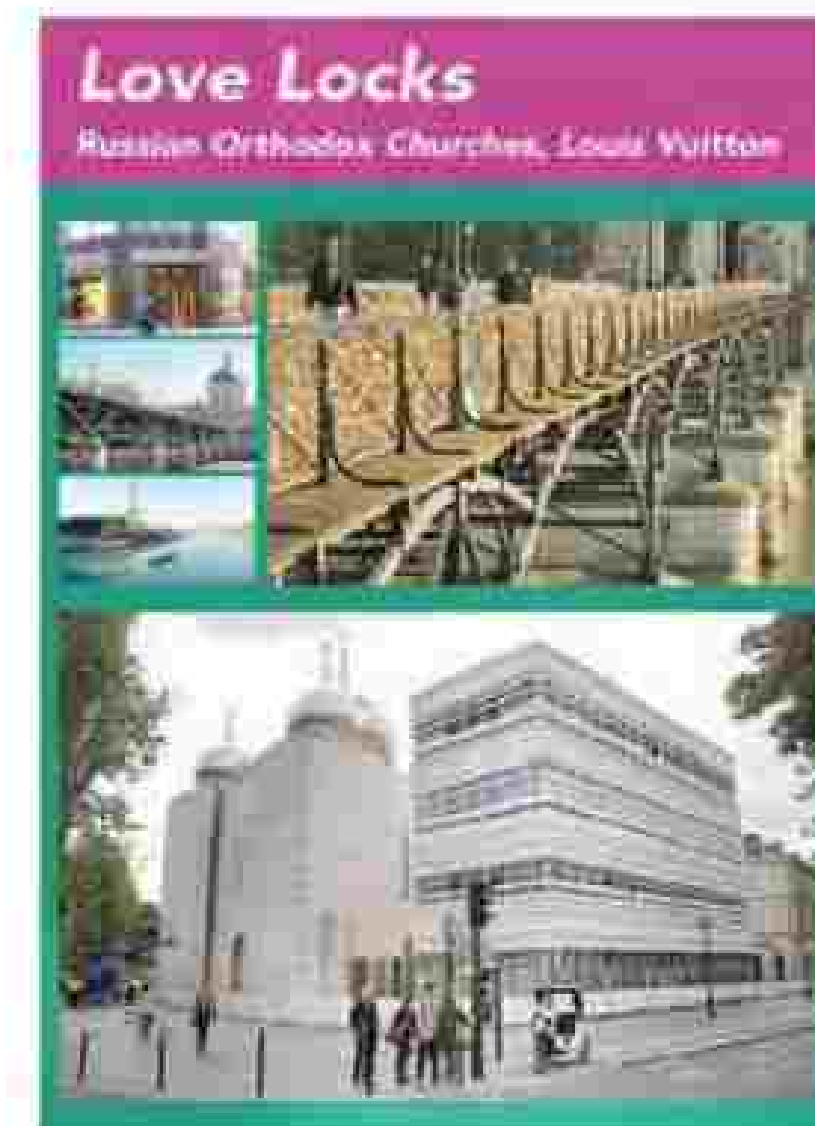
One of the 30 bridges which is a pedestrian bridge on the 'Seine River', the lifeblood of Paris, the 'Pont des Arts' is famous for the 'Love Lock Tradition' which became quite famous in Paris. It is a very interesting and human interest belief, where couples attach padlocks to a bridge and throw away the key as a symbol of their everlasting love. Over a period, the 'Pont des Arts Pedestrian Bridge' was covered with thousands of locks, turning it into a kind of monument to romance, but in the process, the weight of these locks began to damage the bridge, leading to safety concerns. A decade ago, in 2015, authorities removed the locks and replaced the bridge's railings with glass panels to prevent further damage. Despite this, the tradition continued in other locations, and Paris is still full of romantic spots.

The Sacre-Coeur Catholic Church area located on Montmartre Hill, the highest point in Paris, became another popular location for couples to attach love locks to railings and fences around the church contributing to the city's romance culture. Sacre-Coeur Basilica is a major landmark known for its stunning white-domed architecture and panoramic views of Paris. It was built between 1875-1914 as a symbol of national reconciliation after the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune.

Montmartre is a picturesque place in Paris, known for its rich artistic history, charming streets, and stunning views of the city, and once home to famous artists like Picasso and Van Gogh. The reason for the presence of love locks in this area is largely due to its romantic and scenic appeal. The Church itself is a major landmark that attracts many visitors, making it a natural spot for the love lock tradition to take root. The Church is noted for its Romanesque-Byzantine style, expansive mosaics, and the vast piazza in front, which offers one of the best viewpoints in the city.

Another interesting place we passed through was the 'Pont de l'Alma Tunnel', the tragic site where Princess Diana died in a car crash in August 1997. Located near the Seine, the tunnel has become a somber point of reflection for visitors. Above the tunnel, the 'Flame of Liberty' a full-sized replica of the Statue of Liberty's torch, originally a gift from the United States, has become an unofficial memorial for Diana, where people leave flowers, messages, and tributes in her memory.

Paris hosts several Russian Orthodox churches, each with its own significance. These churches reflect the rich cultural heritage and historical presence of the Russian Orthodox community in Paris, each contributing to the city's diverse spiritual and architectural landscape. 'Saint-Alexandre-Nevisky' is built to serve the Russian aristocracy, Orthodox and diplomatic community in the city. It features 'Ornate Onion Domes and intricate Frescoes.' 'Russe de la Sainte-Trinite', 'Church 'de la Protection-de-la-Mere-de-Dieu', 'Saint-Serge-de-Radonezje', and 'Chapel of the Russian Orthodox Church' are the other churches of Russian architectural style. The 'Ritz Paris' with its elegance, opulence, and high society is one of the most iconic and luxurious hotels in the world, located in the heart of Paris. The hotel has hosted royalty,



Montmartre is a picturesque place in Paris, known for its rich artistic history, charming streets, and stunning views of the city, and once home to famous artists like Picasso and Van Gogh. Paris also hosts several Russian Orthodox churches, each with its own significance. The city is a global fashion capital, home to some of the most luxurious shopping centers in the world

celebrities, and artists over the years, with its lavish suites, legendary bar, where Hemingway was a frequent guest. Paris is equally renowned for its charming wayside restaurants, often referred to as 'Bistros' or 'Brasseries' that have been in operation for decades, typically adorned with outdoor seating, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere where locals and tourists alike can enjoy a leisurely meal and variety of French classics like croissants, escargots, and Frech Fries.

While Parisians generally welcome tourists as they contribute to the city's economy and cultural exchange, there appears to be a preference for a balanced flow of visitors. Popular tourist areas can become crowded, leading to occasional frustration among locals. And, hence, the city has been working on managing tourism sustainably, promoting less crowded areas and encouraging responsible tourism practices, reflecting Paris's unique lifestyle.

Paris is a global fashion capital, home to some of the most luxurious shopping centers in the world. On the way we saw, 'Louis Vuitton', the largest high-end flagship store in Paris, a symbol of luxury and fashion, an architectural masterpiece, blending modern design with traditional elegance, offering an extensive collection of the brand's iconic bags, luggage, accessories, and clothing, and providing a premium shopping experience for fashion enthusiasts and luxury seekers from around the globe. There is always a long queue to enter the store. The others in Paris are: Le Bon Marche, Galleries Lafayette, Printemps etc. are famous shopping streets.

We passed through the historic 'Le Marais' district, which is the heart of the Jewish community in Paris. It is home to numerous Jewish shops, restaurants, and temples. Yet another interesting place is the 'Le Marais', a central hub for the 'LGBTQ+ Community' (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) known for its lively gay-friendly atmosphere, with numerous

bars, clubs, and cafes. Close to this in the 'Les Halles' area also a number of LGBTQ+ friendly establishments are there. Similarly, 'Montmartre' area has a historical association with the LGBTQ+ community. Paris generally welcomes diverse neighborhoods and communities.

Typically, Paris City has a 'Famous Prostitution Area'. Historically, 'Pigalle Area' particularly around Boulevard de Clichy, has a reputation for its adult entertainment venues and has been a focal point for discussions about sex work in Paris, and has been known for its association with sex work and nightlife. Pigalle retains some of its historical character, while ensuring that the area remains safe and welcoming for all residents and visitors.

Paris streets by and large remained narrow due to historical preservation and it is said that widening would disrupt the historical and architectural integrity of many neighborhoods. The city's planning focuses on preserving the character of its historic districts, which often means maintaining existing street layouts rather than expanding them. The close alignment of buildings along streets that were designed before the advent of modern urban planning, helps create a dense, walkable urban environment. Driving or walking through Paris, it is seen that the 'Road Traffic and Parking Discipline' is unique.

To reduce road traffic and pollution, various measures were taken, such as expanding pedestrian zones, implementing car-free days, and promoting use of public transport and bicycles. Paris has limited parking spaces and enforces orderly parking practices to manage space efficiently. Double parking or zigzag parking is rare. Paris City has low use of two-wheelers unlike other cities. The strict parking regulations discourage the use of scooters and motorcycles, as finding parking can be challenging. It is a compact city making walking and cycling convenient and practical, and encourages pedestrian and cyclist mobility. Dedicated bike lanes and pedestrian zones are seen.

Paris is famous for its old-looking apartments with their grand facades, that open directly onto the streets, wrought-iron balconies, high ceilings, etc. These buildings were constructed before modern zoning laws, leading to a blend of residential and commercial uses. Their value can vary significantly depending on the location, though they still offer the charm of 'Parisian Architecture' reflecting the neighborhood's prestige, proximity to landmarks, and the level of renovation the apartments have undergone.

Their design fosters a lively, street-level environment, encouraging interaction between residents, businesses, and visitors, and promoting a sense of community and vibrancy, with shops, cafes contributing to the city's lively street life. However, Street vending and pavement shops are regulated tightly in Paris to maintain order and aesthetics. The city has strict rules governing where vendors can set up, leading to fewer such shops. Most commercial activities are concentrated in designated areas such as markets and shopping districts rather than on the pavements. This is the 'Cultural, Historical, and Artistic Richness of Paris' (Dispatch from Amsterdam)

We wander for distraction but we travel for fulfillment
- Hillaire Belloc

Different Strokes

Telangana Navya Nataka: Instilling a Sense of Discipline, Art, Devotion

KAUSALYA RACHAVELPULA

The Telangana Navya Nataka Samiti Competition, a prestigious event in the realm of classical arts, has nurtured discipline, artistry, and devotion for nearly 50 years. With participants showcasing diverse Indian art forms, the competition instills perfection in each performer, while preserving cultural heritage and fostering national integration.

A Legacy of Artistry

For nearly half a century, the Telangana Navya Nataka Samiti has conducted a prestigious competition that serves as a beacon of discipline, artistry, and dedication. Next year marks the 50th Telangana competition, a testament to the organizers' enduring passion for the classical arts.

A Diverse Showcase of Cultural Traditions

The competition features participants from across India's rich cultural landscape, including Kuchipudi, Kathak, Bharata Natyam, Carnatic Vocal, Hindustani music, Carnatic violin, and mridangam. Unique to this competition is its strict adherence to a syllabus prescribed by the Telangana Nataka Samiti. Each performance is judged live, with senior dancers allotted 30 minutes, juniors 15 minutes, and sub-juniors 10 minutes. Specific dance pieces, such as Padamu, Javali, and Ashtapadi, are prepared, but judges may only request one, testing both preparation and spontaneity.

The Bhama Kalapam Challenge

A standout feature is the requirement for a 30-minute Bhama Kalapam performance, where dancers must embody Satya Bhama throughout without breaking character—a true test of devotion to the art form. The competition has seen legends like Junior NTR, Priya Sisters, and Radha-



Raja Reddy begin their journey here, showcasing the rich talent that emerges from this rigorous event.

A Visionary Leader's Insight

Vemaraju Vijay Kumar, President of NNS, shared, "I grew up watching my father, IAS cadre, Commissioner, who was passionate about the arts and started this. After 40 years with the Department of Atomic Energy, I recognize the vital support from donors and sponsors for the Navya Nataka Samiti. Our commitment to excellence has allowed us to thrive for nearly half a century. We connect with the youth in a family-like atmosphere, and this year, we've welcomed around 385 competitors, showcasing a remarkable increase in participation."

Cultural Preservation and National Integration

"The competition is more than a contest—it is a movement of cultural preservation," emphasised Vijay Kumar, noting its role in promoting national integration through traditional North and South Indian art forms. Over the years, organizers have formed a close-knit family, with participants hailing from diverse regions like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Bangalore.

Commitment to Excellence

Strict judging criteria reflect the Academy's commitment to preserving the purity and perfection of classical Indian dance. Ananda UVL, Chairperson of NNS, a former journalist and classical dancer, serves as



one of the judges. She emphasised the importance of high standards: "A flawless performance is essential. The discipline instilled here sets the foundation for future artists."

The Role of Detail in Performance

Madhumathi Kulkarni, a key connoisseur, highlighted the significance of detail in judging: "Candidates are evaluated on every aspect, from lost ornaments to dressing style and expressions. Everything must be flawless to keep the audience engaged. Our competition's uniqueness lies in its syllabus, item length, live music, and the large number of competitors."

A Legacy of Support and Inspiration

Punja Vijay Kumar's commitment to dance extends beyond his family. He has been honoured for his extraordinary work with specially-abled children, particularly training a deaf and mute child named Lakshmi. Kumar's son, Bhuvaneshwar, exemplifies this legacy, having won second prize in the 2017 edition of the competition. With his outstanding performances, Bhuvaneshwar is confident in his chances of success this year. "Never leave our roots; dance is life," he advises his children.

The Transformative Power

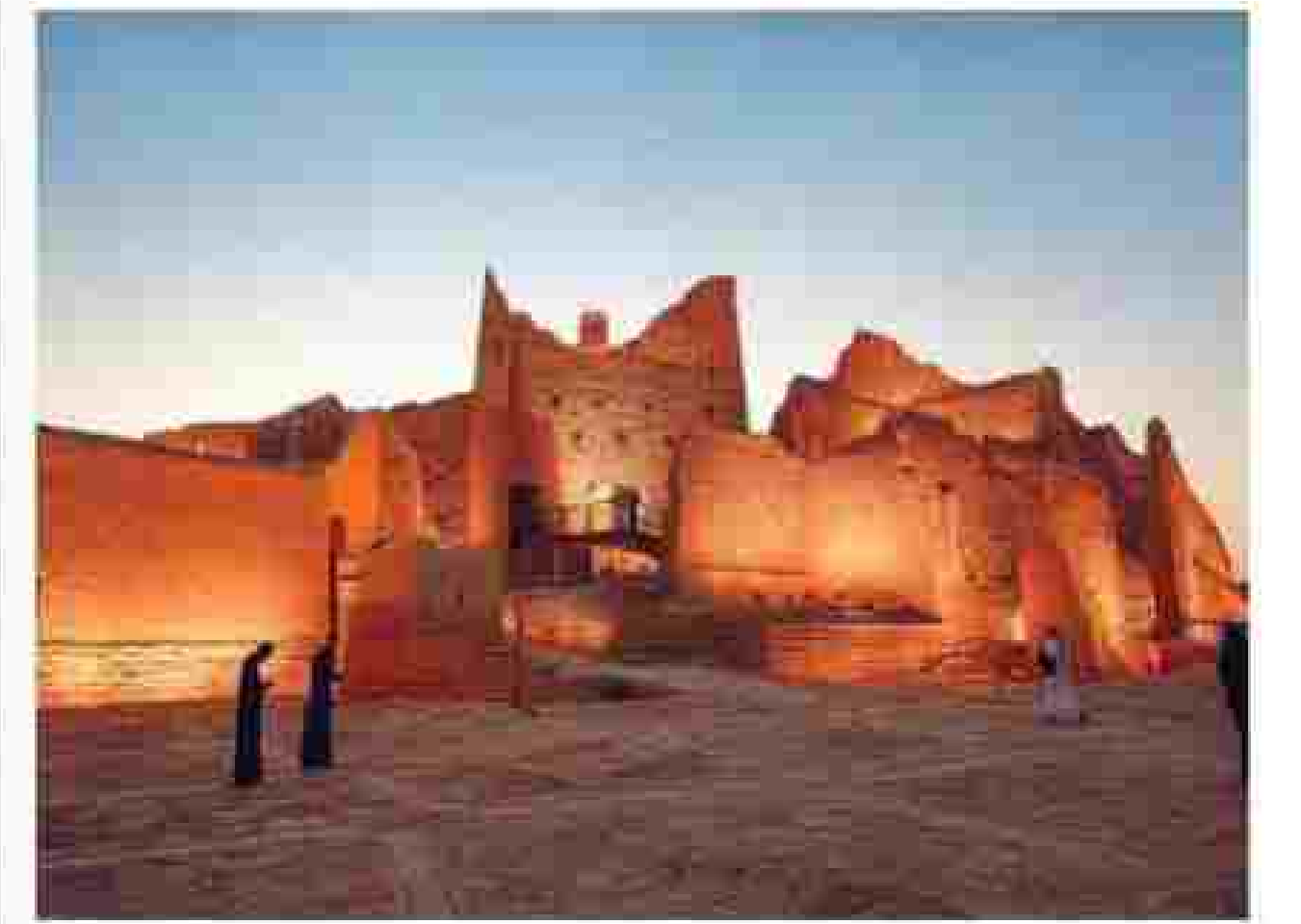
of the Arts

The Telangana Navya Natya Samiti stands as a testament to the passion for the art form shared by all organizers. Each child performs with intense focus and passion, often accompanied by nervousness. While we see apprehension before they step onto the stage, that fear dissipates as they become entranced by the music, leading the audience on a captivating journey.

In an era dominated by AI, our cultural roots remain unshakeable. Traditional classical dances are the essence of our heritage. Regardless of globalisation's impact, every Indian finds solace in reconnecting with these roots, accessible through traditional dance courses that showcase our vast cultures. The children's costumes, jewellery, expressions, and lip-syncing are meticulously judged, with prizes awarded to honour their hard work and talent.

Navya Nataka Samiti introduces participants to new styles of the dances they have cherished throughout their lives, guiding them on a journey of discipline, perfection, and devotion to their beloved art forms. The stage is set to cultivate beautiful-minded citizens of India, empowering children to embark on a path of self-discipline, self-discovery, and ultimately, successful, self-loving lives.

Spectacular Saudi Brings Arabia to Mumbai



Diriyah, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lit up at night

Saudi's national tourism brand, 'Saudi Welcome to Arabia' will be hosting its first-ever immersive consumer event 'Spectacular Saudi', from September 25 to October 2, from 2:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. at R2 Ground in BKC, Mumbai. Slated to transport visitors straight to the Heart of Arabia; the 8-day extravaganza promises a sneak peek into Saudi's many wonders and iconic experiences, all while extending the warm Saudi welcome.

Visitors can expect unique immersive experiences—including exhibits, culinary delights, Ardah dancers, Saudi coffee, traditional scents, and fashion—all under one roof. Each experience will offer an interactive element, starting with traditional coffee, dates and Bakhour. Next, visitors will be guided through the 'mountains and mirrors' display, evocative of the iconic Maraya Hall in Alula. With many Instagram-worthy moments, visitors can start at the '360 Selfie Corner' and choose from a selection of backdrops showcasing the many seasons, and natural wonders Saudi has to offer, such as the wild lavender fields in Al Joul.

A must for fashion enthusiasts—the Sadu Art Installation—is bound to impress. Surrounded by colossal pieces of Sadu weaves, the display dwells into the history of this ancient craft that has been preserved by Bedouin women and is recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage practice. Gastronomy buffs can enjoy Saudi delicacies at the Al Bad- inspired culinary corner.

Featuring exclusive giveaways and discounts tailored for Indian travellers, the Spectacular Saudi event is making it even easier for Indian travellers to apply for their Saudi visa! A true one-of-a-kind offering, all one has to do is present a valid Visa or Mastercard credit card at one of eight dedicated Tasheer kiosks, ensure the name on the credit card matches the passport and have sufficient funds available on the card. After that, sit back and relax as your visa will be in hand within 48 hours.

On the travel front, SAUDIA Airlines is offering special deals, including a buy one get 50% off on the second ticket if travelling business class. Additionally, all economy class tickets will be 15% off. Attendees will also have the chance to participate in daily giveaways for free flight tickets for two to Saudi. With over 50+ travel trade offers, visitors can access incredible cashback and discounts on Saudi travel packages. Additionally, those booking Saudi packages will enjoy complimentary cultural city tours. Group tour packages to Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam will be available exclusively at the event, starting at INR 99,999 for 5 nights. These exciting offers, discounts, immersive experiences and more, are designed to ensure that Indian travellers are ready to indulge in the very best Saudi has on offer. So don't miss out and register at STA India (spectacularsaudi.com) to experience a piece of Saudi, right in the heart of Mumbai.

10 Extraordinary Experiences in the USA

Embark on an unforgettable journey across the USA with 10 extraordinary experiences, each offering a glimpse of the nation's diverse and captivating culture and landscape.

Jazz Music in New Orleans

Jazz was crafted in New Orleans, Louisiana, which changed the course of music around the world. Whether played by titans like Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis, or unknowns in the smallest of clubs, jazz is about expression, emotion, and living life to the fullest. Music is everywhere in New Orleans. Stop by Frenchmen Street, a street that runs north from the east tip of the French Quarter, for top-notch soul and jazz. While on Frenchmen, pop into Spotted Cat for live music on a Sunday, which is New Orleans' favourite day of the week for dancing in the street. Preservation Hall is another destination for jazz enthusiasts, offering a rich immersion into the genre's history through captivating live acts. New Orleans also hosts an array of year-round festivals dedicated to celebrating jazz.

Napa Valley Wine Train

Embark on an unforgettable journey through California's famed wine country with a ride on the Napa Valley Wine Train, offering a unique and enjoyable experience amidst picturesque vineyards. Begin your journey in San Fran-



New York Broadway

cisco and head north to Napa Valley, located less than 100 kilometres away, to experience the renowned castle-like wineries, gourmet dining, and charming bed-and-breakfasts. Board the historic rail tour and indulge in a three-hour gourmet meal onboard while soaking in some of the most scenic views you will ever see. Before the train ride, make sure to explore Oxbow Public Market for a taste of local delicacies, from fresh produce to artisanal chocolates.

Kentucky Bourbon & Barbecue

Kentucky's rich heritage of bourbon and barbecue blends tradition with craftsmanship where local ingredients and innovation lead to culinary artistry. Fly into Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport (SDF) and embark on a sensory journey at Louisville, along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, where distillery tours offer glimpses into the

history of bourbon-making. Indulge in tastings to understand the spirit's flavours, while discovering other drinks such as the Mint Julep and bourbon-infused cocktails. In western Kentucky, discover the distinct taste of slow-cooked barbecue, where meat is smoked over hickory wood fires. Follow the Western Kentucky Barbecue Trail to enjoy these regional specialties or immerse yourself in local traditions at annual events like the International Bar-B-Q Festival in Owensboro or at other barbecue hotspots like Lexington, all within driving distance from the SDF airport.

Pizza Trail in Chicago

The famous Chicago-style deep-dish pizza comprises a cheesy, deep moulded crust with sauce and toppings. The iconic flavours of Chicago-style pizzas come in different varieties such as deep-dish, stuffed, and thin-crust which will send your taste buds



Kentucky Bourbon

through a whole new culinary experience. Try Lou Malnati's, a Chicago institution, for the ultimate pizza experience with their famous buttery crust and crafted ingredients. A family-run joint, this outlet has been turning out some of Chicago's best pizza pies since 1971. It is so popular that the restaurant regularly ships its deep-dish specialties across the nation. Another popular eatery for the stuffed deep-dish pizza is Giordano's, which has been consistently earning accolades across "Best Pizza" lists for over four decades.

Touring the Grand Canyon by Helicopter

On an exciting helicopter ride, experience the awe-inspiring majesty of the Grand Canyon, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and iconic natural wonder of the USA. Trips depart from Las Vegas offering breathtaking views of the Hoover Dam, Lake Mead, and the Mojave Desert before soaring over the

Grand Canyon itself. Other tours take you over other sites, including the Kaibab National Forest, the Colorado River, and the awe-inspiring Dragon Corridor, offering some unforgettable experiences over the Grand Canyon National Park.

Northern Lights in Idaho

In Idaho, the unexpected sighting of Northern Lights over Priest Lake and the stunning Idaho Panhandle National Forest is a mesmerizing spectacle. This region offers an ideal canvas for the aurora with its mountainous terrain and serene warm-water lake in the backdrop. Located approximately 80 kilometres south of the Canadian border and 150 kilometres north-east of Spokane, this region is easily accessible from the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) and Spokane International Airport (GEG) in Washington by car. The area is renowned for its dark, clear skies perfect for northern light



Grand Canyon

viewing during winter.

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

For nine days every October, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta takes to the skies with around 600 balloons and crews from all over the globe. Since the first rally in 1972, the Balloon Fiesta has grown so popular that it claims to be the USA's largest annual international event and one of the most photographed events worldwide. Nearly 1 million people flock to the launch field during the festival which is filled with various side events and contests amidst the colourful backdrop of balloons and the Sandia Mountains. Albuquerque International Support is just 25 kilometres south of Balloon Fiesta Park.

Broadway Shows in New York City

Prepare to be captivated by New York City's unparalleled and larger-than-life

Broadway shows. A visit to the city will not be complete without experiencing the glitz and glamour of a Broadway production featuring show-stopping performances, compelling storytelling, and breathtaking set design. With 41 historic theatres lining its iconic streets, Broadway offers a diverse array of long-running classics like "Chicago," "The Lion King," and "Wicked," alongside new productions each year. From gripping dramas to captivating musicals, there is a Broadway show to suit every age, taste, and budget, ensuring an unforgettable journey into the world of live entertainment that leaves you spellbound for hours on end.

Alaskan Cruise

Go on an Alaskan adventure on a cruise for a deeper dive into the wilderness to uncover natural wonders and native wildlife. No trip to Alaska is complete without a glimpse

of these iconic creatures, best experienced on a wildlife cruise departing from towns like Whittier, located 93 kilometres from Anchorage, or Seward, which is roughly a 2.5-hour drive from Anchorage. From magnificent glacier viewing in Glacier Bay National Park to wildlife-spotting excursions, these cruises offer unparalleled opportunities to witness Alaska's majestic fauna and breathtaking landscapes.

Colorado Hot Springs Loop

This captivating journey traverses more than 1,200 kilometres from the historic Hot Springs Loop to the scenic Roaring Fork Valley, culminating in the rejuvenating waters of Glenwood Springs and Steamboat Springs. A 2.5-hour drive from Denver, Chaffee County is the first stop. Explore Chaffee County's protected public lands and natural hot springs, then reach Saguache County for serene stargazing. Discover Pagosa Springs' downtown hot springs amidst mountain scenery before continuing to Durango for outdoor adventures. Venture to Ouray for hot springs and scenic hikes, then explore Carbonade's creative district and indulge in Avalanche Ranch's natural pools. Conclude your journey in Steamboat Springs, where Western heritage meets thrilling snow sports and rejuvenating hot springs, before your return to the capital Denver.

SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Can We Be the Vishva-Guru?



Aravinda Rao

The expression Vishva-guru is rather tricky. It is a compound word in Sanskrit which can mean 'the guru for the world, or 'one for whom the world is the guru'. We do hear claims that Bharat is the Vishva-guru, but we have to be conscious of the irony of language. A well-known verse in the Manu Smriti seems to be the inspiration for such claims. The verse says that 'the people of all lands on earth would have to learn their charitam (code of conduct) from the first-born men of this land' (2-20).

Our spiritual masters rarely make this claim. Prior to Manu the Vedas said, 'let all noble thoughts come to us from all direc-

tions'. The Vedic sage used the word Vishva (world), implying that we are also humble enough to receive all good thoughts from anyone in the world. Our sages acknowledged the then Greek astronomers, saying, 'they too are equal to rishis; though they are mlechhas, shastra is well protected by them'. Mlechha referred to those who did not follow the Vedic culture.

Perhaps the world view of a civilization and the attitude to other civilizations can be the indicators to see whether one can claim to teach anything to the world. Indian civilization is unique in this regard. This is perhaps the only civilization which asks the human being to go beyond religion and investigate the Supreme Reality for oneself. A person on this path becomes an anti-varnashrami, one who transcends the definitions of varna and ashrama. He goes beyond all identifying factors like brahmana varna or grihastha ashrama. Though the ritualistic study of Vedas was restricted to some, this knowledge was not denied to anyone. 'Go beyond the Vedas, go beyond all the



dualities, be always stationed in the knowledge of Reality', Krishna tells Arjuna (Gita 2-45). No other civilization asks its seekers to go beyond its own sacred texts.

Going beyond the dualities or binaries such as good and evil, friend and foe, believer and non-believer, is important. A person has to lose his social identity completely and stay as the hypothetical God himself, with unconditional love for all beings, seeing all beings as his own self (Gita 6-45).

Here one may note how God does not have any anger to those who worship other gods (Gita 9-23). World civilizations are seen confined to binaries, distinguishing 'our people' from 'others'.

Our sacred texts equate the jiva with Brahman, the Supreme Reality. We are not conscious of this because we identify ourselves with the body-mind-complex. We are asked to contemplate and get rid of the superimposed identity, realise oneness with the Supreme, and work with

that frame of mind. Our world view is further seen in the Gita (18-20). It is to see the oneness of creation, to see the unchanging divine principle in all beings. All beings or people seem as though divided, but there exists an underlying unity in all. As against this, there can be the vision to divide people into different categories. This vision is due to rajo guna.

In such a world view, with unconditional love for all, tolerance and acceptance are ingrained. It is the only means for world peace, as it does not ask its followers to impose on others in any way - either politically or spiritually. Even the idea of guru is not an imposition, because we are only holding a formula for world peace, it is for others to follow or not. One becomes a guru only when there is a disciple, but the absence of a disciple does not diminish his stature. It is for the guru to be spiritually strong so that the world feels bound to acknowledge it, if not follow.

The question of varna division comes as a counter. This division is a mere acknowledgement of the diversity in human nature in

The expression Vishva-guru is rather tricky. It is a compound word in Sanskrit which can mean 'the guru for the world, or 'one for whom the world is the guru'. We do hear claims that Bharat is the Vishva-guru, but we have to be conscious of the irony of language. A well-known verse in the Manu Smriti seems to be the inspiration for such claims. The verse says that 'the people of all lands on earth would have to learn their charitam (code of conduct) from the first-born men of this land' (2-20)

their social actions, not in their essence. This diversity is universal, as discussed in earlier notes. It is unfortunate that most Indian scholars stand disconnected from their spiritual heritage and hence do not realize this. Society would not have survived if it really oppressed or discriminated against certain sections of people.

However, unless a large percentage of society follows the above noble path, we can only say that Vishva-guru is our ideal, advocated in theory but actualized only by a few.

(The writer is a former DGP, Andhra Pradesh)

Where do you think you are going?



Sadhguru

rut is no good. You must be willing to look at it.

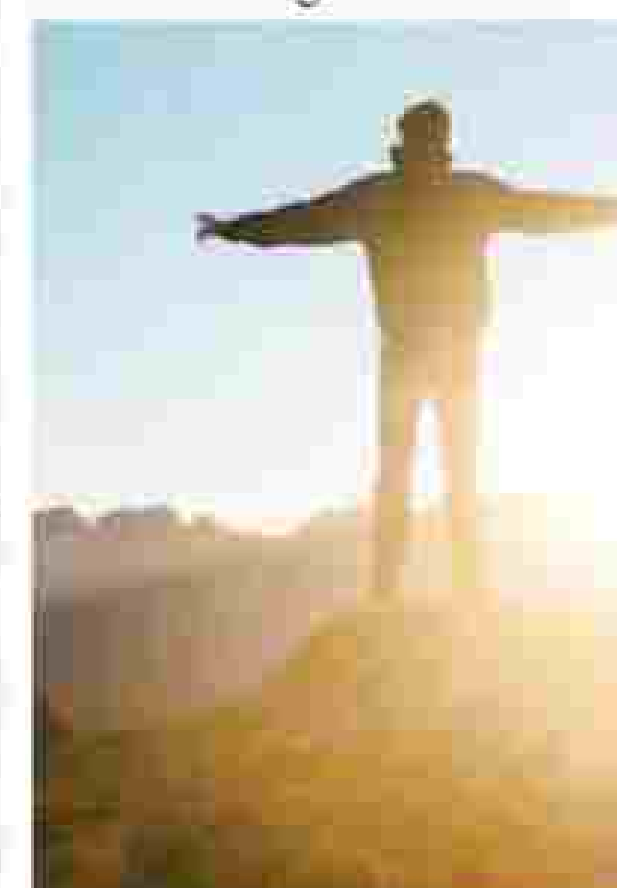
Now if your blissfulness is guiding you in a different direction, you tell me should you trust your blissfulness, or just your sense of duty? Duty becomes meaningful in your life only when life has become barren. If there is love in your heart, you have no duty for anybody; you will do things out of your love. You will simply function out of the intelligence you call love and it will be right. Only to get barren human beings, without any sense of love in them, to move in some direction, you can fix some duty. But once you are a meditator, I don't want you to have any sense of duty in you. I want you to have a huge sense of blissfulness and love in you. Then you function more efficiently and joyfully, in a very intelligent way.

Do not ever make the mistake of believing that you have to do the same thing till the last day of your life. At a certain stage, with the available intelligence and understanding, you made certain decisions and carried it on for a certain period of life. It does not mean you have to carry it to your deathbed. "No, I have done this all my life, I have to do it." That is a stupid way of life. Is it not important that, if not every day, at least once in a few years, you look at it and see whether your life is really going in the right direction or not?

For example, if you are a doctor, you must have invested five to ten years in educating yourself. Now that you made ten years of investment, it does not mean that the remaining part of your life has to go in the same direction. If it is relevant, it is fine and it can go on, but you must be willing to evaluate it. It is not that you definitely have to give it up and do something else, but you must be open enough to evaluate it. What is wrong? Whether it is your profession or business or family, you must evaluate whether you are really investing your life energies in the right direction for both yourself and for the world around you. You must evaluate it periodically, otherwise your life will move unintelligently, because you have already made your life a rut and your life continuing in the same

So there is nothing wrong in constantly considering what you are doing, and whether what you are doing is worthwhile or not. I am crystal clear about everything that I do. In spite of that, I am always considering, "Is this what I should continue to do?" Please look at it. You must consider it, otherwise you are forsaking your intelligence. Unfortunately on this planet, always, in the name of God, people have demanded that you must forsake your intelligence. If you forsake your intelligence you are forsaking your creator also.

Do not ever make the mistake of believing that you have to do the same thing till the last day of your life. At a certain stage, with the available intelligence and understanding, you made certain decisions and carried it on for a certain period of life. It does not mean you have to carry it to your deathbed. "No, I have done this all my life, I have to do it." That is a stupid way of life. Is it not important that, if not every day, at least once in a few years, you look at it and see whether your life is really going in the right direction or not?



Thought pollution: The root of environmental crisis



Rajyogi Brahmakumar Nikun

Most of us living in this world are very much aware of the word 'Pollution', be it a child, a youngster or an old person. However, one could not really contemplate over the reasons or source from which this dreadful monster called pollution really occurs. Today, globally every country is facing consequence of pollution, contamination or abuse of air, water, food & even Space on a very large scale, but they are not able to find a foolproof solution to this dangerous threat for humanity. Although many institutions & regulatory bodies have been established & many designs and plans have been made to resolve this problem, but those are like a

bucket of water used in hopes of extinguishing an enormous blazing fire. Today a fast-developing country like India stands poised on a pinnacle of wealth and power, yet we Indians live in a land of vanishing beauty, increasing ugliness, shrinking open spaces, and of an overall environment that is diminishing daily by pollution and noise and blight. Warnings of scientists & environmentalists about the dangers of pollution seem to fall on the deaf ears as the majority of people continue to pollute the air with their automobile exhaust, the water with their sewage, and the whole panorama with plastic bottles and cans. So where does this take us? Would there really be a solution to control or tackle pollution problems & save humanity? Well! The answer lies with the ones who are posing this question, i.e. we the humans, YES! Over the years, while discussing deeply about cause & effect of pollution, we smartly avoid looking at the actual problem that's



deep rooted in the mental sphere rather than the sphere of matter.

If we look up for the dictionary meaning of word pollution, we may find something like 'to destroy purity of; to contaminate'. However, we humans are only aware of the material pollution in the branches of the polluted tree & we have totally disregarded the seed or root of 'thought pollution' which gave growth to that tree. So, without destroying the root basis of pollution, the source can never be purified. In Fact, it won't be an exaggeration to say that the problem of environmental

pollution is actually due to pollution of man's mind which is full of selfishness, jealousy, greed, anger, etc. The problem of ecological imbalance is due to our mental imbalance, and the disequilibrium in nature is due to disequilibrium in man's mind.

Another fact which is generally unknown or is little realised, is that the vibrations from a polluted mind contaminate or corrupt the atmosphere; they make it tense and vicious. Most of us make a mistake by thinking that our thoughts are invisible & psychic and hence they can't do anything, but

actually thoughts have both hands and legs, because one can control one's hand to rob nothing, control one's legs to kick nobody, but one can scarcely control one's thought without thinking as thought is too deep to be expressed, too strong to be suppressed, too fast to be drawn back, hence he who will not command his thoughts, will soon lose command of his actions. The wars and struggles and quarrels of mankind are very often caused by this. A deep thinking would reveal that most of the present global problems are due to thought pollution, for this pollution destroys a person's sense of being impartial, considerate and co-operative and makes him callous, inimical, violent-prone and vicious. It influences economics, politics, commerce, business, even friendship and all relationships and destroys real love, kindness and human values which are essential to peace and happy life. The ultimate solution to this problem lies in realising the self and also our

relationship with other human beings. Remember! Great men are those who see that the spiritual force is much stronger than the material force. Hence without a spiritual orientation of the relationship between man and man, moral and spiritual values cannot be brought into play or be sustained, and, in the absence of these core values, no problem can really be solved for a considerable length of time. It is, therefore, essential for all of us to understand our real and intrinsic nature behind the mask or the garment of the body to set the direction right. If this is not done, then possibly science without spirituality may dangerously lead mankind to a nuclear catastrophe or population explosion or environmental upheaval. So, let us use the powerful weapon of spiritual wisdom to cleanse our soul from thought pollution & survive in harmony with nature & its elements without any kind of disturbance whatsoever.

BEJAN DARUWALLA'S HOROSCOPE

CHIRAG DARUWALLA



Aries

Ganesha says this week will be good for unmarried people, their marriage proposal may get approved. Your love life is not looking anything special. Married people will have to face stressful situations in domestic life due to some other person. Your financial condition will be good. You have to budget all your expenses. If you have made any investment earlier, you will get full benefit from that also. People doing jobs will receive good news from higher officials in their workplace.

Taurus

Ganesha says this week will be good for people with the Taurus zodiac sign. There will be sweetness in love relationships. You will look very happy with each other. There will be happiness and peace in the lives of married people. Will get support from family. Will spend time with family members and learn to save money, so that there is no problem in the future. Your financial condition will be good. You will get new contracts in business.

Gemini

Ganesha says this week, single people will get a chance to choose their desired life partner. There will be sourness in love relationships. Married people will seem happy in their domestic life. Your financial condition will be good. Expenses will remain. We have to move forward with budget planning. Time is going to be good for higher education students, you will get a chance to study the subject of your choice. This week you will get a lot of relief and will get rid of old diseases. You will get the company and support of your parents.

Cancer

Ganesha says this week you will get support from family members. You will plan to go to some religious place with your family, where everyone will look very happy. Your love life will be full of happiness. This week is going to be favorable for married people. This week you are likely to make financial gains in many ways. The economic situation will be strong. Your pending work will be completed. This time is a bit weak for employed people. You will have to pay more attention to your work.

Leo

Ganesha says this week is going to be good for married people. You will spend some time alone with your spouse. You have to be a little careful in matters of love. You should avoid investing money anywhere, as it may hurt your business. This is a good time for employed people. There are chances of a short and long journey. Your relationship with your business partner will also become stronger. Students will have to avoid overconfidence. This week will be full of health problems.

Virgo

Ganesha says this week is going to be pleasant for people with the Virgo zodiac sign. There will be happiness in family life. You may remain worried about your spouse's health. This week will not be anything special for love relationships. People doing business will get the desired profits. There are signs of unemployed people getting good employment. There are chances of job change. The efforts you were making to expand your business will be successful.

Libra

Ganesha says this week you will have to face some problems in life. Your spouse's behavior will appear to have changed a bit. Your love life will not be anything special. There will be tension between the two. Your financial situation will bring mixed results. Income will increase, but expenses will also remain high. This week is going to be moderate for employed people. There are chances of job change.

Scorpio

Ganesha says this week will be full of ups and downs. People living a love life will seem happy with their beloved. Married people will feel tension in their life. Interference from another person can also cause discord. You will get the full benefit of your first investment. You can also expect big profits from the government sector. People doing business will get success in the plans they were making to take the business forward. New contracts will be available.

Sagittarius

Ganesha says there will be ups and downs in love relationships this week. A misunderstanding may arise between the two regarding some issues. Married people will have to face problems in life. Your spouse will start some new work, in which you will fully support him/her. This week will be good from a financial point of view. There will also be an inflow of money, due to which the economic situation will remain strong.

Capricorn

Ganesha says time is going to be very good for love relationships. The distance between you and your loved one will reduce. Married people will feel stressed due to interference from another person in their domestic life. You will get the happiness of having children. You will share your thoughts with your father. People who are doing ancestral business will make some changes in their ancestral business. You will have some sources from which you will see an increase in income day by day. Employed people will get a chance to change jobs.

Aquarius

Ganesha says this week you will feel full of energy, due to which you will complete all your pending tasks. You can also take your lover for a walk somewhere, where you will be seen talking lovingly. There will be happiness in the family. Everyone will live together happily and peacefully. You will get full support from your spouse. You will be seen working with your spouse for the welfare of the family. Some more family responsibilities will be assigned to you, which you will fulfill.

Pisces

Ganesha says this week is going to be very good for the people of Pisces. You will get full support from your spouse. Will get support from family. The ongoing dispute between brother and sister will end. Your love life will be better. The economic situation will be strong. The pending money will be returned. You will get the full benefit of the investment made earlier. You will get full support from your children. Health will improve. Time is very good for higher education.



Abhishek Bachchan's Dance-Drama 'Be Happy' first look gets unveiled



Streaming giant Prime Video has revealed the first look of *Be Happy*, a dance-centric drama starring Abhishek Bachchan and directed by choreographer-turned-filmmaker Remo D'Souza. Known for his work in films like *ABCD* and *Street Dancer 3D*, D'Souza brings yet another dance-filled narrative to life, with Nora Fatehi, Nassar, Johnny Lever, Harleen Sethi, and Inayat Verma joining the cast.

The film follows Shiv Rastogi, played by Bachchan, a single father who is determined to help his daughter, portrayed by Inayat Verma, achieve her dream of performing on India's biggest dance reality show. Prime Video's official poster showcases the father-daughter duo mid-dance, emphasizing the film's theme of ambition, resilience, and the emotional bond between them.

Speaking about the project, D'Souza shared, "Be Happy is a heartfelt story about a single father's journey to fulfill his daughter's dreams. I believe viewers will connect deeply with this emotional yet light-hearted narrative."

Prime Video's Nikhil Madhok, Head of India Originals, highlighted the streaming service's commitment to presenting authentic and relatable stories, adding that the movie's unveiling on Daughter's Day was fitting given its focus on a father's devotion to his daughter. Produced by Lizelle Remo D'Souza, *Be Happy* promises to be an inspiring tale of perseverance and love, with a release date set to be announced soon. Fans are eagerly awaiting its premiere on Prime Video.



Rumors cleared: Salman Khan not involved in 'Singham Again'



SRK recalls cringe moments from 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' shooting

Social media has been abuzz with rumors suggesting that Bollywood megastar Salman Khan is part of the highly anticipated film *Singham Again*, led by Ajay Devgn. Several reports even hinted that Salman would reprise his iconic role as Chulbul Pandey from



the Dabangg series, sparking excitement among fans.

However, official confirmation has now debunked these speculations. Salman Khan is not in-

involved in the cop-action drama *Singham Again*. Reports have clarified that director Rohit Shetty never approached Salman for a cameo in the film, putting an end to all the swirling rumors.

Despite the gossip, fans of Salman have much to look forward to. The actor is set for a key cameo in Varun Dhawan's upcoming film *Baby John*. Following that, he will take on a full-fledged role in *Sikandar*, directed by AR Murugadoss.

Additionally, there is buzz that Salman might collaborate with Atlee, the director behind Shah Rukh Khan's recent hit *Jawan*, further keeping his fans on their toes for future projects.

Anushka Sen honoured for strengthening India-Korea relations

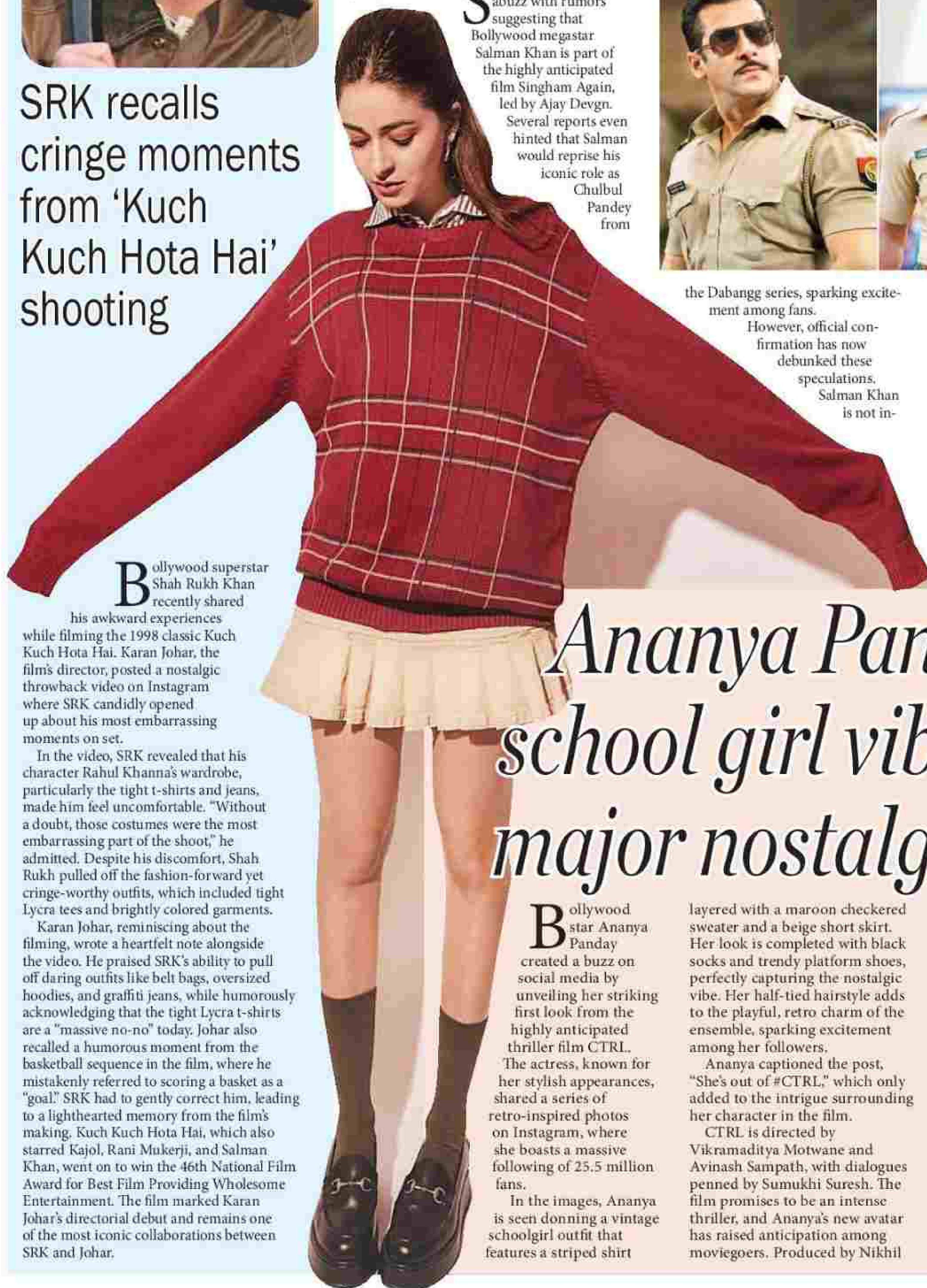
Actress Anushka Sen was recently awarded for her contributions to enhancing the cultural relationship between Korea and India. The young star expressed her gratitude, sharing how this recognition motivates her to continue promoting meaningful cross-cultural collaborations.

Anushka, who has a massive Instagram following of 39.4 million, took to the platform to share her joy with a series of pictures from the award ceremony. Dressed in a chic black crop jacket paired with matching trousers, she radiated elegance. Her sleek ponytail and minimalist, no-makeup look added to her stylish appearance. In her post, she wrote, "Honoured to receive the award from CEO Mr. Hyun Woo Kim of SBA (Seoul Business Agency) for my contribution to strengthening the relationship between Korea and India."

She further expressed her pride in her association with Korean projects, including her role as Brand Ambassador for the Korea Tourism Organisation. Anushka has previously made waves by being the only Indian to feature on Korean billboards. She continues to represent the growing collaboration between both nations.

Anushka has recently teamed up with South Korean Olympian Kim Ye-ji for a global project titled *Crush*. Kim, a silver medalist in the Paris 2024 Olympics, will make her acting debut in this ASIA spin-off series, where she will play a killer, while Anushka reprises her role as an assassin. Starting her career as a child actor in Zee TV's *Yahan Main Ghar Ghar Kheli* (2009), Anushka has since become a household name with roles in *Baavreer* and *Jhansi Ki Rani*. She was last seen in the web series *Dil Dosti Dilemma* on Prime Video.

Ananya Panday's school girl vibe gives major nostalgia dose



Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan recently shared his awkward experiences while filming the 1998 classic *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*. Karan Johar, the film's director, posted a nostalgic throwback video on Instagram where SRK candidly opened up about his most embarrassing moments on set.

In the video, SRK revealed that his character Rahul Khanna's wardrobe, particularly the tight t-shirts and jeans, made him feel uncomfortable. "Without a doubt, those costumes were the most embarrassing part of the shoot," he admitted. Despite his discomfort, Shah Rukh pulled off the fashion-forward yet cringe-worthy outfits, which included tight Lycra tees and brightly colored garments.

Karan Johar, reminiscing about the filming, wrote a heartfelt note alongside the video. He praised SRK's ability to pull off daring outfits like belt bags, oversized hoodies, and graffiti jeans, while humorously acknowledging that the tight Lycra t-shirts are a "massive no-no" today. Johar also recalled a humorous moment from the basketball sequence in the film, where he mistakenly referred to scoring a basket as a "goal!" SRK had to gently correct him, leading to a lighthearted memory from the film's making. *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, which also starred Kajol, Rani Mukerji, and Salman Khan, went on to win the 46th National Film Award for Best Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment. The film marked Karan Johar's directorial debut and remains one of the most iconic collaborations between SRK and Johar.

Bollywood star Ananya Panday created a buzz on social media by unveiling her striking first look from the highly anticipated thriller film *CTRL*. The actress, known for her stylish appearances, shared a series of retro-inspired photos on Instagram, where she boasts a massive following of 25.5 million fans.

In the images, Ananya is seen donning a vintage schoolgirl outfit that features a striped shirt

layered with a maroon checkered sweater and a beige short skirt. Her look is completed with black socks and trendy platform shoes, perfectly capturing the nostalgic vibe. Her half-tied hairstyle adds to the playful, retro charm of the ensemble, sparking excitement among her followers.

Ananya captioned the post, "She's out of #CTRL," which only added to the intrigue surrounding her character in the film.

CTRL is directed by Vikramaditya Motwane and Avinash Sampath, with dialogues penned by Sumukhi Suresh. The film promises to be an intense thriller, and Ananya's new avatar has raised anticipation among moviegoers. Produced by Nikhil

Dwivedi and Arya Menon under Saffron Magicworks and Andolan Films, *CTRL* also stars Vibaan Samat and Aparshakti Khurana. The film is set to premiere on Netflix on October 4, 2024.

Ananya Panday, daughter of actor Chunky Panday, made her Bollywood debut in *Student of the Year 2* in 2019. She has since starred in several hit films, including *Pati Patni Aur Woh*, *Gehraiyaan*, and made her Telugu debut in *Liger*. The young actress also recently ventured into OTT with the comedy series *Call Me Bae* on Prime Video.

With *CTRL*, Ananya is poised to showcase a different side of her acting prowess, adding another exciting chapter to her career.

"Now it is up to the state government on how promptly it can implement its assurances, and enforce tight security measures at the medical colleges and hospital to prevent the recurrence of such a ghastly tragedy in future,"
Arif Ahmed, representative of West Bengal Junior Doctors' Forum

Maratha leader Jarange-Patil's health fails on fifth day of hunger strike

JALNA (MAHARASHTRA)

THE health of Shivba Sanghatana leader Manoj Jarange-Patil started deteriorating on the fifth day of his sixth hunger strike here on Saturday, his party leaders said.

Since Friday noon he was feeling exhausted and sickly,

and his supporters were concerned to see him lying restlessly on his stomach or not communicating with them.

Last evening, at one point, Jarange-Patil got up to address his people, but his legs didn't seem to support his weight and he suddenly fell into a heap, appearing to be motionless.

However, his aides who were around managed to catch him in time and prevented him from falling down and hurting himself.

They helped him sit upright again and after that he again took some rest at the hunger strike venue.

From Friday night, many of his alarmed followers,

some with tears in their eyes and many women seen weeping, made frantic appeals to Jarange-Patil to break his hunger strike, or at least get some medication to revive him, but he remained adamant.

Later, state Minister Shambhuraj Desai called up Jarange-Patil with the same

plea, plus many of his close aides repeatedly goaded him to get treated for his frail health, and he reluctantly agreed to do so in the wee hours of Saturday.

A medical team present at the spot immediately administered him with saline and certain medicines, which he has started taking, while go-

ing a little easy on the agitation since Saturday morning.

As the hunger-strike gets longer and the date of Maharashtra Assembly elections looms closer, Maratha groups have issued calls for a shutdown (bandh) in Beed and Osmanabad districts to express solidarity with Jarange-Patil. (IANS)



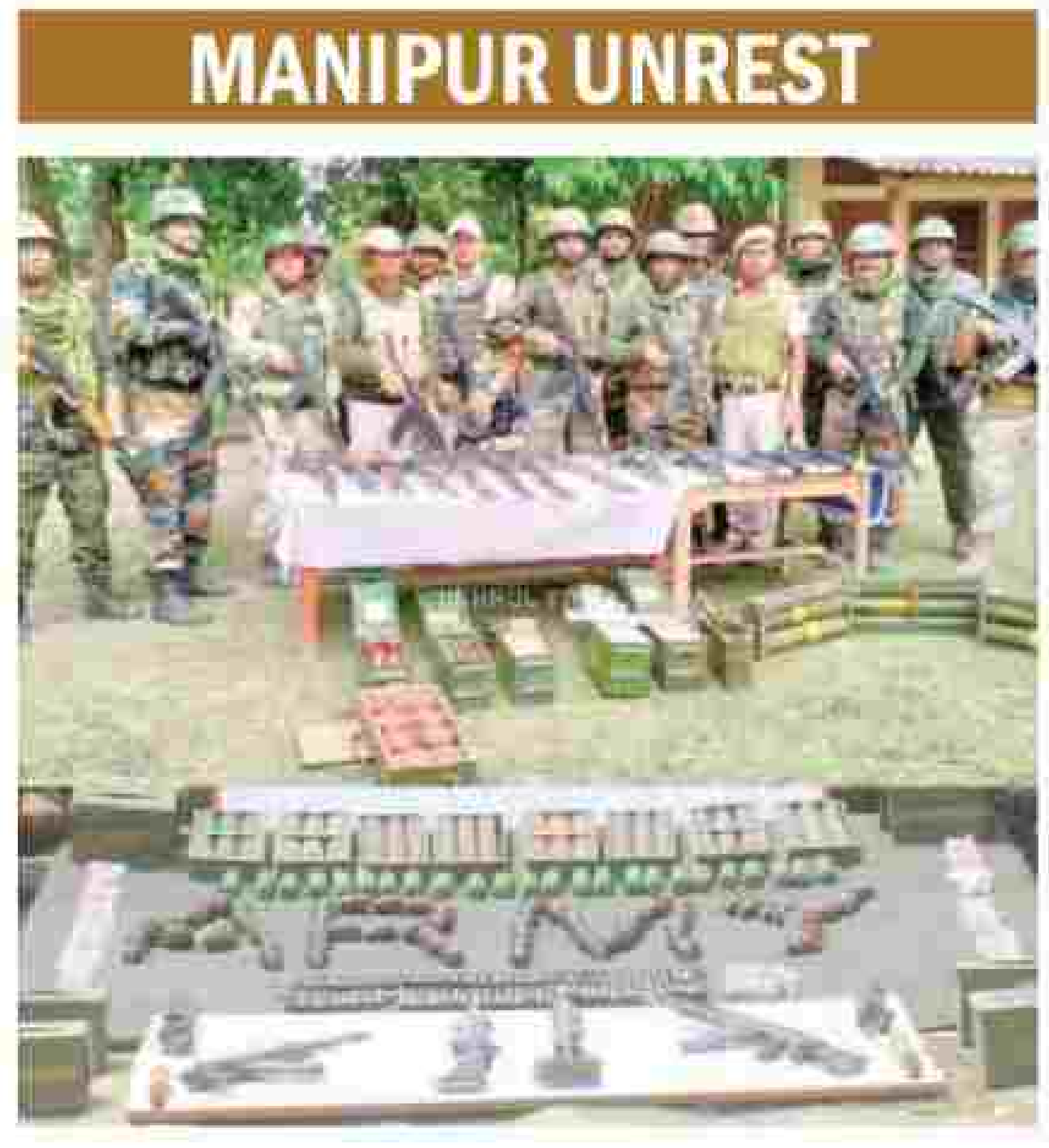
Huge cache of arms & ammunition recovered

KOLKATA

A day after the Manipur government informed about the ingress of tribal militant outfits from Myanmar, the Indian Army in coordination with the state police recovered two caches of weapons and warlike stores during raids in Churachandpur, Thoubal and Imphal East.

The Army's Eastern Command, based in Kolkata, highlighted the efforts by troops to restore peace in the region, with the demilitarisation of the local population as a primary objective.

"In the first operation, a search operation was carried out in the heavily forested upper reaches of Thangjing Ridge in Churachandpur district. The operation led to the recovery of two 9 mm pistols along with two pistol magazines, a single-barrel rifle, two locally fabricated rockets measuring 5.5 feet and 3 feet respectively, a modified long-range mortar, two modified medium-range



mortars, four mortar bombs, nine rounds of 9 mm ammunition, 6.2 kilograms of Grade Two explosives, and warlike stores," it was stated by the Army.

The army said that in a separate operation, acting on

specific intelligence inputs, a team of Indian Army and Manipur Police carried out a search at Changbi village, located in the fringes of Thoubal and Imphal East districts.

"This operation resulted in the recovery of two carbines, two pistols, a single-barrel gun, nine hand grenades, eleven rounds of small arms ammunition and other warlike stores," it was further mentioned in the statement.

On Friday, Kuldeep Singh, security advisor to the Manipur government, revealed some extracts of the intelligence report that stated how the 900 militants had split into groups of 30 each and were planning to carry out acts of violence.

He said that security forces had been directed to carry out intelligence-based operations to seize weapons and other equipment that may be used by the militants. These weapons are not among those looted from police armouries, Singh had mentioned.

Over the last 16-odd months, ever since ethnic clashes erupted in Manipur, there has been a concerted effort by militant outfits to drive a wedge between various security agencies operating in the state. (IANS)

Sibal on Tankha's defamation case

'Politicians have no right to tarnish lawyers' image'

BHOPAL

MADHYA Pradesh High Court on Saturday conducted hearing in a defamation case against former Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, former Minister Bhubendra Singh Yadav and State BJP President V.D. Sharma.

The case was filed by Congress Rajya Sabha MP and senior advocate Vivek Tankha, who alleged that the trio BJP leaders have made false allegations against him regarding the OBC reservation. The case was filed earlier in January 2022.

Senior and renowned advocate Kapil Sibal represented for Tankha during the hearing in the court on Saturday.

The case was heard in the court of Justice Sanjay Dwivedi. After the hearing was over, advocate Sibal said, "It's not about Vivek Tankha only, but about all the advocates who exercise their duty in the courts."

"We (Tankha) filed a petition against the Madhya Pradesh government's ordinance regarding the municipal body elections, and not against the OBC reservation quota," Sibal said talking to the press after the court hearing



in Jabalpur on Saturday.

He claimed that the trio (Shivraj, Bhubendra and VD) had told the court that case was filed on the basis of media reports, and the news reports have not quoted them line-by-line. However, the court wasn't satisfied with their reply. "This is the case between practicing lawyers and the politicians. If the politicians, who are on top posts, would make such baseless allegation and would try to tarnish a professional's image, then we have to take a stand against them," Sibal added.

Vivek Tankha, who was also present in the court with Sibal, said he was satisfied with the court's hearing.

Nine members of family in Guj attempt suicide

RAJKOT

NINE members of the Soni family from the Kevdavi area of Rajkot attempted mass suicide by consuming poison on Saturday. The family members have been rushed to Civil Hospital for emergency treatment.

Reports said that the Soni family - jewellers by profession - took the extreme step after traders from Mumbai withheld Rs 2.75 crore for 22-carat gold jewellery they had supplied.

Despite repeated follow-ups over the last 11 months, the payment was not made.

It is alleged that the traders not only failed to clear the dues but also issued threats to the family.

Police have launched an investigation into the case. They are examining the circumstances surrounding the family's financial difficulties and recording statements from various individuals involved.

The family has named four individuals from Mumbai - Vijay Kailasji

Rawal, Prashant, Mahendra, and others - as responsible for withholding the payment.

The condition of the family members deteriorated quickly after consuming the poison, and they were immediately shifted to a government hospital for treatment.

In a similar case in 2023, seven members of a family, including three children, were found dead in their apartment in Surat in what police suspect to be a case of mass suicide. The family, reportedly facing severe financial distress, left a note explaining their drastic step.

The bodies were discovered after neighbours detected a foul smell coming from the residence. When repeated knocks on the door went unanswered, the neighbours alerted the police. Upon arrival, authorities found the lifeless bodies of the family members, including a contractor, his wife, his parents, and the couple's three children, a six-year-old son and two daughters aged 10 and 13. (IANS)

BIZ BRIEFS

Only a caste, economic and income census can redefine India's socio-economic landscape

Caste has been a defining feature of Indian society across equations

RAJEEV R.

India, a land of staggering diversity, continues to grapple with profound socio-economic disparities among its populace. Only a minuscule percentage of people lords over the majority of national resources, facilities, privileges, opportunities and responsibilities. A tragic irony is that those comprising SCs, STs, and OBC estimated to be around 75 per cent of the population, have over the years been victims of socio-economic and educational exclusion, deprivation and institutional atrocities.

No doubt, things have certainly improved ever since India started following the rules as prescribed in the Constitution but we have miles to traverse to achieve the goal of an inclusive Viksit Bharat for which a 2047 deadline has been fixed. It is quite possible that the Indian economy becomes a \$30 trillion economy by then but I will keep my fingers crossed so far as the inclusivity of the attributes of a developed nation are concerned. If we are really serious about making a new and inclusive India, we need to know well the socio-economic and educational conditions of different social groups in general and those who have been on the margins for decades in particular. Towards addressing this, the Union government conducts periodic census exercises that delve deep into demographic data, including caste, economic status, and income levels. These exercises are not just statistical endeavours but pivotal tools in shaping policies and interventions aimed at equitable development and social justice.

However, their limitations underscore the need for a wholesome caste-economic census, a demand which has gained momentum in recent years. Barring a few political parties, the majority are in support of a comprehensive caste-economic-income census and fine-tuning of welfare schemes

and affirmative measures on the basis of its findings so that the idea of last mile development and empowerment is fructified in a sustainable manner.

One has to understand that caste has been a defining feature of Indian society for centuries, influencing social dynamics, economic opportunities and political landscapes. The caste census, distinct from the regular population census, will provide invaluable insights into the socio-economic status of various caste groups. It will help identify marginalized communities that have historically faced discrimination and exclusion from mainstream development processes. By mapping the distribution and socio-economic indicators of different castes, policymakers can tailor affirmative action programs such as reservations in education, employment and political representation. These initiatives will further uplift disadvantaged communities, mitigate historical injustices and foster inclusive growth.

Similarly, the economic details will capture data related to economic activities across sectors and regions and will provide a comprehensive snapshot of the country's entrepreneurial landscape, from small-scale enterprises to large industries. This granular data will aid in formulating targeted policies to support economic growth, promote entrepreneurship, and enhance productivity in an inclusive manner. Moreover, the economic data will serve as a crucial benchmark for assessing the effectiveness of government schemes and initiatives aimed at fostering economic development. By identifying growth hotspots and areas of underdevelopment, policymakers can channel resources strategically to promote balanced regional

growth and reduce disparities between urban and rural areas.

We all know well that income inequality remains a pressing issue in India, where a significant portion of the population struggles to meet basic needs. People's income details will help us in quantifying these inequalities by capturing data on household incomes, expenditure patterns, and wealth distribution. This data will be instrumental in designing targeted welfare programmes and social safety nets to alleviate poverty and improve living standards.

Moreover, the income data will be extremely helpful in assessing the impact of economic policies on different income groups. It will provide empirical evidence to gauge the effectiveness of poverty alleviation measures, such as subsidies, pensions, and financial inclusion programmes. By ensuring that benefits reach those who need them the most, the caste and income census will contribute to fostering a more equitable society.

I am of the firm opinion that the combined insights from caste, economic, and income census exercises will form the bedrock of evidence-based policymaking in India. They will enable them to identify vulnerable populations and prioritize resource allocation, and monitor the progress of development initiatives over time. This data-driven approach is essential for tackling chronic socio-economic disparities and advancing the goal of inclusive growth. Furthermore, the census exercises will facilitate transparency and accountability in governance by providing reliable data for public scrutiny and academic research. They will empower civil society organisations, researchers and advocacy groups to press for policy reforms that address systemic inequalities

and promote social justice. Yet one wonders why some people are opposed to conducting a comprehensive census exercise, which will be an indispensable tool for promoting inclusive development, social cohesion and ensure equitable distribution of opportunities. By harnessing the power of data, India will chart a path towards a more just and prosperous future for all its citizens.

Let there be no doubt that only a holistic empowerment of all sections of society will help us address the colossal issue of caste-based discrimination, which has a deep-rooted history in India, spanning millennia, shaping social, economic, and political structures across the subcontinent. Originating from ancient Vedic texts, where society was stratified into varnas based on occupation, caste divisions evolved into a complex hierarchical system over time, doing an irreparable damage to our social ecosystem. Over centuries, the caste-based hierarchical system became rigid, with each caste assigned specific roles and privileges. A vast chunk of the population among us faced severe social ostracism and economic deprivation. Their marginalization was not merely social but also institutionalized through practices like untouchability.

Post-independence, our Constitution has certainly outlawed discrimination based on caste and introduced quota in education and employment for historically marginalized communities, aiming to uplift them but in vain. Still caste-based discrimination, deprivation and denial persist in various forms.

Economic disparities, unequal access to education, and persistent social prejudices continue to affect millions, challenging our collective quest for social equality and inclusive development. Efforts towards social justice and empowerment remain crucial in ensuring a more equitable future for all Indians.

Amazon's new offers

Amazon Great Indian Festival 2024 will start from September 27, with 24-hour early access for Prime members, according to the e-commerce major which promises great deals, big savings, blockbuster entertainment, and more than 25,000 new product launches across categories on Amazon. In. Customers can expect offers from several brands, including, Samsung, realme NARZO, OnePlus, iQOO, Intel, Sony PlayStation, Hindustan Unilever, P&G, TCL, Acer, Xiaomi and Eureka Forbes, among others. Further, this festive season, Amazon is making it easier for customers to support India's small businesses with exclusive deals.

Pension fund from ICICI Prudential

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has launched 'ICICI Pru Signature Pension', a market linked pension product enabling customers to build a cost and tax efficient retirement fund. Retirement planning is a crucial activity and a must for all customers to be financially independent. This unique product helps customers to effectively plan for both the accumulation and income generation phases of retirement planning. Amit Palta, Chief Distribution Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "ICICI Pru Signature Pension provides customers the opportunity to participate in the India growth story".

Chilli farmers use Gracia

Godrej Agrovet Limited (GAVL) said that 98 per cent of chilli farmers used Gracia last year, an effective pest management solution for chilli crops. Releasing the findings of the survey, which was carried in chilli markets across south, the company witnessed 57 per cent of the farmers using Gracia between 15-35 DAT (days after transplanting). "With Gracia offering a prolonged duration of control against thrips, if chilli crops are treated early, the findings clearly showcase that farmers are finding value in using Gracia early," said Rajavelu NK of Godrej Agrovet.

A fair transition can nullify green energy's hidden costs

Grids have become a bottleneck for energy transitions but investment has been rising

VINCENT FERNANDES

Global energy investment is set to exceed \$3 trillion for the first time in 2024, with \$200 billion going for clean energy technologies and infrastructure. Investment in clean energy has accelerated since 2020, and spending on renewable power, grids and storage is now higher than total spending on oil, gas and coal.

In 2015, the ratio of clean power to unabated fossil fuel power investments was roughly 2:1. The ratio is set to reach 10:1 this year. The rise in solar and wind deployment has driven wholesale prices down in some countries, occasionally below zero, particularly during peak periods of wind and solar generation. This lowers the potential for spot market earnings for producers and highlights the need for complementary investments in flexibility and storage capacity.

Investments in nuclear power are expected to pick up in 2024, with its share (nine per cent) in clean power investments rising after two successive years of decline. It is projected to reach \$80 billion in 2024, nearly double the 2018 level, which was the lowest point in a decade.

Grids have become a bottleneck for energy transitions but investment is rising and spending is expected to hit \$400 billion this year, driven by new policies and funding in Europe, the United States, China and parts of Latin America. Investments in battery storage are ramping up and are set to exceed \$50 billion in 2024. But spending is highly concentrated.

Investment in energy efficiency and electrification in buildings and industry has been resilient, despite the economic headwinds. But most of the dynamism in the end-use sectors is coming from transport, where in-



vestment in clean energy is expected to reach over \$300 billion in 2024, 1.6 times the 2020 level and well ahead of the amount invested in fossil fuels. The European Union spends \$370 billion on clean energy today, while China is set to spend almost \$680 billion, supported by its large domestic market and rapid growth in the so-called "new three" industries: solar cells, lithium battery production and EV manufacturing.

With the large number of resources and funds being diverted towards renewable energy innovations, ensuring those resources are allocated properly is a must. Avoiding inefficiencies and unexpected costs should be examined in every process of energy transition. One of the main factors of unforeseen costs is poorly designed systems, which can come from a large variety of sources, such as poor geological conditions or inefficient power grid designs.

The human element of the transition should also not be forgotten. Attention needs to be paid to workers in the fossil fuels industries, such as oil workers, coal miners, and gasoline-car factory workers, whose livelihoods depend on these jobs. It is estimated that 2.7 million jobs related to fossil fuel industries globally will be lost. This does not mean that green energy should be abandoned, rather, a fair transition should be ensured for all. Another cost to consider is the waste produced by renewable energy technology and its supporting infrastructure. The waste from renewables globally is expected to increase by 3,000 per cent for solar, 200 per cent for wind and 600 per cent for energy storage by 2030 from 2020. The waste would accumulate from the replacement of end-of-life systems. It was reported that Vietnam would potentially generate 3.1-3.5 million tonnes of solar PV waste and 1.5-5.1 million tonnes of wind turbine waste by 2050.

Over 90 per cent of renewable energy waste is recyclable and contains high-value minerals. However, the current issue with renewable energy waste is the lack of recycling infrastructure, making it economically unfeasible. Through investment, these challenges can be overcome, and a circular system of clean energy components can be created. Renewable energy recycling will be a large market, with solar alone estimated to be worth \$2.7 billion by 2030.

By the end of 2050, it is expected that the ROI from the \$131 trillion global investment in energy transition will be about \$61 trillion.

"It is a great honour to be nominated for the FIH Player of the Year Award again. While I am elated to be named among some of the best players in the world, I would like to acknowledge that it would not have been possible without the support of my team,"

— Harmanpreet Singh, Indian hockey skipper

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1ST TEST AGAINST B'DESH

Pant, Gill tons put India in command

G UNNIKRISHNAN
CHENNAI

RISHABH Pant and Shubman Gill cleansed months of hurt, anxiety and disappointments of varying nature with emotional hundreds on the third day to place India in a prime position to win the first Test against Bangladesh here Saturday.

Gill (119 not out) and Pant (109 led the hosts' run glut with an alliance of 167 for the fourth wicket that helped India, overnight 81/3, declare their second innings at 287 for 4 for an overall lead of 514. Bangladesh showed some spunk in their second innings to reach 158 for four when play was called off at 4.25 pm due to bad light. They still need a whopping 357 runs for the result to be in their favour.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto (51) and Shakib Al-Hasan (5) were manning the crease for the visitors, and the day could have ended on a better note for them have they been a slightly more judicious in shot selection against star off-spinner R Ashwin (3/63). But let's forget the match situation and those dreary numbers for a while to cast a deeper look into the story of the day.

The hundreds by Pant and Gill stood as a testimony of these two fine young men's will to rise above towering personal obstacles that would have strangled the ordinary.

Pant's turmoil has been widely-documented after that horrifying

car crash in December 2022, and the way he reacted after reaching his sixth Test hundred with a two off

Shakib Al-Hasan underscored the value he attached to the knock.

Pant stood near the middle of the pitch with closed eyes, an upward tilted head and a raised bat — offering a silent prayer, perhaps, to the Lord above for returning life and cricket to him.

Gill watched the whole scene from a fair distance, as he did not want to invade into an intensely private moment of his partner.

Soon, the two brave-hearts melted into a warm embrace as Chepauk erupted. Perhaps, the moment stood also as a tribute to Pant equaling Chennai's very own "Thala" MS Dhoni's record



India's Rishabh Pant celebrates his century with Shubman Gill on the third day of the first Test against Bangladesh, at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, in Chennai on Saturday

SAFF U17 C'SHIP
Ishfaq bats for improvement despite India's winning start

THIMPHU (BHUTAN)

INDIA got off to a winning start in the U17 SAFF Championship with a 1-0 win over Bangladesh at the Changlimithang Stadium. The game was in a deadlock for 91 minutes until Sumit Sharma's towering header won the game for the nation.

Bangladesh were never going to be a pushover though. They were a tough nut to crack 12 months ago as well, where India managed to beat them 1-0 in the SAFF U16 Championship group stage and then 2-0 in the final. It was always going to be a close affair again under the

overcast Thimphu sky. But head coach Ishfaq Ahmed was far from pleased with the display in the first 45 minutes.

"Believe me, you don't want to listen to what I told them at half-time," AIFF quoted Ahmed as saying.

"I was really angry with them because I know the level of these guys. We changed things because Bangladesh set up a low, mid-block. We switched Vishal (Yadav) to the left and Samson (Ahongshangbam) to the right because we wanted to open them up more on the wings and create chances from wide positions because that's usually the only way to

beat this kind of a setup," he added.

That worked in India's favour as they became increasingly dominant on the wings in the second half. Ahmed's substitutions were on point as he injected more pace via the fresh legs of Rishi Singh and Manbhakpur Malngiang. It was the latter, who assisted Sumit's winning goal with a fine cross after a short-corner routine.

India will face Maldives in their second and final Group A match on September 24. The semi-finals are scheduled for September 28, followed by the final on September 30.



Brief scores

India 376 and 287/4 dec in 64 overs (Shubman Gill 119 not out, Rishabh Pant 109; Mehidy Hasan Miraz 2-103) lead Bangladesh 149 and 158/4 in 37.2 overs (Najmul Hossain Shanto 51 not out, Shadman Islam 35; Ravichandran Ashwin 3-63) by 357 runs.

India squad for U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers announced

NEW DELHI: India U20 head coach Ranjan Chaudhuri, on Saturday, announced a 23-member squad for the 2025 AFC U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers to be held in Laos from September 25-29.

The Blue Colts are placed in Group G along with Iran, Mongolia and hosts Laos.

The India U20 squad

Goalkeepers: Divyaj Dhaval Thakkar, Sahil, Priyansh Dubey. **Defenders:** Pramveer, L Hembra Meetei, Nangbam Surajkumar Singh, Malemgamba Singh Thokchom, Dhanajit Ashangbam, Manabir Basumatary, Thomas Cherian, Sonam Tsewang Lhokham. **Midfielders:** Manjot Singh Dhami, Vanlalpeka Guite, Akash Tirkey, Ebindas Yesudasan, Ishaan Shishodia, Manglenhang Kippen. **Forwards:** Kelvin Singh Taorem, Korou Singh Thingujam, Monirul Molla, Thanglalsoun Gangete, Naoba Meitei Pangambam, Gwngwsar Goyary. **Head coach:** Ranjan Chaudhuri.

The fixtures: Mongolia vs India (Sep 25); India vs Iran (Sep 27); India vs Laos (Sep 29).

Sundar-Jeevan and Yuki move to semis in separate events in China

NEW DELHI: India's Vijay Sundar Prashanth and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan found a way to prevail over second seeds Julian Cash and Llyod Glasspool in a tough battle in the Hangzhou Open quarterfinals while Yuki Bhambhani progressed to the Chengdu Open semifinals with his partner on Saturday.

In Hangzhou, Sundar and left-handed Jeevan lost the opening set but came back strong to emerge 6-7 (4) 7-6 (6) 10-8 winners in an energy-sapping contest that also tested their nerves. The match lasted two hours.

They next face third seeds Ariel Behar and Robert Galloway. "We played a good match. We knew we are playing a good team. I don't think they have played together before. Both of them have big serves. We knew if we kept holding our service games, we will have chances in the tie break," said Sundar. "We took the mini chances in the tie break. We stuck to our team plan," added Sundar, who played the first half of the season with Anirudh Chandrasekar before teaming up with Jeevan.

Harmanpreet nominated for FIH Player of the Year

NEW DELHI

SKIPPER Harmanpreet Singh, who powered India to a second successive bronze medal in hockey at the Olympics in Paris, was on Saturday nominated for the FIH Player of the Year Award.

The 28-year-old ace drag-flicker, who was the top scorer at the Paris Olympics with 10 goals from eight matches, had previously won the award twice in a row from 2020-22. "It is a great honour to be nominated for the FIH Player of the Year Award again," the Indian defender stated in a Hockey India release.

"While I am elated to be named among some of the best players in the world, I would like to acknowledge that it would not have been possible without the support of my

team. "All the goals I have scored in the FIH Hockey Pro League, and the Paris 2024 Olympic Games are because the team created those goal-scoring chances for me," he added.

Harmanpreet has been nominated along with the Dutch duo of Thierry Brinkman and Joep de Mol, Hannes Müller of Germany and Zach Wallace of England. All international matches held in 2024, including Test matches, the FIH Hockey Pro League, FIH Hockey Nations Cups, FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers and the Olympic Games were taken into consideration.

The calm and composed India captain scored seven of his 10 goals through penalty corners while the remaining three goals were pen-

alty strokes. Harmanpreet described the Paris Olympics as the pinnacle of his career, expressing gratitude to his team for its unwavering support during challenging times, including his struggles with penalty corners in the previous World Cup.

"The Olympic Games in Paris was not just the highlight of the year, but the highlight of my whole career so far. The team has always had my back, especially during the World Cup last year where I couldn't get a goal from penalty corners.



VANTIKA HELPS INDIAN WOMEN DRAW WITH US

BUDAPEST

INTERNATIONAL Master Vantika Agrawal delivered the goods when it was badly needed, defeating Grandmaster Irina Krush to force a 2-2 draw against the United States while the Indian men stayed in sole lead after splitting points with Uzbekistan in the ninth round of the of the 45th Chess Olympiad currently underway here.

The Indian think-tank rested an out-of-form Grandmaster D Harika but it did not change the fortunes on the top board as R Vaishali went down to Gulrukhegim Tokhirjonova.

On the second board, Divya Deshmukh settled for the peace result in an uneventful game with black against Carissa Yip. On the fourth board, Tania Sachdev had almost everything going in her favour but could not find

Men split points with Uzbekistan

the knock-out blow when the opportunity came to share the point with Alice Lee.

It was left to Vantika to equalise the score and the young girl played with a lot of heart and commitment to beat her higher-rated opponent. For the record, Krush blundered in mutual time pressure and Vantika was remorseless in her attack.

The draw took India to 15 points, and they will now probably need two victories in the last two rounds to keep the gold medal chances alive.

Kazakhstan emerged as the new sole leader in this section on 16 points, defeating Poland 2.5-1.5. Alua Nurman played the star performer for Kazakh women as she won on the fourth board

45TH CHESS OLYMPIAD



against Alicja Sliwicka after the top three boards had ended in draws.

With Kazakhstan in front, India is in sole second position and they are trailed by as many as nine teams on 14 points each. In the penultimate round, Kazakhstan will face another stiff test against second seed Georgia, while the Indian women will take on a depleted China.

Important Results (Round 9) Open:

India (17) drew with Uzbekistan (15) 2-2 (D Gukesh drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov; Javokhir Sindarov drew with R Praggnanandhaa; Arjun Erigaisi drew with Shamsiddin Vokhidov; Jakhongir Vakhidov drew with Vidit Gujrathi); USA (15) beat Hungary (14) 2.5-1.5; China (15) beat Iran

(13) 2.5-1.5; Norway (12) lost to Slovenia (14) 1-3; Armenia (14) beat Germany (12) 2.5-1.5. Women: USA (14) drew with India (15) 2-2 (Gulrukhegim Tokhirjonova beat R Vaishali; Divya Deshmukh drew with Carissa Yip; Irina Krush lost to Vantika Agrawal; Tania Sachdev drew with Alice Lee); Kazakhstan (16) beat Poland (14) 2.5-1.5; Ukraine (14) drew with Armenia (14) 2-2; France (12) lost to Georgia (14) 0.5-3.5; China (14) beat Turkey (12) 3-1. Top standings after 9 rounds: Open: 1. India - 17 points; 2-4. USA, Uzbekistan - 15 points each; 5-9. Slovenia, Ukraine, Serbia, Hungary, Armenia - 14 points each. Women: 1. Kazakhstan - 16; 2. India - 15; 3-11. China, Armenia, Poland, USA, Spain, Germany, Ukraine, Georgia, Vietnam - 14 each.