

sunday pioneer

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India, Indonesia decide to expand defence, trade ties



US-India relations to grow STRONGER under Trump: USISPF chief




Dr Vineeth Ganganna's JOURNEY from Orthopedics to IPS



QUOTE OF THE DAY
The pioneer

No PMAY houses for Telangana if the Congress Government names the housing scheme after 'Indiramma'. If the photo of Prime Minister Modi is not included on PDS ration cards and housing scheme documents a plan would be drafted to enable the Centre to directly provide housing and ration cards to the poor

— Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Union MoS



DON'T MISS...

Traffic curbs for R-Day fete in city

The NTR District Police Commissioner, SV Rajasekhara Babu, has announced traffic restrictions in Vijayawada city today because of the 76th Republic Day celebrations at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium. The restrictions will be in effect from 7 AM to 12 noon, during which vehicular movement will be diverted to alternative routes. Governor S Abdul Nazeer, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh Justice Dhiraj Singh...

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20 huts gutted, 6 hurt in fire mishap

A major fire broke out at Bhairavapatnam village in Mandavalli mandal during the early hours of Saturday, reducing 20 huts to ashes and injuring six persons, including two children. According to the police, the fire started in one hut and quickly spread to neighbouring houses, engulfing the entire colony within minutes. The injured, identified as Shahrukh Khan, Vamsi, Anu, Karthik, and Vicky, were rushed to the GGH in Kaikaluru.

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'Avoid fake narratives'

CEC Rajiv Kumar on Saturday requested political parties to avoid "disruptive campaigning" and "fake narratives", saying it might cause disillusionment among youngsters regarding the electoral process. He was addressing the 15th National Voters' Day event here in the presence of President Droupadi Murmu, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and representatives of political parties. At the same time, Chief Election Commissioner...

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India puts up a big show at Davos

As the five-day World Economic Forum Annual Meeting ended on Friday, Indian leaders said they could see trust for India in eyes of all global leaders and that was reflected in investment commitments totalling over Rs 20 lakh crore with Maharashtra grabbing the biggest pie of almost 80 per cent. Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who led the largest ever Indian delegation of five Union ministers and several leaders from states including three chief ministers, said trust and talent are the biggest factors attracting the world to India. All states and central government departments shared space for the first time in two India Pavilions and a joint press conference was held for the first time by state and Union ministers...

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AP global investment hub: CM

Vows increased focus on green energy, Artificial Intelligence

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has unveiled ambitious plans to position Andhra Pradesh as a global investment hub with a strong focus on green energy and artificial intelligence (AI). Speaking about his recent visit to Davos, where he interacted with global business leaders at the World Economic Forum (WEF), Naidu emphasised the state's transformation into a premier destination for investments.

"We aim to attract Rs 10 lakh crore in investments, particularly in green energy and green hydrogen," Naidu said, highlighting the strides made during the Davos meetings. He noted that Andhra Pradesh, once plagued by challenges, is now being repositioned on the global map.

Recalling his early visits to Davos in 1997, Naidu shared how Hyderabad was once mistaken for a city in Pakistan. "I promoted Hyderabad when no one knew about it, and today, I am doing the same for Andhra Pradesh," he said. The Chief Minister announced

- **Investment target:** The State plans to attract Rs 10 lakh crore in investments, especially in green hydrogen and energy
- **Major projects announced:** BPCL, NTPC, and others to invest significantly in petrochemicals, green hydrogen, and steel plants
- **Davos meetings:** Naidu highlights AP's investment potential in over 70 meetings with global companies
- **Amaravati leadership centre:** Plans for a global leadership centre in collaboration with CII and Singapore's IMD



- **Natural farming model:** AP aims to lead India in natural farming practices
- **Infrastructure development:** Naidu reaffirms commitment to completing Polavaram and developing Amaravati
- **IT revolution:** TCS unit in Visakhapatnam to create 10,000 jobs
- **Youthful workforce:** Naidu emphasises AP's young population as a key driver for growth
- **Opposition criticism:** CM says Oppn claims false, citing Singapore's continued support

"Hyderabad was once mistaken for a city in Pakistan. I promoted Hyderabad when no one knew about it, and today, I am doing the same for Andhra Pradesh."

major investment commitments, including BPCL's Rs 96,000 crore petrochemical complex in Ramayapatnam and a Rs 1.35 lakh crore steel plant near Anakapalle. NTPC plans to invest Rs 1.87 lakh crore in green hydrogen, while green ammonia production in Kakinada forms part of the Rs 10 lakh crore green energy investment.

Naidu also revealed plans to establish a global leadership centre in Amaravati in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Singapore's International Institute for Management Development (IMD). He added that Andhra Pradesh is poised to become a model state for natural farming and a petro hub, with an IT revolution on the horizon, supported by TCS's upcoming unit in Visakhapatnam, which will create 10,000 jobs.

He expressed optimism about the state's strategic advantages, including its coastline and youthful workforce, and highlighted discussions in Davos centred around green energy, AI, and deep tech. Naidu reaffirmed his commitment to completing infrastructure projects, including Polavaram, by 2047, and continuing rapid development in Amaravati with the Centre's support.



US SC clears Mumbai attack convict Tahawwur Rana's extradition to India

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

The US Supreme Court has cleared Mumbai attack convict Tahawwur Rana's extradition to India, dismissing his review petition against the move. India is seeking the extradition of Rana, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, as he is wanted in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks case. This was Rana's last legal chance not to be extradited to India. Earlier, he lost a legal battle in several federal courts, including the US Court of Appeals for the North Circuit in San Francisco.

Rana on November 13 filed a petition for a writ of certiorari before the US Supreme Court. This was denied by the apex court on January 21, a day after Donald Trump was sworn in as the American President. "Petition DENIED" the Supreme Court said. Rana, 64, is currently detained at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Los Angeles. Earlier the US government had argued in the court that the petition for a writ of certiorari should be denied. US Solicitor General Elizabeth B Prelogar said this in his filing before the Supreme Court on December 16. She said Rana was not entitled to relief from extradition to India in this case. In his petitions for a writ of certiorari to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, Rana had argued that he was tried and acquitted in federal court in the Northern District of Illinois (Chicago) on charges relating to the 2008 terrorist attack on Mumbai.

Vijayasai steps down as RS MP

RECONSIDER DECISION, YSRCP URGES SENIOR LEADER

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As announced earlier, YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leader and Rajya Sabha Member V Vijayasai Reddy submitted his resignation to Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar in New Delhi on Saturday. Reddy's departure, citing "personal reasons," comes after two terms in the Upper House and follows recent speculation about his future political course. He had previously announced his retirement from politics on Friday, denying any intention to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).



Speaking to the media after his resignation, Reddy reaffirmed his commitment to Hindu Dharma and his devotion to Lord Venkateshwara, stating, "In my long political career, I have never lied," while dismissing rumours of aligning with the BJP. He further clarified

that his resignation was driven by personal reasons, not any external pressure or desire for another position, and he expressed deep gratitude to the YSR family for their support over four decades.

Reddy's resignation follows an ongoing investigation by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) regarding his alleged involvement in the Kakinada Sea Port case. He rejected any suggestion that his decision was an attempt to evade legal scrutiny, asserting, "If I quit politics, I will be weak, not strong. Why would anyone close the cases on me if I resign?"

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HOMES TO SHELTERLESS CM to hand over keys on Feb 1: Kolusu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Housing, Information & Public Relations, Kolusu Parthasarathy, has announced that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu will hand over house keys to beneficiaries in Tethali village, Tanuku constituency, on February 1. This event will kick off the distribution of keys for 1.14 lakh completed houses across the State, with local MLAs, public representa-

tives, and officials taking part in the distribution in their respective areas.

Addressing the media on Saturday, Parthasarathy highlighted the coalition government's focus on the welfare of SC, ST, and BC communities, and its commitment to development across the state. He stated that the government aims to complete 7 lakh homes under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) by December 2025, generating 7 crore workdays and Rs 2,100 crore in income through MGNREGA.



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No more 'Doli' ordeals in Agency areas: Dy CM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deputy Chief Minister and Panchayat Raj, Rural Development and Forests Minister Pawan Kalyan announced an initiative to enhance road connectivity in tribal regions of Andhra Pradesh. The government has allocated Rs 275 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) to improve infrastructure in these remote areas, aiming to end the long-standing dependence on 'Doli' (makeshift stretchers) for transport.

Of the total allocation, Rs 246 crore has been earmarked for Agency areas in Alluri Sitarama Raju (ASR) district, funding the



construction of 71 roads covering 265.16 kilometres. The Central government will contribute Rs 146 crore (60%), while the State government will provide Rs 100 crore (40%).

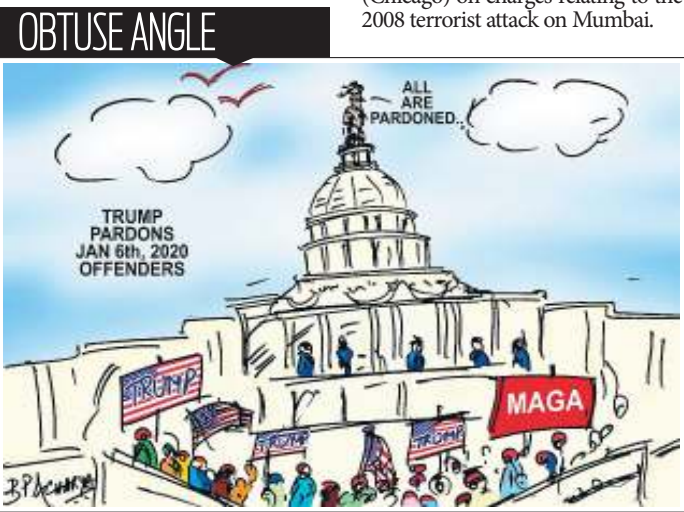
Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, during his recent visit to the ASR district, laid the foundation for several road projects and emphasised the government's commitment to tribal welfare. He noted that these roads would connect remote villages, improving access to essential services and boosting overall development.

Prez Murmu bats for 'One Nation One Election'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday advocated for the "One Nation One Election" initiative, asserting it has the potential to redefine "good governance" in the country by promoting consistency in governance, preventing policy paralysis, mitigating resource diversion, and alleviating financial burdens on the state.

In her address to the nation ahead of the 76th Republic Day, she emphasised the government's ongoing efforts to "eliminate remnants of a colonial mindset that have lingered in the country for decades" and cited the replacement of the British-era criminal laws with three new modern laws.



OBTUSE ANGLE

India set for GSLV-F15 launch milestone on Jan 29

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

India is set to reach a milestone in its space programme with the upcoming launch of the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)-F15 on January 29. This launch, the 17th mission of the GSLV programme, will also mark the 100th launch from the country's spaceport at Sriharikota, underscoring India's growing capabilities in space exploration.

The GSLV-F15 will carry the NVS-02 satellite, which is slated to be placed into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO). The mission will take off from the Second Launch Pad (SLP) at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SHAR), located in Sriharikota,

a site that has become synonymous with India's space successes.

What makes this mission particularly noteworthy is that it is the 11th flight of GSLV featuring the indigenous Cryogenic stage, an advanced technology that highlights India's self-reliance in space technology.

The NVS-02 satellite is part of the country's Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC), an independent regional navigation satellite system that aims to provide accurate positioning, velocity, and timing services not just to India, but also to neighbouring regions up to 1,500 km beyond its borders. The satellite, housed in a 3.4-

meter metallic payload fairing, will offer two key services through NavIC: the Standard

Positioning Service (SPS), which will provide location accuracy better than 20 meters and tim-

ing accuracy better than 40 nanoseconds, and the Restricted Service (RS), an encrypted service meant for authorized users.

This successful launch will enhance India's satellite-based navigation services and provide a reliable alternative to global navigation systems, contributing to the country's push towards greater self-reliance in space and satellite technology.

With this mission, India continues to cement its place as a key player in the global space community, showcasing advancements that could have far-reaching benefits for sectors ranging from telecommunication to disaster management.



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Revanth's Davos Stint Leaves TDP Lobby in a Tizzy

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy's success at Davos has become the talk of the town, sending shockwaves through circles that once believed Andhra Pradesh's TDP lobby held the upper hand in securing lucrative deals. With Rs 1.7 lakh crore worth of MoUs bagged for Telangana, whispers are rife about how Revanth managed to pull off what many thought impossible. While Telangana's spending on the Davos trip was reportedly modest, the contrast with Andhra Pradesh's efforts couldn't be more glaring. Andhra seemingly spent three times more than Telangana. Despite setting up a pavilion, Andhra reserved a hotel to conduct the meetings. The Pavilion was just a namesake. The lacklustre performance has left many scratching their heads. Chandrababu's recent remark that the Davos summit is more about "marketing than signing MoUs" has raised eyebrows, particularly among those who remember his criticism of Former CM Jagan Mohan Reddy for skipping the event altogether. As the Kamma lobby, known for leveraging high-profile networks, grapples with this unexpected turn, murmurs suggest that Revanth's achievement has thrown a spanner in their carefully curated narrative of influence. The sheer scale of Telangana's success under Revanth has left many wondering - was this a masterstroke of strategy or a dose of beginner's luck? Either way, it seems Davos has become a stage for shifting dynamics in the Telugu states.

Revanth Reddy is simply following his guru's footsteps," he remarked, dragging in a laundry list of past scandals - phone tapping, Kaleshwaram, drugs, and farmhouses - that he says have conveniently disappeared from the spotlight. While the Formula E case fizzles out, Sanjay seems to think the Congress and its media frenzy have found a new formula: hype without action. The question now is, who's running the real race - KTR, Congress, or the breaking news channels?

intimidating the press, journalists have taken this approach in stride, with some even anticipating the "name and channel" drill during his interactions. Media professionals, known for their resilience, continue to ask hard-hitting questions, unfazed by Bhatti's attempt to shift the focus momentarily. Interestingly, Bhatti's responses appear to vary depending on the perceived leanings of the journalist's channel. For opposition-friendly outlets, his replies often take a sharper tone, leading to lively exchanges that have become a hallmark of his press meets. Rather than deterring the media, Bhatti's tactic has added an element of theatre to his interactions. The press, meanwhile, remains as determined as ever to seek answers, ensuring that their role in holding power to account remains undiminished.

BRS forgets its glory while taking potshots

In a classic case of shooting itself in the foot, the BRS seems to be so busy undermining the Rs 17 lakh crore investments secured at Davos that it has forgotten to celebrate its role in making them possible. Whispers in political circles suggest that of these deals, at least Rs1 lakh crore worth of investments in data centres can directly be credited to KCR's vision for a power-surplus Telangana. Remember those days before 2014? Industries protesting at Indira Park over power cuts - Telangana was stuck with the dubious tag of being power-deficient.

Jagga Reddy's no-filter chitchat sets political circles abuzz

TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy has once again proved that he's the king of candid comments, sparking a buzz with his latest unfiltered remarks. Known for speaking his mind without worrying about the aftermath, Jagga Reddy's recent chitchat with journalists has become the talk of the town—and not just within Congress circles. Dropping a

REPORTERS' DIARY

Fast forward to KCR's tenure, and the state transformed into a power-surplus hub, a fact he proudly flaunted for a decade. And now, these data centres, which demand enormous amounts of electricity, are not just coming in but are set to contribute heavily to the state's coffers through power sales. But here's where the irony gets thick: in its eagerness to discredit the Davos investments as "fake," the BRS is missing the golden opportunity to take credit for its efforts. Meanwhile, Chandrababu Naidu, true to form, continues to live off his "Cyberabad success" stories. Political insiders are smirking at how the BRS's attempt to downplay Revanth Reddy's big Davos moment has turned into a case of throwing out the baby with the bathwater. With the Congress government setting the stage for the next drama, one thing's clear - while the BRS bickers and forgets its legacy, Telangana's power sector quietly stands tall as the unsung hero of this saga.

bombshell, Jagga Reddy admitted, "No politician, including me, irrespective of political affiliation, does politics without taking money from others." This bold confession has left political circles abuzz, with many questioning the intent behind such an open statement. Taking a swipe at the current trend of revenge politics, Jagga didn't hold back on criticizing leaders who indulge in it. He pointed out that KCR is "confined to a farmhouse" while engaging in revenge politics and warned that this practice brings nothing but regret in the long run. "Power is not permanent for any party," he declared, emphasizing that leaders who focus on political fights rather than governance will eventually feel the sting of history's judgment. Jagga Reddy also praised past leaders like YSR, Chandrababu Naidu, Kiran Kumar Reddy, and Rosaiah for steering clear of revenge politics, claiming that revenge isn't in the blood of Telangana's people. "I've always been against revenge politics," he added, leaving plenty of room for speculation about who he was really targeting with his remarks. As always, Jagga Reddy's unfiltered words have sparked conversations across party lines, with many wondering if there's more to his comments than meets the eye. One thing's for sure - when Jagga Reddy speaks, everyone listens, even if it leaves them scratching their heads.

(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate, K Venkateshwarlu)

Bandi Sanjay's formula for breaking news drama

Bandi Sanjay, not one to mince words, has once again stirred up a storm, and this time, it's all about the Formula E-Car Racing case. On Saturday, the fiery Union Minister accused the Congress government of playing to the galleries, teasing KT Ramarao's arrest for over a month and leaving media channels breathless with endless breaking news updates. "The channels almost died of giving breaking news!" Sanjay quipped, mocking the frenzy. While everyone waited for KTR to be hauled up, the government suddenly shifted gears, launching an investigation into Greenko and other firms. The media, predictably, pivoted to fresh breaking news, but Sanjay wasn't buying it. "What happened after all the noise? No arrests, no developments. Just another show," he scoffed, claiming the Congress thrives on one drama after another, with Davos now taking centre stage. Sanjay didn't stop there. He alleged that Congress received hefty donations from Greenko while simultaneously intimidating the company. "Is it right to take money as party donations and then trouble the same company? This is KCR-style politics, and

Bhatti's 'name and channel' routine raises eyebrows

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka's habit of asking journalists for their names and channels whenever posed with tough questions has become the buzz in media circles. This repeated line of questioning, often delivered with a pointed tone, has turned into a routine that many reporters now see as his shield to avoid difficult questions. Far from

CM to hand... All India Shramik Samman Yatra kicks off in V'wada

Continued from Page 1

Criticising the previous government's mishandling of housing projects, Parthasarathi assured that the current government is working hard to provide homes to eligible individuals. He also revealed that Rs 502 crore had been allocated to continue housing projects, despite financial challenges caused by the former administration. The Minister further mentioned that the state government is providing free sand worth Rs 5.19 crore to support house construction for the poor and has approved land allocations for housing sites for rural and urban poor.

The All India Shramik Samman Yatra, a historic initiative to unite and empower India's unorganised workforce, commenced on Saturday. Covering 12 states, the Yatra will conclude at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi, on February 25, aiming to spotlight the rights and pressing concerns of workers across the nation.

The Yatra began with a rally at Rajarajeswaripeta, Vijayawada, focusing on justice, safety, and dignity for all workers. Participants highlighted key demands, including fair wages, safe working conditions, social security, and the protection of workers' fundamental rights. The inaugural event was led by Varghese, Convener of the Working People's Coalition (WPC). Notable speakers included Alladi Deva Kumar, Executive Secretary of DBRC; Ch Samuel Anil Kumar, Deputy Director of DBRC; Vyakula Mary; Sister Justus; and Madhav, Coordinator of India Labour Line. Representatives from Indian Labour Line and other worker organisations also participated. The Yatra addresses challenges faced by unorganised workers, such as inadequate wages, job insecurity, and



TODAY	
ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham:	Krishna Paksha
Tithi:	
Dwadashi:	Jan 25 08:32 PM to Jan 26 08:55 PM
Trayodashi:	Jan 26 08:55 PM to Jan 27 08:35 PM
Nakshatram:	
Jyeshtha:	Jan 25 07:07 AM to Jan 26 08:26 AM
Moola:	Jan 26 08:26 AM to Jan 27 09:02 AM
Rahukalam:	4:40 PM to 6:04 PM
Yamagandam:	12:28 PM to 1:52 PM
Variyam:	07:23 AM to 09:02 AM
Gulika:	3:16 PM to 4:40 PM
Amritakalam:	02:33 AM to 04:11 AM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	12:06 PM to 12:50 PM
VIJAYAWADA WEATHER	
Forecast:	Mostly Sunny
Temp:	33°
Humidity:	61%
Sunrise:	6:39 AM
Sunset:	6:01 PM
Updated:	January 25, 2025 5:00 PM

Balayya chosen for Padma...

Continued from Page 1

A cultural icon, Balakrishna has made significant contributions to Telugu cinema through his acting and philanthropic efforts, leaving a lasting legacy. KL Krishna was recognised for his invaluable contributions to literature and education, while Madugula Nagaphani Sharma was honoured for his exceptional work in the arts. Manda Krishna Madiga, a stalwart in public affairs and social justice, received the award for his relentless efforts in uplifting marginalised communities. Miriyala Apparao was posthumously awarded for his

Prime Minister Modi congratulated the awardees, praising their dedication and innovation. "Their achievements are a testament to their hard work, passion, and selfless service to society. They inspire us all to strive for excellence," he said. The Padma Awards 2025 also recognised personalities from other fields, including actors Ajith Kumar and Shobana Chandrakumar, and posthumously, singer Pankaj Udhas. Additionally, singer Arijit Singh and cricketer R. Ashwin were honoured with Padma Shri awards. In total, seven Padma Vibhushan, 19 Padma Bhushan, and 113 Padma Shri awards were announced.

Vizag poised to become IT hub

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Prominent IT companies are setting their sights on Visakhapatnam, positioning the city as the next hub for expansion. With an increasing interest from the IT sector following the formation of the coalition government, efforts are underway to accommodate these growing demands. District authorities, acting on government directives, are in the process of identifying approximately 500 acres on the city's outskirts to facilitate these developments. Additionally, they are exploring the acquisition of D-patta and subsidised lands near the identified locations to ensure adequate space. Tech giants Google and TCS are currently in advanced stages of land acquisition plan-

Google and TCS plan expansion



Two months ago, representatives from both companies announced their intent to construct their own facilities if suitable land was allocated. Google has requested 80 acres of land within a 40-50 kilometer radius of the coastline to establish data centers. The company has also opted to distribute its operations across three separate locations rather than consolidating them into a single site. In response, author-

ities have identified several government-owned and hilly terrains as potential options. TCS, on the other hand, has sought 30 acres for its expansion plans. In the interim, the company is preparing to commence operations at the Millennium Towers in Rushikonda. The first phase of its operations is expected to launch within five to six months. Over the next five years, TCS plans to expand its Visakhapatnam campus to accommodate approximately 10,000 employees. Google, too, is set to begin construction of its facilities by the end of this year, marking a significant milestone in its plans to establish a footprint in the city. Government officials have

clarified that land will not be allocated to IT companies free of cost. Instead, it will be sold at fixed prices. Infrastructure development in these areas will be overseen by the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC) or the Industries Department. The entry of industry leaders like Google and TCS is expected to attract a wave of small and medium-sized IT companies to the region. This influx is likely to drive economic activity across multiple sectors, solidifying Visakhapatnam's position as a growing IT hub. With these developments, Visakhapatnam is on the brink of a major transformation, signalling a promising future for the city as a significant player in India's IT landscape.

Sri Lankan team to study AP's natural farming model

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A delegation from Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement will visit Andhra Pradesh to study the Andhra Pradesh Community Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) model. The 11-member team will be in the state from January 27 to February 7 to gain insights into the globally recognised natural farming model implemented by Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS). According to RySS officials, the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, in collaboration with NOW Partners, a global alliance promoting regenerative and sustainable practices, plans to pilot the APCNF model in two Sri Lankan villages. The delegation aims to adopt Andhra Pradesh's sustainable farming practices to promote ecological balance, empower farmers, and enhance food security in their country.

Swachhata drive and trekking at Kondaveedu Fort by CGST

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As part of the ongoing 'Swachhata Pakhwada 2025' celebrations, the CGST Guntur Commissionerate, in association with Guntur Trekking Kings and Decathlon Guntur, organised a Swachhata drive and trekking programme at the historic Kondaveedu Fort on 25th January. The initiative aimed to promote cleanliness, environmental awareness, and physical fitness among CGST officials, staff, and their families.



Over 70 participants, including officers, staff, and their family members, joined the 5-kilometre trek through the scenic surroundings of the fort. Alongside the trekking activity, participants took part in a cleanliness drive, collecting over 100 kilograms of plastic waste and other non-biodegradable materials from the area. An awareness session on cleanliness, sustainability, and conser-

vation was also conducted, emphasising the importance of collective efforts to protect natural resources and maintain hygiene. Sadhu Narasimha Reddy, Commissioner of CGST Guntur Commissionerate, addressed the gathering and appreciated the enthusiasm shown by the participants. He underlined the need for environmental preservation and

Ex-MLA Malladi condemns demolition of Abhayanjaneya Swamy Temple

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP Central Constituency Coordinator and former MLA Malladi Vishnu has strongly condemned the demolition of the Abhayanjaneya Swamy Temple at Seethammadhara in Visakhapatnam, alleging it was carried out without prior notice or proper procedure.



Vishnu criticised the ruling coalition government for increasing temple demolitions and attacks on priests since assuming power. He termed the act a grave offence and recalled similar incidents, including the demolition of the Nagamma Temple in Nellore for

road expansion and the displacement of deity idols. He further pointed to the destruction of the Trikoteswara Swamy and Kanakadurga Amma Temples in Palnadu and the demolition of a 40-year-old Nagendra Swamy Temple at Madhuranagar canal bund.

Road safety awareness highlighted

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Deputy Transport Commissioner (DTC) A. Mohan stressed the importance of prioritising passenger safety and courteous behaviour among drivers during the 36th National Road Safety Celebrations. The month-long event, organised by the IFTU Pragathiseela Auto Workers Union, was inaugurated at the Press Club in Vijayawada on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, DTC Mohan noted that while

Vijayawada's roads have not increased in number, the rapid rise in vehicles has caused frequent traffic congestion. He urged drivers to strictly follow traffic rules to ensure public safety and convenience. "Traffic rules and the Transport Acts are stringent, and their enforcement is the shared responsibility of the police and transport departments," he said.

Traffic Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (ADCP) AVL Prasanna Kumar highlighted the significance of responsible driving and cau-

tioned drivers against consuming alcohol or indulging in risky habits. "Every driver should be a hero for their family by adopting safe driving practices," he remarked while explaining key traffic regulations to prevent road mishaps. IFTU Pragathiseela Auto Workers Union President D. Srinivasa Rao, along with leaders Ch. Peddiraju, Pingali Ramana, and Y. Appa Rao, actively participated in the programme, supporting efforts to raise awareness about road safety.

It's an internal...

Continued from Page 1

Turning to the state's broader political landscape, Naidu expressed concern over the governance under former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, accusing the Jagan government of having caused damage to Andhra Pradesh's reputation globally. "The Jagan government has also brought about destruction to the Singaporeans, which is why they are reluctant to invest here. AP is now in a situation where it is hated worldwide," he said. He criticised the influx of unqualified individuals into politics, suggesting that this could lead to such adverse outcomes.

In response to comments made by Telangana Congress leader Revanth Reddy about Hyderabad, Naidu defended his development of the city, saying, "I developed Hyderabad for the Telugu community. It doesn't matter what anyone says now. No one destroyed Hi-Tech City, not even those who came to power after me. But here in AP, the previous government demolished Praja Vedika. They played the three-capital game without having capital. Additionally, the number of flights arriving at Gannavaram Airport has decreased, and Jagan has stopped the subsidies. We are now fixing all these issues and rebuilding AP."

Vijayasai steps down as...

Continued from Page 1

YSRCP reacted to Reddy's resignation with a statement expressing respect for his decision while making it clear that they did not approve of his departure. The party described him as a pillar of strength, having stood by the party through both challenging and triumphant times. "Even though we do not approve of your decision, we still respect your choice," said the party in a post on 'X'. YSRCP also expressed

respect for Reddy's desire to shift his focus to agriculture, a field he has expressed interest in pursuing. Despite Reddy's decision, party leaders like Maddila Gurumoorthy urged him to reconsider, stressing the importance of unity in securing the re-election of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. Gurumoorthy, speaking outside Reddy's residence, highlighted that experienced leaders like Reddy were crucial for the party's future. In

response, Reddy said he would "think and talk about it." Former minister K Goverdhan Reddy praised Vijayasai Reddy for his courage and determination, recalling his significant role in securing Jagan Mohan Reddy's position as Chief Minister despite facing challenges from political adversaries. Goverdhan Reddy reiterated that YSRCP valued Reddy's contributions and would continue to do so, regardless of his final decision.

Meanwhile, Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president YS Sharmila commented on the development, pointing to Reddy's long-standing association with Jagan Mohan Reddy and questioning why several of his close associates were leaving the YSRCP. She alleged that the Chief Minister had deceived the people and lost credibility as a leader. As Reddy embarks on his plans outside of politics, YSRCP remains hopeful that he will reconsider his decision, while the political landscape in Andhra Pradesh watches closely for any further developments.

Traffic curbs for R-Day fete in city today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The NTR District Police Commissioner, SV Rajasekhar Babu, has announced traffic restrictions in Vijayawada city today because of the 76th Republic Day celebrations at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium. The restrictions will be in effect from 7 AM to 12 noon, during which vehicular movement will be diverted to alternative routes.

Governor S Abdul Nazeer, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur, and several Ministers, MPs, MLAs, MLCs, and senior IAS and IPS officers are expected to attend the event. Commissioner Babu has appealed to the public to cooperate with the police during the restrictions.

As per the guidelines,



vehicles travelling between the Police Control Room and Benz Circle will be diverted via RTC Y Junction, Eluru Road, Swarna Palace,

Deepthi Centre, Chuttugunta, Padavala Revu, Gunadala, and Ramavara Padu Ring. Similarly, traffic from RTC Y Junction to

Benz Circle will be routed through Bankar Locks, Raghavaiah Park, Old Fire Station, American Hospital, Mazjid Road, Netaji Bridge, Geetha nagar, and Screw Bridge.

Vehicles coming from Benz Circle's second flyover towards Bandar Road will be diverted at Fakeergudem via Screw Bridge and Netaji Bridge. No vehicles will be allowed from Red Circle to RTA Junction or from Sikhamani Centre to Veterinary Junction. Only invitees with valid passes will be permitted on MG Road between the DCP Bungalow and Benz Circle.

RTC buses will also be rerouted. Buses on MG Road between RTC Y Junction and Benz Circle will be diverted via Eluru Road and Rama varappadu Ring. Commissioner Babu has advised pass holders to reach the IGMC Stadium by 7:45 AM.



12 arrested in city for ganja trade

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada police arrested 12 persons on Saturday for their involvement in the transportation, sale, and purchase of ganja in various parts of the city. Officials from the NTR District Police Commissionerate's Law & Order and Task Force seized 23 kg of ganja worth Rs 1.40 lakh during the operation. Among those arrested, eight were identified as repeat offenders with criminal records. The

arrests were made in a park under the jurisdiction of the Governorpeta Police Station.

Taskforce Additional DCP A. Srinivasa Rao presented the arrested individuals to the media at the Police Command Control Room. The accused include Pemmadi Mahesh (Kankipadu), Kommuru Sai Kiran (Tadigadapa), Tenneru Rohith (Kankipadu), Katuru Mahesh (Kankipadu), Valla bhaneni Sai Sriram (Ayodhya Nagar), Boddu Umesh (Kankipadu),

Shaik Akbar Bhasha (Bhavanipuram), Khagga Venkata Tarun (Poranki), Nadella Tarun Chowdary (Lenin Nagar), Shaik Fathima (Murali Nagar), and Dungala Murali (Poorna nandapeta).

ADCP Srinivasa Rao explained that the accused procured ganja at low prices and sold it at a profit to several individuals in the city. He revealed that the money earned was used for entertainment activities. Under the leadership of Director

General of Police (DGP) Ch. Dwaraka Tirumala Rao and NTR District Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu, efforts are underway to make Vijayawada a 'Drugs-Free City'. The ADCP urged the public to report incidents of ganja cultivation, sale, or use, assuring that informers' identities would remain confidential. Information can be shared via email at antinarcoticcell@vza.apolice.gov.in or by contacting 9121162475.



Home Minister inspects Visakha Girls' Home

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha visited the Government Child Home for Girls to assess the current situation and interact with the residents. During her visit, the Minister checked on the welfare of the 56 girls housed in the facility, some of whom hail from other states and are as young as toddlers. She assured them of the government's commitment to their safety and development.

Speaking to reporters, the Minister revealed that two girls were recently returned to their families, while another two relocated to nearby girls' homes. Alongside academics, the girls are receiving vocational training to promote self-reliance. She noted that some residents are experiencing mental health challenges, and the government is ensuring proper medical supervision for those in need.

In a sharp critique of opposition parties, the Home Minister accused them of politicizing sensitive issues involving children. She stressed that the relocation of girls is done legally, based on

court orders, and reaffirmed the government's dedication to protecting vulnerable children. "We know our responsibilities and are committed to safeguarding these children. There is no need for external reminders," she said.

The Minister also addressed allegations and misinformation allegedly spread by the opposition. She highlighted inaccuracies on platforms such as YSRCP's Twitter account and accused them of misleading the public with lies over the last five years. "Those who have committed wrongdoings will be held accountable. The people are watching," she remarked.

Touching upon broader political issues, Anitha expressed dissatisfaction with the handling of the Ramatheertham case, citing confusion between the roles of the accused and witnesses. She criticised the opposition's governance record and baseless remarks on the state's participation in events like Davos. The visit reinforced the government's proactive approach to addressing key issues while taking a firm stance against political adversaries.

Internal unrest grips YSRCP after Vijayasai's resignation

SPECULATION SURROUNDS REDDY'S EXIT AMIDST FINANCIAL STRUGGLES AND GROWING FACTIONAL TENSIONS WITHIN THE PARTY

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) is grappling with internal unrest following the unexpected resignation announcement of Rajya Sabha member V Vijayasai Reddy. Once a central figure in the party, Reddy's sudden retirement from politics has sent shockwaves through political circles, raising questions about the true nature of his departure and whether there are underlying factors at play.

Speculation is rife that Aurobindo Pharma, a company linked to Reddy and involved in major dealings at Kakinada port, is facing significant financial distress. These financial challenges are thought to be contributing to the political shift, possibly complicating matters for party chief



YS Jaganmohan Reddy and prompting the exit of one of the party's top leaders.

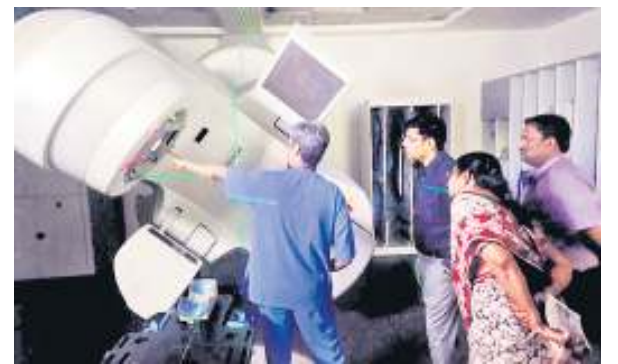
Before the rise of the YSRCP to power, Reddy was instrumental in managing the party's operations in Uttarandhra. His influence remained strong after the party's success, particularly in Visakhapatnam, where his dominance overshadowed other ministers. The leadership

under Reddy was marked by a strong-arm approach, with opposition leaders facing severe setbacks, including property destruction, legal cases, and instances of harassment. Key decisions during this time included the removal of Daspalla lands from government listings, changes to the Visakhapatnam-Bhogapuram coastal corridor, and land

acquisitions in Bhimili against local resistance.

Reddy's tenure also caused familial discord within the region. Ashok Gajapathi Raju, the chairman of Simhachalam Devasthanam, was ousted in favour of his niece, Sanchayita, creating friction within the influential Gajapathi family.

The internal dynamics of the party worsened following Reddy's removal from his position a year before the 2024 elections, with YV Subba Reddy taking over his responsibilities. After the party's electoral defeat, Jagan reassigned the Visakhapatnam charge to V Vijayasai Reddy. However, his attempts to regain control were met with resistance from local leaders such as MP MVV Satyanarayana and Auditor GV, exacerbating factional tensions within the party.



Vizag launches large-scale cancer and NCD screening initiative

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In line with the state government's initiative to curb the rise in cancer cases, authorities in the Visakhapatnam district have launched a large-scale cancer screening program. The initiative aims to detect the disease in its earliest stages among individuals aged 18 years and above. The target population for the program stands at 17,77,440, with 2,61,670 individuals already screened, accounting for approximately 13% of the total target.

The screening is being carried out through door-to-door surveys by Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs) and mid-level health providers, who are visiting homes across communities. If any symptoms of cancer are found, the details are forwarded to local Primary Health Centers (PHCs) for further evaluation. In cases where cancer is suspected, patients are referred to King George Hospital (KGH) for advanced testing and treatment.

The program has already shown concerning signs, with 720 individuals exhibiting symptoms of oral cancer, 670 showing early signs of breast cancer, and 730 suspected of having cervical cancer.

Additionally, 600 secondary evaluations have been conducted, resulting in 20 referrals to KGH for further testing.

Apart from cancer detection, the screening initiative is also gathering data on non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including hypertension and diabetes. The results have raised alarms, with 25,700 individuals diagnosed with hypertension and 19,290 with diabetes. One in every fourth or fifth household in the district is affected by these chronic diseases, highlighting the need for comprehensive healthcare programs.

Dr P Jagadishwar Rao, the District Medical and Health Officer, stressed the significance of early detection in improving health outcomes. "Our goal is to raise awareness and identify symptoms that individuals may not even recognize. Early-stage cancer detection can significantly improve treatment success," Dr. Rao said. Dr. Harika, Program Officer for RBSK and NCD/CDD, assured that the screening process is being closely monitored. "Field staff are ensuring screenings are conducted effectively and that any suspicious cases are immediately referred for follow-up care," Dr. Harika explained.

Best Electoral Practices Award for NTR DC

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Dr G Lakshmisha, NTR District Collector, has been conferred with the prestigious Best Electoral Practices Award in recognition of his exemplary contributions to improving electoral processes. The award was presented by Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary K Vijayanand during the 15th National Voters' Day celebrations held at the Tummalapalli Kaleshwaram Auditorium in Vijayawada on Saturday.

Dr Lakshmisha was honoured for his outstanding efforts in conducting voter awareness campaigns, facilitating the enrolment of new voters, and

ensuring the preparation of error-free electoral rolls. His dedication and meticulous work in strengthening democratic practices earned accolades from the Election Commission.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary K Vijayanand lauded Dr Lakshmisha's achievements, emphasising their importance in fostering a robust and inclusive electoral system. Former State Election Commissioner Dr Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar, Joint Chief Electoral Officer A Venkateswara Rao, and other dignitaries also congratulated Dr Lakshmisha for his remarkable contributions to the electoral process.



SCHOOL GAMES SEPAK TAKRAW NATIONALS AP boys' and girls' teams in quarter-finals

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The School Games Sepak Takraw Nationals for under-14 boys and girls, organised by the School Games Federation of Andhra Pradesh (SGFAP) in collaboration with the School Games Federation of NTR District, have progressed to the quarter-finals stage. Both the boys' and girls' teams from host Andhra Pradesh have secured their spots in the knockout rounds.

In the boys' category, teams from Manipur, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Gujarat, and Delhi have also made it to the quarter-finals. Similarly, in the girls' category, teams from Manipur, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana have advanced to the next stage. The Andhra Pradesh teams put up an impressive performance in the league matches to secure their place in the quarter-finals.



Secretary S. Ramesh stated that the quarter-finals and semi-finals would be conducted on Sunday, with the finals slated

DAY 2 RESULTS:

Boys: Gujarat defeated Bihar 15-12, 15-11; Delhi defeated Jharkhand 15-7, 15-13; AP defeated Maharashtra 15-7, 15-9.

for Monday. The event will conclude with the closing ceremony on the same day, he added.

Girls: Andhra Pradesh defeated Bihar 15-7, 15-4; Manipur defeated Jharkhand 15-4, 15-2; Gujarat defeated Maharashtra 15-13, 15-11.

Seminar on modern education challenges ends

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The two-day seminar titled "Leading People into the Challenging Modern World of Education" concluded successfully on Saturday at the YES-J Building, Andhra Loyola College Campus, Vijayawada. The event brought together 72 participants, including superiors from schools and colleges managed by Catholic Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, to address key challenges in modern education and explore innovative opportunities for educators.

On the second day, the Bishop of Nellore, Dr. MD Prakasam, presided over the seminar and delivered an inspiring address. Highlighting the vital role of Catholic educational institutions, he said, "Our mission as educators is



not merely to impart knowledge but to nurture responsible, ethical, and empathetic individuals who contribute positively to society."

Advocate Romy Chacko, a Supreme Court lawyer, presented an insightful session on the Minority Rights of Educational Institutions. He

discussed constitutional provisions and legal frameworks safeguarding the autonomy of minority-run institutions, stressing inclusivity, integrity, and accountability.

A session on the POCSO Act and Juvenile Justice Law was conducted by Pradeep and Annie Namratha from Project

CACA (Children Against Child Abuse). They emphasised the responsibilities of educational institutions in ensuring child safety, advocating robust reporting mechanisms, timely interventions, and child-friendly environments. Mental health and well-being in education were

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addressed by Pratibha Malhotra from Project CACA, who highlighted the need for mental health support within schools to create balanced and nurturing learning environments.

The seminar saw active participation from prominent figures, including Telangana Catholic Bishops' Council (TCBC) Education Commission secretary Sahaya Raj and media coordinator Dr. G. Sahaya Baskaran, among others.

MNCs keen to establish units in AP: Irrig Minister Nimmala

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Minister for Water Resources Development Nimmala Ramanaidu has announced that several multinational companies (MNCs) are coming forward to set up their units in Andhra Pradesh, promising to generate significant employment opportunities in the coming days.

The Minister was speaking as the chief guest at a Job Mela organised by the AP Skill Development Corporation, National Career Service, and BRR & DJR Degree College in Palakollu on Saturday.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister reiterated the government's commitment to creating over 20 lakh jobs in the next five years. Highlighting Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's efforts, he stated that the government is focused on bringing world-class technology, industries, and entrepreneurs to Andhra Pradesh to



secure a bright future for the youth.

He emphasised the government's priority on education and employment, adding that job fairs are being held in colleges to help students secure

jobs directly, eliminating the need to search for opportunities post-graduation.

Nimmala Ramanaidu urged students to make the most of these opportunities and contribute to the state's develop-

ment. He noted that the coalition government's initiatives are attracting major investments, supported by a special industrial policy aimed at fostering entrepreneurship in every household.

The Minister also highlighted the government's ongoing 'skill census' to assess the skills of youth across sectors and the establishment of 'Skill Hubs' in all 175 Assembly constituencies to provide technical training to unemployed youth. He assured that these efforts, along with skill development programmes, would enable the youth to secure jobs quickly.

Additionally, he announced the notification for filling 16,500 teacher posts through the DSC examination by the next academic year. Free coaching for 700 DSC aspirants is being provided by the Dharma Rao Foundation.

Earlier, the Minister distributed appointment letters to selected candidates and congratulated them. The event was attended by RDO Dahiraju, District Skill Development Officer P Lokman, District Employment Officer B Varalakshmi, and other officials.

Arrangements for CM's visit reviewed



PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Joint Collector T Rahul Kumar Reddy, along with other officials, reviewed the arrangements for Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's upcoming visit to Tanuku, scheduled for February 1.

As part of the preparations, the Joint Collector inspected

the construction of a helipad on the campus of SNVM Polytechnic. He also visited an alternative site for the helipad located near the highway at Tetali village.

During the inspection at the PMAY-NTR Nagar layout in Tetali village, Joint Collector Reddy, accompanied by Housing MD P Rajababu,

As part of the preparations, the Joint Collector inspected the construction of a helipad on the campus of SNVM Polytechnic. He also visited an alternative site for the helipad located near the highway at Tetali village

assessed the progress of arrangements. He issued instructions to officials, emphasising the need to complete all preparations for the Chief Minister's programme by January 30.

Housing Chief Engineer T Padmanabham, Additional SP V Bhima Rao, RDO Khateeb Bhano, and Housing Construction Officer Y Hariharanath were among the officials present during the inspection.

Govt to promote inclusive growth and tourism development: Durgesh

PNS ■ RAJAHMUNDRY

Minister for Tourism Development, Kandula Durgesh, has emphasised the government's commitment to achieving inclusive growth while simultaneously fostering the tourism sector in the state.

In a statement on Saturday, Minister Durgesh highlighted that the government is focused on both tourism development and the broader goal of inclusive, comprehensive growth along with job creation.

He explained that economic development would be driven by promoting sustainable practices and generating employment opportunities. The coalition government is determined to position Andhra



Pradesh as a leading destination in the tourism sector.

Reaffirming his commitment to the tourism sector's role in economic growth benefiting all sections of society, Durgesh recalled that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan have given spe-

cial attention to tourism for overall development.

"The Chief Minister has recently accorded 'Industry' status to the tourism sector. Following this, a new tourism policy for 2024-25 has been introduced," the Minister stated. Durgesh further revealed that during the tourism summit held in Vijayawada, they met with investors and received proposals for various tourism projects.

"The next tourism summits will be held in Visakhapatnam and Tirupati soon. The Central government has already sanctioned funds for the Akhanda Godavari and Gandikota tourism projects, and work on these has commenced," he added.

'CPI Maoists' TG secretary Bade Damodar not killed in Bijapur'

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Communist Party of India-Maoist Telangana State committee secretary and action team leader Bade Chokka Rao alias Damodar is still alive. He was believed to have been killed in encounter with the police in Chhattisgarh state.

It is now confirmed that the Telangana police intelligence inputs proved right.

Maoist party spokesperson Samatha released a statement, saying that there was no truth in the announcement that Damodar was among those killed in the encounter with the police.

The statement alleged that the police had killed even the persons who went to the encounter site to extend medical services to the injured villagers. The police encounter took place on January 16 and 17.

The statement claimed that 8,000 police personnel laid siege to Singavaram, Tuddepalli, Mallampenta, Pujari Kanker and Ternalbatti villages in the Bijapur district. The Maoists alleged that eight



Maoists and four villagers were killed in a supposed gunfight. Subsequently, the forces took the bodies of the deceased, and some common people were also taken away, and they were dead and labelled them as Maoists, Samata said.

Samata called for a fight against the "Brahminical fascist government." After the Pujari Kanker incident, police released letters in the name of the Maoists, which were attempts to create confusion among the public, said Samata.

10th Class girl dies as auto overturns

PNS ■ KURNOOL

In a tragic accident, a 10th Class girl student was killed, and three others were injured when the auto rickshaw they were travelling in overturned while en route to school at Sunkeswari village in Mantralayam mandal on Saturday.

According to the police, eight students were travelling in the auto-rickshaw when a vehicle collided with it from behind, causing the auto to overturn on the road. The 10th Class student, Anusha, sustained critical injuries in the accident and was rushed to the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Yemmiganur, where she was declared dead on arrival. The injured students were also admitted to the GGH for treatment.

A pall of gloom descended on Sunkeswari village following the tragic loss of the young student. The grieving parents were seen inconsolable. The parents of the students shared with the media that the group of students travels daily to Vidyanager Government School and never expected such a devastating accident to occur.



20 huts gutted, 6 injured in fire mishap

PNS ■ ELURU

A major fire broke out at Bhairavapatnam village in Mandavalli mandal during the early hours of Saturday, reducing 20 huts to ashes and injuring six persons, including two children.

According to the police, the fire started in one hut and quickly spread to neighbouring houses, engulfing the entire colony within minutes. The injured, identified as Shahrukh Khan, Vamsi, Anu, Karthik, and Vicky, were rushed to the GGH in Kaikaluru. Those in critical condition were later shifted to hospitals in Eluru and Guntur.

Police stated that the colony housed tribal families who had migrated from Nellore and earned their livelihood by poaching birds. The mishap

reportedly began when a mosquito coil ignited flames in one of the huts. The situation worsened when a gas cylinder exploded, intensifying the blaze. The fire destroyed not only the huts but also some two-wheelers. Victims, who lost all their belongings, appealed to the government for assistance.

DSP Srevan Kumar, along with CIs Krishna and Ravikumara and SI Ramachandra Rao, supervised the firefighting efforts. However, residents alleged that fire tenders arrived an hour late, by which time the flames had already caused extensive damage. Additionally, the injured had to be transported to hospitals in private vehicles due to the unavailability of 108 ambulances.

No PMAY houses for TG if Cong Govt includes 'Indiramma' in its name: Sanjay

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

No houses would be sanctioned by the Centre if the Congress Government of Telangana names the housing scheme meant for the poor after 'Indiramma,' Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar said on Saturday.

He said that if the photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not included on PDS ration cards and housing scheme documents, the Centre would draft a plan to directly provide housing and ration cards to the poor.

Speaking at an event in Karimnagar at which Corporation Mayor Sunil Rao and others joined the BJP, the Union MoS (Home) said the Modi Government is ready to sanction houses to Telangana under the PM Awas Yojana during the next allotment.

However, if the Congress Government tries to 'gamble' using the name 'Indiramma' (named after former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi), the Centre will not sanction even a single house, said Sanjay.

He said that photos of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Indira Gandhi are displayed on ration cards even though the PDS rice and other items are supplied by the Centre. "If the photo of Narendra Modi ji is not on the ration cards, we will not supply ration items to the TG government. We (the Centre) will see how to directly supply rations to the poor. We will not do injustice to the poor when it comes to housing," he said.

Purandeswari inspects collapsed airport terminal

PNS ■ RAJAHMUNDRY

Rajahmundry MP Daggupati Purandeswari visited the airport on Saturday to inspect the collapsed new terminal.

She questioned officials and representatives of the contracting company about the sudden collapse of the under-construction terminal. She specifically asked Mano Punappan, Managing Director of Retanus Corporation, and Project DGM Saravanan how the 15 iron rafters could collapse during construction.

The MP reprimanded the engineers, officials, and representatives of the contracting agency for their negligence, expressing anger over the collapse of a portion of the airport terminal. She announced that experts from IIT

Chennai would conduct an inquiry into the incident and submit a report to determine the exact cause of the collapse. "As soon as we receive the report, action will be taken against those responsible for the collapse," the MP said, questioning who would be held accountable if workers had been killed in the incident. She also mentioned that she had spoken to the Union Civil Aviation Minister regarding the matter.

Meanwhile, official sources confirmed that two workers were injured in the collapse and are currently undergoing treatment. Union Civil Supplies Minister K Rammoohan Naidu expressed dissatisfaction with the incident and instructed the concerned officials to submit a detailed report.

Hyderabad win 47th All-India U-19 Twenty-20 cricket tournament

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad's cricket team won the 47th All India Rajiv Gandhi U-19 Twenty-20 Cricket Tournament by defeating Tamil Nadu by 35 runs. The final was held at LB Cricket Stadium on Saturday. The prize distribution ceremony was attended by V Hanumantha Rao, Shiva Sena Reddy, Chairman of the Sports Authority of Telangana, MSK Prasad, former Indian cricketer and BCCI Chief Selector, and other notable guests.

Chairman of the Cricket Federation of India V Hanumantha Rao stated that the tournament's goal is to develop young cricketers, particularly from rural areas, and to provide them a platform to display their skills while promoting a drug-free lifestyle. He noted that the Cricket Federation of India

has worked for 18 years to nurture cricket from the grassroots level, especially in rural India. The tournament featured 12 teams, including those from Sri Lanka, Dubai, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra.

Best Players Include: Best Bowler: Ashwad Rajiv (Hyd) - 11 wickets in 5 matches.

Best Fielder: Sanjay R (Chennai).

Best Wicket Keeper: Varun Vinod (Hyd).

Best Batsman: GM Gokul (Chennai) - 201 runs in 6 matches.

Best All-Rounder & Player of the Tournament: M. Sai Karthikeya (Hyderabad) - 126 runs & 9 wickets.

Final Match Man of the Match: Yashveer (Hyderabad) - 4 wickets.

Hyderabad scored 192/9 in 20 overs. In reply, Tamil Nadu managed 157/9 in 20 overs. Hyderabad won by 35 runs.



Swiggy workers demand fair pay

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Gig and Platform Workers' Union (TGPWU) stands in support of Swiggy delivery workers who went on strike on Saturday, demanding solution to their concerns.

The workers' demands included restoration of the old MG (minimum guarantee) payment. Removal or reduction of MG payment has hurt the earnings of delivery workers, leaving them financially struggling. The workers want a transparent and fair base pay system that ensures fair compensation for their hard work and long hours. Management's Lack of Response: Despite trying to raise these issues,



Swiggy's management has ignored workers' concerns, forcing them to go on strike.

The union urged the Swiggy to engage in talks with workers and address their demands. Without fair wages and a stable payment system, workers' livelihoods are at risk

and trust in the platform is lost. TGPWU stresses the need to prioritize the well-being of gig workers, who are essential to the on-demand economy. These workers deserve respect, fair pay, and secure conditions.

Founder President of

TGPWU, Shaik Salaudhin calls for policy reforms that ensure fair wages and social security for all platform-based workers. He noted that the union remains committed to supporting the striking workers and fighting for their rights until their demands are met.

Woman's murder mystery cracked, one arrested

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

Shadnagar Police have successfully solved a chilling murder case that occurred on January 20 at the Sri Sangameshwara Lodge. The victim, a 35-year-old woman named Pittala Shivaneela, was murdered by Anandi Devas, a gruesome act of violence, the police said.

The police said that Devada had called the woman to a lodging house, promising to marry her. When Shivaneela started exerting pressure on Devada that he should marry her, an argument ensued between them. Devdas took Shivaneela to Room 202 in the lodge and strangled her to death with her dupatta.

Devas, after committing the murder, stole her belongings, including gold earrings,



silver anklets, a two-wheeler, and her mobile phone, before fleeing the scene. The police later recovered these stolen items from him during his arrest. The investigation led to the swift arrest of the accused, Anandi Devas, a 35-year-old private warden from Nandigama Mandal in Ranga Reddy district.

Devas has a criminal record. In 2021, he was involved in the murder of another

woman, Lakshmi, in Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh. He had been arrested and later sent to jail. After being released, he was involved in another violent incident in 2024, which further cemented his criminal profile. The case was supervised by senior officers, including Avinash Mahanti, Commissioner of Police for Cyberabad, B Rajesh, DCP Shamshabad, and K Ram Kumar, ADCP Shamshabad.

ACROSS THE STATES



Six Nigerians held in Delhi for overstaying visa

Delhi Police has detained six Nigerian nationals, including two women, for overstaying their visas by more than four years in southeast Delhi, an official said on Saturday. The operation was conducted in Sunlight Colony following tip-off about them. The individuals were identified as Ezeogu Obiorah Franklin Howard (31), Boadu Nancy (30), Kouadio Yopo Leopold (28), Henry (27), Marry Theresa (26) and Sandey Patrik (35). "All six were found living secretly in Delhi. They were produced before the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), which ordered the detention of the five individuals. The sixth individual, Sandey Patrik, was found to be involved in an ongoing case of the Foreigners Act at Uttam Nagar Police Station, with a non-bailable warrant issued against him by the trial court. He was handed over to the Uttam Nagar police for further legal proceedings," said the police officer.



Classical dance, music event to mark R-Day at Maha Kumbh

People visiting the Maha Kumbh will witness a 'Sanskriti ka Maha Kumbh' event, being held to mark the 76th Republic Day, on Sunday, with a line-up featuring classical dance and music. According to a state government statement, the Department of Culture has lined up performances across the Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, and Triveni pandals. The highlight of the day will be a performance by renowned singer Sadhana Sargam at the Ganga Pandal. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience the rural culture of Uttar Pradesh through performances of Faruahi, Birha, and Alha on the day. Artists will also mount Kuchipudi, violin recitals, classical singing, instrumental music, and dance performances on the day.



Cold conditions intensify in Jammu & Kashmir

Cold conditions intensified in Kashmir, with the minimum temperature dipping on Saturday and the Met office predicting mostly dry weather till the end of the month, officials said. Night temperatures dropped further across the Kashmir valley as the cold tightened its grip, they said. The minimum temperature in Srinagar settled at minus 4.1 degrees Celsius, compared to the previous night's minus 3.3 degrees, the Met office said. Pahalgam, one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 8.2 degrees Celsius against minus 7 degrees the night before. The tourist resort town of Gulmarg in north Kashmir recorded a minimum temperature of minus 9 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature was minus 4.4 degrees Celsius in Qazigund, minus 5.5 degrees at Konibal in Pampore town, minus 4.8 degrees in Kupwara, and minus 2.2 degrees in Kokernag.



India, Indonesia decide to expand defence, trade ties

Agree to jointly counter terrorism, radicalisation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Indonesia on Saturday decided to work jointly in defence manufacturing and supply chains, diversify two-way trade basket and boost maritime security ties with Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing the Southeast Asian nation as an "important partner" of New Delhi in the Indo-Pacific.

Following wide-ranging talks between Modi and visiting Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, at least five pacts providing for cooperation in areas of health, maritime security, culture and digital space were signed.

In his media statement, Modi said that both sides are committed to maintain peace, security and a rules-based order in the region and that freedom of navigation must be ensured in accordance with international laws.

The assertion came amid China's growing military muscle-flexing in the South China Sea as well as in the Indo-Pacific.

The prime minister also said that both sides empha-

sised on cooperation in maritime security, cyber security, counter-terrorism and de-radicalisation.

Subianto, who arrived here on Thursday night primarily to grace the Republic Day celebrations as the chief guest, said Indonesia's partnership with

In his media statement, Modi said that both sides are committed to maintain peace, security and a rules-based order in the region and that freedom of navigation must be ensured in accordance with international laws

India is "very important" and that he has issued directions to his officials for accelerating the bilateral economic engagement.

In his remarks, Modi said both sides also decided to further strengthen mutual coop-

eration in areas such as FinTech, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things and digital public infrastructure.

Both sides also decided to work together in the areas of energy, critical minerals and science and technology.

"Indonesia is our important partner in the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and Indo-Pacific region," Modi said.

"We both are committed to maintaining peace, security, prosperity and rules-based order in this entire region. We agree that freedom of navigation must be ensured in accordance with international laws," he said. "In our Act East Policy, ASEAN unity and centrality have been emphasised," he added. The prime minister said the focus of the "extensive discussion" centred around various aspects of mutual cooperation.

"To increase cooperation in the defence sector, we have decided to work together in defence manufacturing and supply chain. We have also emphasised on cooperation in maritime security, cyber security, counter-terrorism and de-radicalisation," he said.

Cong announces free 'tirth yatra' to Buddhist sites if elected in Delhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Saturday announced free 'tirth yatra' for Buddhist places if the party is elected in Delhi in the upcoming assembly polls. During a press conference, former Delhi MP Udit Raj said there were no schemes for Buddhist pilgrimages, which the Congress would change if it formed the government.

The Delhi government organises pilgrimage for Tirupati, Ayodhya, Vaishno Devi, Balaji for senior citizens at its own expense, Raj said.

"So why are there no pilgrimage schemes for the Buddhist places like Sarnath, Bodhi Gaya, Lumbini, Deekshaboomi, Mhow etc.," he asked.

"If our government comes, we will not discriminate and will provide free pilgrim-

age for them also," Raj stated.

The 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra Yojana' was launched by the AAP govern-



ment in 2019 to aid the elderly in visiting pilgrimage sites across the country.

Under the scheme, the Delhi government organises free pilgrimage travel for the elderly to 15 places of various religious faiths, including Ayodhya, Dwarkadheesh,

Puri, Varanasi, Maa Vaishno Devi Dham, Ajmer Sharif, Rameshwaram, Shirdi, Tirupati Balaji and Amritsar.

At the press conference, Raj said the Congress had earlier held a protest outside the residence of AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal, asking why he did not announce Rs 18,000 salary to Buddhist monks and priests of Ravidas and Valmiki temples. On December 30, Kejriwal announced that the AAP would give a monthly honorarium of Rs 18,000 to temple priests and gurdwara granthis under the 'Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana' if it returns to power in Delhi in the upcoming elections.

Congress leaders, including Raj, staged a protest near Kejriwal's residence on Monday, demanding a monthly salary for Buddhist monks and priests of Guru Ravidas and Lord Valmiki temples.

Meitei seeks transparent policy to end Manipur crisis

PNS ■ IMPHAL

Meitei group Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) on Saturday demanded a transparent and time-bound security and resolution policy from both the state and central governments to address the ongoing ethnic strife in the state.

The conglomerate of several Imphal valley-based civil society organisations also called for a thorough investigation into the alleged "complicity of

influential individuals and entities in Manipur, Mizoram and Chin state (Myanmar) in narco-terrorism activities".

The COCOMI sought concrete actions from the Centre and the Manipur government to counter these threats. "A transparent and time-bound security and resolution policy from both the state and the central governments" is needed to address the Manipur crisis comprehensively, the organisation said in a statement.

Tricolour set to fly proudly in Bastar

PNS ■ RAIPUR

The national flag will be unfurled in 14 remote locations in Chhattisgarh's Naxalite-hit Bastar region on Republic Day on Sunday, as security forces push Maoists

into retreat from their strongholds, an official has said. These locations are in the Bijapur, Narayanpur and Sukma districts of the region,

comprising seven districts. New camps of security forces set up in these areas have paved the way for development in the region, he said.

"Fourteen new camps of security forces have been set up near 13 vil-

ages since September last year," Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P told PTI on Saturday.

Avoid fake narratives, disruptive campaign

CEC Rajiv Kumar urges political parties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

CEC Rajiv Kumar on Saturday requested political parties to avoid "disruptive campaigning" and "fake narratives", saying it might cause disillusionment among youngsters regarding the electoral process.

He was addressing the 15th National Voters' Day event here in the presence of President Droupadi Murmu, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and representatives of political parties.

At the same time, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Kumar assured political parties that the Election Commission (EC) would respond in writing to concerns flagged by them on the electoral process and the suggestions made by them to improve the system.

His remarks came on a day the opposition Congress hit out



at the EC, saying its "self-congratulation" on the occasion would not obscure the fact that the poll panel's functioning had made a "mockery" of the Constitution and insulted the voters.

Kumar also flagged the "dangerous trend" all over the world of misinformation and

fake narratives, calling them the single-biggest threat to democratic processes worldwide. "I would also urge them to avoid disruptive campaigning so that our youth do not get disillusioned and move away from the electoral process," Kumar said.

Kejriwal playing politics of deceit and lies, says Amit Shah

Asks people elect BJP for development

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hitting the campaign trail in Delhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday accused AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal of playing "politics of deceit and lies", and exhorted people to vote for the BJP for the development of the city.

Addressing his public meeting in the city for the February 5 assembly polls, Shah also slammed the AAP for allegedly misleading people by claiming the BJP will discontinue all existing welfare schemes in Delhi if voted to power.

"PM Modi has himself assured that no existing welfare



scheme for the poor in Delhi will be discontinued but Arvind Kejriwal is spreading lies... They are misleading people. I am say-

ing it again against the BJP will not stop any scheme meant for the welfare of the poor," he told the rally in Rajouri Garden.

BJP's 'Jumla Patra' admission of defeat in Delhi: Sisodia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday rejected the third and final part of the BJP manifesto 'Sankalp Patra' as a 'Jumla Patra', claiming the saffron party has copied AAP's schemes and policies, and it seems they have already admitted their defeat in the assembly polls.

With less than two weeks to go for the assembly polls, senior BJP leader Amit Shah released the final part of the BJP manifesto Saturday, promising to clean Yamuna in three years, providing complete ownership rights of plots in 1,700 unauthorised colonies, and implementing welfare measures for gig workers and labourers.

Addressing a press conference after Shah's announcement, senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia said it was the BJP's 'Jumla Patra'.

Shah announced 50,000 jobs if the BJP came to power in Delhi that has a population of 3.5 crore, he said.

"It appears from the BJP's manifesto and the announcements made by Shah, that it has already

admitted that it is losing the elections and not going to form government," Sisodia said.

Instead of presenting any vision or plan for Delhi, Shah abused Arvind Kejriwal, he charged. "Kejriwal, whom Shah abused, has got a plan (for Delhi). He provided 12 lakh jobs during COVID," Sisodia asserted.

The former Deputy chief minister also alleged the BJP was behind sealing of shops in Delhi that Shah has promised to desal if his party comes to power.

"When the AAP came to power, efforts were made to desal the shops but BJP leaders prevented it," he alleged.

Rather than giving 'Jumlas', Shah should focus on providing security to the people of Delhi including traders "who are living under fear due to poor law and order in the city".

Shah also promised providing life insurance cover for lawyers and electric buses in the city both of which were already introduced by the AAP government, Sisodia claimed.

'Will amend law to rein in microfinance companies'

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday said the state government would amend the existing laws related to the money lending business and introduce new legislation to protect the interest of genuine borrowers.

In the wake of public outrage against the alleged harassment by microfinance companies to recover money from borrowers, Siddaramaiah chaired an emergency meeting with his deputy D K Shivakumar, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, Home Minister G Parameshwara, Law Minister

H K Patil, senior government and top police officials. Representatives of the



microfinance companies association, regional officers of the Reserve Bank of India and NABARD officials were also

present. Later, briefing reporters, the CM said he took the opinion of the microfinance companies as well as the RBI officials.

"After taking their view, we told them that we won't say not to give loans or do not recover money from borrowers, but while recovering money you should not torture and harass people," Siddaramaiah said. While recovering money, RBI guidelines should be followed by microfinance institutions. The central bank should also monitor the violations of these guidelines, he added.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is set to showcase its military prowess and rich cultural heritage and display a symbolic confluence of 'virasat' and 'vikas' on Kartavya Path here to mark the 76th Republic Day on January 26 when the nation will also commemorate the platinum jubilee of the enactment of the Constitution.

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto will be the chief guest on the occasion. A 352-member marching and band contingent from Indonesia will be participating in the parade.

Subianto will be the fourth Indonesian president to attend

India's Republic Day celebrations. Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, was the chief guest at India's first Republic Day celebrations in 1950.

While 75 years of the Constitution is the focus of celebrations this year, the theme for the tableaux is 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'.

Sixteen tableaux from across states and Union Territories and 15 from central ministries, departments and organisations will roll down the ceremonial boulevard on Sunday.

The country will display its military prowess by showcasing some of the cutting-edge defence platforms including BrahMos, Pinaka and Akash,

R-DAY PARADE

India to display military might, cultural heritage



with the Army's Battle Surveillance System 'Sanjay' and DRDO's surface-to-surface tactical missile 'Pralay' set to register their presence in the ceremonial parade for the first time.

T-90 'Bhishma' tanks Sarath (infantry carrying vehicle BMP-II), Short Span Bridging System 10m, Nag Missile System, multi-barrel rocket launcher system 'Agnibaan' and 'Bajrang' (light specialist vehicle) will also be part of the parade, officials said on Thursday.

The parade will see many other firsts as well, such as the tri-services tableau that will depict the spirit of "jointness" among the armed forces.



MISSION BAY HAS SOME AMAZING DISHES:

KIMCHI BRUSSELS SPROUTS: *Kimchi Brussels Sprouts* is a fusion dish that combines the earthy flavour of Brussels sprouts with the bold, spicy, and tangy notes of traditional Korean kimchi. The Brussels sprouts are usually roasted or sautéed, then tossed with kimchi, adding a satisfying crunch and depth to the dish.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH: *Butternut Squash* is a rich and creamy dish that highlights the natural sweetness and smooth texture of roasted butternut squash. It is served as a soup, puree, or roasted, offering a comforting and nutritious side or main.

THAI STYLE CORN SOUP: *Thai Style Corn Soup* is a vibrant, flavourful dish that blends sweet corn with the fragrant spices of Thai cuisine. It typically includes ingredients like coconut milk, lemongrass, ginger, and chili, creating a savoury-sweet soup with a perfect balance of heat and creaminess.

SHIMEJI MUSHROOMS FLATBREAD: *Shimeji Mushrooms Flatbread* is a savoury appetizer or main dish that features the delicate, nutty flavour of shimeji mushrooms. The mushrooms are sautéed and served on a crisp flatbread base, often garnished with herbs, cheese, and a drizzle of sauce for added flavour.

RICOTTA RAVIOLI: *Ricotta Ravioli* is a classic Italian dish featuring soft, pillowy pasta filled with creamy ricotta cheese. The ravioli can be served with a variety of sauces, from simple butter and sage to rich tomato-based sauces, highlighting the delicate filling.

APPLE BERRY CRUMBLE: *Apple Berry Crumble* is a comforting dessert that combines the sweetness of apples with the tartness of berries, all topped with a buttery, crumbly topping. Baked until golden and bubbling, it's often served warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or whipped cream.

TOFFEE DATE CAKE: Yet another sinful delight, *Toffee Date Cake* is a rich, moist dessert made with dates and a toffee-flavored sauce, creating a dense, caramel-like sweetness. Often served warm with a drizzle of toffee sauce and a side of cream, it offers a decadent treat perfect for dessert lovers.

A TASTE OF SAN FRANCISCO

The *Mission Bay* Restaurant recently opened in Malviya Nagar Delhi. It has some great cuisine and authentic American wining and dining experience for the connoisseurs, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

Ever imagined to have American experience in Delhi, authentic and cosy ambiance with a service with smile. A tall order really but that is exactly what *Mission Bay* is offering in South Delhi. *Mission Bay* Restaurant stands as a delightful oasis of flavour, design, and American hospitality. Inspired by the vibrant and eclectic spirit of San Francisco, this restaurant offers an immersive experience that takes you straight to the Bay Area, all while keeping you grounded in the comfort of cozy, inviting interiors. As you step into *Mission Bay*, you are immediately greeted by the distinctive atmosphere reminiscent of the Californian city. The restaurant's interior is thoughtfully designed to capture the essence of San Francisco, featuring chic industrial elements, vibrant murals, and elegant wooden accents. The open, airy spaces and warm lighting evoke the feeling of walking through a trendy Bay Area neighbourhood. With high ceilings, large windows, and a touch of vintage charm, *Mission Bay* provides an inviting environment that feels both contemporary and comfortable. The

design masterfully blends rustic and modern elements, allowing guests to feel like they are dining in the heart of San Francisco. *Mission Bay* is not just about the ambiance, it's about bringing a slice of American dining to the capital. The restaurant offers a curated menu inspired by the best of American cuisine, with everything from hearty burgers and fried chicken to succulent steaks and fresh seafood. Each dish is crafted with care, using the finest ingredients to bring out authentic American flavors. The American-inspired cuisine is rich in diversity, just like San Francisco itself, with touches of California's innovative food scene and classic diner favorites. What stands out at *Mission Bay* is its commitment to quality and innovation. From comfort food to indulgent desserts, the menu offers a variety of options that cater to every palate. Whether you're craving the comfort of a juicy burger or the richness of a gourmet salad, *Mission Bay* delivers with an authenticity that transports you straight to the West Coast. One of the restaurant's most commendable aspects is its exceptional



service. The staff at *Mission Bay* are attentive, friendly and dedicated to creating a welcoming atmosphere. Their knowledge of the menu is impeccable, and they take the time to ensure that every guest feels special. Whether it's a

casual lunch, an intimate dinner, or a celebratory meal, the team at *Mission Bay* ensures a personalised dining experience. Their commitment to excellence in service sets *Mission Bay* apart from other restaurants in the area.

Despite the bustling energy of Delhi, *Mission Bay* manages to create a cosy environment that feels intimate and relaxed. The restaurant is the perfect spot for a romantic date, a family gathering, or a meal with friends. The ambiance is

unpretentious yet sophisticated, making it a great place for both casual dining and special occasions. *Mission Bay* has rapidly become a sought-after destination for food lovers in Delhi, offering not just a meal but an experience. With its innovative concept, stylish design, and impeccable service, it offers a little taste of San Francisco without leaving the city. For anyone seeking a unique dining experience in Malviya Nagar, *Mission Bay* is a must-visit. Whether you're a local or just passing through, *Mission Bay* Restaurant is a gem that promises a truly memorable American dining experience with a touch of West Coast flair, all while providing the warmth and comfort that makes you feel right at home.



A CULINARY REVIVAL

By **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere Opens its Doors: In the vibrant heart of Delhi, *Le Meridien New Delhi* recently opened legendary *Le Belvedere* as *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere*. This exciting culinary destination blends the iconic restaurant's storied past with an innovative, modern twist, promising to captivate diners with a unique fusion of tradition and creativity. For decades, *Le Belvedere* has been a symbol of sophistication and elegance, a cherished venue for diplomats and dignitaries who delighted in its signature *Szechuan Chinese cuisine* and refined ambiance. With the unveiling of *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere*, the space embarks on a new chapter, fusing cherished memories with a fresh, dynamic vision for the future.



Tradition Meets Innovation: At *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere*, the restaurant elevates Asia's rich street food culture, combining traditional flavours with contemporary flair. Far more than just a dining experience, it celebrates the artistry of cuisine, blending innovation with timeless tradition. With inspiration drawn from the bustling street markets of Thailand, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Singapore and China, the menu offers a harmonious balance of authenticity and modern creativity that will delight discerning food lovers. The culinary philosophy at *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* is rooted in honoring the bold flavours and techniques of Southeast Asia, while also adapting to the evolving tastes of today's global palate. Each dish tells its own story, inviting guests to explore the vibrant world of Asian cuisine through a lens of imaginative reinterpretation and impeccable craftsmanship.



A Journey Through Flavour: The menu at *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* is a sensory journey that promises to captivate from the first bite. Guests can indulge in an array of dishes, from playful twists on classic favorites to bold new creations, each thoughtfully crafted to engage the senses and spark curiosity.

With a focus on diverse textures and punchy flavours, the restaurant invites diners to savor the spirit of discovery with every course.

Whether you're enjoying an intimate dinner or hosting a celebratory gathering, *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* offers a culinary adventure that is both exciting and accessible. The restaurant's ambiance, where tradition and modernity intertwine, enhances the experience, making each meal a memorable occasion.

An Invitation to Explore: *XO & Mi @ Le Belvedere* is now open, ready to welcome guests to explore a world where history, culture and gastronomy come together. From its reimaged take on Southeast Asian street food to its dynamic blend of traditional flavors and contemporary techniques, this new dining destination at *Le Meridien New Delhi* promises to be a must-visit spot for food enthusiasts in the city.

To take you to the mouth watering taste of Kashmir, *Shangri-la Eros New Delhi* hosted a culinary journey with the *Chef pin pop-up* at Tamra. The pop up showcased the spicy flavours of Kashmir, expertly handpicked by *Chef Archana Dhawan*. Apart from the Kashmiri flavours, desserts took the show with the pastry *Chef Dakshata Agarwal*. Guests were treated to a symphony of Kashmiri delicacies, beginning with a selection of signature appetisers. *Chef Dhawan's* creations included the crispy *Nadur Monji*, a delightful fried snack made from lotus stems and gram flour. The delicate *Chaman Kanti* and aromatic *Nadur Aloo Adrek Mond* further tantalised the palate. For non-vegetarians, succulent *Chicken and Mutton Kanti* alongside the traditional *Talite Gaad* offered a taste of local specialties. The live theatrical kitchens added a touch of drama, where skilled chefs artfully prepared *Kabar Gah* and the classic *Kaladi Kulcha*, each dish carrying a unique story of Kashmir's rich culinary heritage.

The main course was a grand celebration of flavours, where traditional Kashmiri recipes were brought to life with timeless cooking techniques. Vegetarian delights included the famed *Dum Aloo*, aromatic *Chaman Tamatar*, and the distinctive *Chaman Rogan Josh*, all complemented by the hearty *Haak* and *Kashmiri Bhadrehwah Rajma*.

Non-vegetarians were equally indulged with the legendary *Mutton Rogan Josh*.



FROM ROGAN JOSH TO KASHMIRI KAHWA

Tamra was brought alive with the aroma of Kashmir and the soul satisfying taste of the desserts, writes **ABHI SINGHAL**

delicate *Yakhni*, and unique *Masch Aloo Bukhara*. Fish enthusiasts savored both *Tamatar* and *Nadur* preparations. Each dish was served with a selection of breads, including *Kashmiri Phulka*, accompanied by authentic *chutneys* – from the nutty Walnut to the tangy *Muli* and *Anardana Pudina* variations.

To complete the dining experience, guests were invited to savour the royal *Saffron Kheer* and enjoy a warming cup of *Kahwa*, Kashmir's beloved spiced tea. While *Chef Dhawan* delighted palates with her authentic Kashmiri creations, Pastry *Chef Dakshata Agarwal* added a touch of sweetness with her signature dessert collection. The sweet finale featured delicate *Chiffon Cakes* in two variations - a fresh Strawberry Kiss topped with Chocolate Strawberry Panna Cotta and the rich Chocolate Kiss adorned with Dark Chocolate Cookie Soil.

The indulgence continued with a velvety *Chocolate Mousse Caramel* embellished with dark chocolate elements, and the standout *Bailey's Chocolate Egg*, which guests could enjoy at their table or take home as a memorable treat. Each dessert showcased a perfect blend of classic techniques and contemporary presentation, offering a delightful conclusion to the culinary journey. The *Chef Pin pop-up* at *Shangri-la Eros New Delhi* provided a unique opportunity for guests to experience the essence of Kashmir through its flavourful cuisine and taste.



FINDING SOUL CONNECTIONS AT SOUL STORIES

Whether you're an avid bird watcher or someone looking to escape the chaos of urban life, Soul Stories promises an unparalleled blend of adventure and soulful experience, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**



Soul Stories - Luxury Villas and Resort, Mussoorie, the bird-watching resort and retreat offers a haven for nature lovers and peace seekers alike. Surrounded by dense oak, deodar and rhododendron forests, this retreat is not just a destination but an experience that reconnects you with nature, tranquility, and yourself. Whether you're an avid bird watcher or someone looking to escape the chaos of urban life, Soul Stories promises an unparalleled blend of adventure and solace. Located near Dhanaulti, in Tehri Garhwal district, Uttarakhand, India. Dhanaulti is located on the popular tourist circuit of Landour, Mussoorie, Kanatal, Chamba and New Tehri. Soul Stories is easily accessible from Delhi and other parts of the country via *Dehradun*, followed by a scenic two-hour drive.

THE ALLURE OF SOUL STORIES' BIRD-WATCHING RETREAT

One of the retreat's standout features is its rich biodiversity. Dhanaulti, perched at an altitude of around 2,250 meters in the vicinity of Mussoorie, is home to an astonishing variety of avian species. From the vibrant Himalayan monal, the state bird of Uttarakhand, to colourful flycatchers, woodpeckers and thrushes, the retreat is a paradise for ornithologists and casual bird watchers alike. Guided bird-watching trails led by local experts ensure you don't miss out on spotting rare and exquisite birds. The retreat is carefully designed to



for personal rejuvenation. Unlike traditional retreats, it combines the joy of bird watching with holistic wellness practices such as yoga, meditation and mindfulness walking on the pathways around. For those seeking deeper connections, there are bonfire evenings where guests can share their experiences and bond with like-minded individuals. The idea is to create a community where stories and nature blend to form lasting memories.

ESCAPE FROM THE MADDENING CROWD

In an increasingly chaotic world, finding peace can feel like an elusive goal. Dhanaulti's remoteness makes it an ideal destination for those looking to unplug. With limited connectivity and a deliberate emphasis on slow living, Soul Stories encourages guests to step away from their screens and immerse themselves in the present moment. The serene environment fosters introspection, creativity and a sense of calm that lingers long after you leave.

SUSTAINABILITY AT ITS CORE

Soul Stories is committed to sustainable tourism. The retreat employs eco-friendly practices such as rainwater harvesting, solar energy, and organic farming to minimise its ecological footprint. Additionally, they actively engage with the local community by employing local guides and sourcing ingredients for their delicious, wholesome meals from nearby farms.

WHY SOUL STORIES SHOULD BE YOUR NEXT GETAWAY

Whether you're a seasoned birder, a wellness enthusiast or simply someone yearning for a break from the daily grind, Soul Stories offers something for everyone. Its combination of natural beauty, thoughtful amenities, and enriching experiences makes it a sanctuary where you can find peace, inspiration, and joy.

In the words of a recent visitor, "Soul Stories is not just about luxury and finding solace amidst nature; it is about discovering your own self. A place where you can hear silence and listen to your inner voices." So pack your bags, leave your worries behind, and let the hills of Dhanaulti and the birds of Soul Stories guide you to a state of blissful serenity.



harmonise with its natural surroundings. Rustic cottages with large windows offer panoramic views of the forested hills, creating the perfect backdrop for morning coffee or an evening of stargazing. The soft chirping of birds replaces the noise of traffic, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the calming sounds of nature. Madhavi Madan, the visionary behind this resort, is a dynamic individual who has personally curated every detail visitors experience here. From the paintings and artifacts to the designer furniture, each element reflects her passion and impeccable taste, seamlessly harmonising with the natural surroundings.

A PLACE TO RECONNECT AND RECHARGE

Soul Stories stands out for more than its natural beauty; it offers an opportunity



ROVING THROUGH DUBAI'S ARTFUL HEART

As I arrived at *Rove City Walk Dubai*, anticipation coursed through me. Touted as a modern gem in this cultural capital, I was eager to see if it would live up to the remarkable reviews, says **AKANKSHA DEAN**



As I stepped into the vibrant realm of *Rove City Walk*, the first thing that struck me was the energy of the lobby. It wasn't just a reception area; it was a hub of creativity and warmth. I was immediately enveloped by a design philosophy that blended harmoniously with its lush surroundings. Channelling the spirit of the local environment, the hotel intertwines the tales of Dubai's rich culture with modern touches, creating captivating backdrops that demand to be photographed. This isn't just a hotel; it's a canvas where every corner tells a story waiting to be shared on Instagram. This artistic flair was a delightful prelude to the stylish experience awaiting me. **STYLISH COMFORT IN DOWNTOWN DUBAI:** The check-in was seamless, thanks to the friendly and engaging staff who made me feel at home from the moment I arrived. Located in the heart of the city, I felt the pulse of Dubai within my reach. Just a 15-minute journey from Dubai International Airport, the hotel's strategic location makes it ideal for both business travellers and holidaymakers alike. My home for the stay was one of the 560 spacious rooms, each designed with the modern traveller in mind. My room, with its innovative décor and local

artworks, was a cosy retreat. Looking out the window, the view of the majestic Burj Khalifa was awe-inspiring, creating a perfect backdrop for my stay. I loved that 30 percent of these rooms are interconnected, a thoughtful feature for families or groups. With complimentary Wi-Fi, plush designer mattresses, and sofa beds perfect for unwinding after a day of exploration, it felt like the ideal sanctuary. The modern bathrooms, complete with power rain showers, were the cherry on top, offering a refreshing escape. The sense of ease continued beyond the room. The 24-hour gym kept me motivated, while the inviting pool and sun deck offered a tranquil refuge for relaxation. A self-service laundromat and a boutique convenience store added to the sense of independent living, making it feel like I could call this place my own. The hotel also features co-working spaces that are both functional and inspiring for creativity, making it an excellent choice for business gatherings and social celebrations. The Daily, an all-day neighbourhood hangout, was the perfect spot to unwind. Whether dining in or grabbing something for later, I was never disappointed. Quality coffee paired with globally-



inspired, nutritious dishes kept me fuelled for my adventures, and the vibe was just right for casual conversations with fellow travellers. **DOWNTOWN'S VIBRANT CHARM:** One of the best aspects of staying at *Rove City Walk* is its prime location, coupled with the convenience of a complimentary shuttle service to various attractions. A leisurely stroll led me to the iconic Coca-Cola Arena at City Walk, and it was just as easy to dip my toes in the sparkling waters of Jumeirah Beach. I hopped on the hotel bus, which whisked me away to the sprawling Dubai Mall. As I arrived at one of the world's largest shopping destinations, the sheer

scale and opulence of the mall took my breath away. I strolled past luxury boutiques, indulged in some retail therapy, and marvelled at the massive aquarium teeming with vibrant marine life. While at the Dubai Mall, I also experienced the mesmerising Dubai Fountain show. The synchrony of water, light and music created an unforgettable spectacle, an enchanting performance that lingered in my mind long after the final splash. Another day, I visited City Walk, brimming with chic boutiques and eye-catching street art. I lost myself in the colours of the art installations and enjoyed a leisurely meal at one of the trendy cafés. Nearby, the Green Planet, an extraordinary indoor rainforest, invited exploration among its lush greenery and exotic wildlife. It was a refreshing change of pace, showcasing the diversity of ecosystems right in the heart of the city. When evening approached, I made my way to the Dubai Opera House for an enriching cultural experience. The performances held there were world-class, each one a captivating expression of artistry and creativity. **LAST MOMENTS OF BLISS:** After several exhilarating days of exploration, it was time to wrap up my Dubai adventure. Late check-out at 2 PM

was a blessing, allowing me to linger longer in this oasis before heading out. However, I extended my experience with a last-minute visit to the Plaza Premium Lounge at the airport, a tranquil haven before my departure. As I settled into the lounge's plush seating, the welcoming ambience provided the perfect setting to reflect on my unforgettable trip. I treated myself to gourmet snacks and beverages, relishing the peaceful environment. The lounge's modern décor and views of the airport buzz were a gentle reminder of the journeys that lay ahead. As I bid farewell to Dubai, I took one last glance at the cityscape. In my time at *Rove City Walk*, I discovered more than just a temporary home; I found a vibrant community hub that embodies the essence of Dubai while delivering comfort and convenience. Every moment spent here was a reminder of why I love exploring the world, one hotel at a time. — Akanksha Dean is an independent food & travel writer, a chef and a catalyst and is the first Indian to have trained at Osteria Francescana, in Modena, Italy, rated as the world's best restaurant in the World's 50 Best Restaurants, in 2016 and 2018 and currently in the Best of The Best Category



IN BRIEF



NDTV loss widens in Q3 at Rs 55.48 cr

Media network NDTV Ltd on Saturday reported a widening of consolidated loss to Rs 55.48 crore in the third quarter ended December 31, 2024, impacted by higher expenses. The company had posted a consolidated loss of Rs 10.16 crore in the same quarter last fiscal. NDTV said in a regulatory filing. Consolidated revenue from operations in the quarter under review stood at Rs 132.74 crore compared to Rs 97.95 crore in the year-ago period, the company said. Total expenses in the third quarter were higher at Rs 187.72 crore as compared to Rs 110.23 crore in the same period a year ago, it added. During the quarter, production expenses and cost of services were higher at Rs 54.87 crore as compared to Rs 36.78 crore in the year-ago period and employee benefits expense was also higher at Rs 42.87 crore as compared to Rs 33.88 crore in the same period a year ago.



SpiceJet to expand flight connectivity

Domestic air carrier SpiceJet on Saturday said it would launch direct flight connectivity between Prayagraj and Chennai, Hyderabad aimed at serving passengers keen to take part in the ongoing Maha Kumbh festival. The special flights from Chennai and Hyderabad to Prayagraj would be operated from February 1 to 27 while services from Guwahati would be run from February 11 to 28. The airline would also enhance its daily services to Prayagraj from Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Bengaluru by adding more flights from these cities, a company statement said here. "SpiceJet is committed to providing seamless connectivity to passengers travelling to Prayagraj for the Maha Kumbh. With direct flights from Guwahati, Chennai and Hyderabad and enhanced frequencies from Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Bengaluru, we aim to make travel convenient and accessible for devotees across the country," SpiceJet Chief Business Officer Debojo Maharshi said.



DLF sells 173 ultra luxury homes for Rs 11,816 cr

Real estate major DLF has sold 173 apartments for Rs 11,816 crore in its ultra luxury residential project 'The Dahlias' in Gurugram, on strong demand from the super-rich. In October last year, DLF launched a 17-acre housing project 'The Dahlias' at DLF Phase 5 in Gurugram, Haryana comprising 420 apartments and penthouses. This project is the second ultra luxury offering from DLF after the successful delivery of 'The Camellias' at same location. The minimum size of an apartment is 10,300 square feet. According to an investors' presentation, DLF has sold 173 units having 18.5 lakh square feet area, for Rs 11,816 crore. Average realization was around Rs 70 crore per residence. The average per square feet rate is around Rs 64,000 on saleable area and Rs 1,05,000 on carpet area. On bumper sales in this project, DLF Group MD Ashok Tyagi said there has been a "very strong underlying demand" for this exclusive offering.

India puts up a big show at Davos

Returns with Rs 20 lakh cr investment commitments

PNS ■ DAVOS

As the five-day World Economic Forum Annual Meeting ended on Friday, Indian leaders said they could see trust for India in eyes of all global leaders and that was reflected in investment commitments totalling over Rs 20 lakh crore with Maharashtra grabbing the biggest pie of almost 80 per cent.

Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who led the largest ever Indian delegation of five Union ministers and several leaders from states including three chief ministers, said trust and talent are the biggest factors attracting the world to India.

All states and central government departments shared space for the first time at two India Pavilions and a joint press conference was held for the first time by state and Union ministers, coming from half a dozen different parties to put up a unified 'Team India' face. "We are in Davos at a very important juncture in our glob-



al geopolitical and geo economic scenario. Despite all the disruption and all the issues the world is facing, India has emerged as a very trusted country which respects IP rights, a country where democracy is vibrant," Vaishnaw said. "We have clearly demonstrated to the world that under all circumstances, this is the country which believes in peace, growth for everybody and inclusive development," he added.

Maharashtra delegation, led by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, signed 61 MoUs worth Rs 15.70 lakh crore, with the potential to generate 16 lakh jobs.

Telangana delegation, led by CM Revanth Reddy, secured 20 MoUs worth Rs 1.79 lakh crore, focusing on data centres, green energy, and cutting-edge technologies, which they said are expected to generate nearly 50,000 jobs.

'Amitabh brand ambassador for 'India Gate' basmati rice'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

KRBL Ltd has roped in Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador for its 'India Gate' brand of basmati rice.

Bachchan's association with 'India Gate' marks a significant milestone in the brand's journey to strengthen its connection with consumers and reaffirm its position as the global leader in the basmati rice category, the company said in a statement.

Ayush Gupta, India Business Head, KRBL said, "We are honoured to welcome Amitabh Bachchan to the KRBL family. His legendary stature, unwavering integrity and timeless appeal perfectly resonate with our core values and rich heritage."

With his iconic presence, the company aims to deepen its consumer engagement and plans to take the brand's story to every corner of the country and the world, he added.

US-India relations to grow stronger under Trump: USISPF chief

PNS ■ DAVOS

Confident of US-India relations getting much stronger going ahead, industry body USISPF chief Mukesh Aghi has said the two sides are mature enough to deal with the bumps that may come ahead during US President Donald Trump's second presidency.

Speaking to PTI here during the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting that ended on Friday, Aghi said geopolitical alignment between India and the US has become more closer and strategic and the camaraderie between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump is very strong. "So, from that perspective, we believe the relationship between the two companies will keep moving forward in the right direction," said the President and CEO of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF).

USISPF describes itself as a non-profit, non-governmental, and non-partisan organisation and it has offices in Washington and New Delhi. USISPF's members represent over USD 10 trillion in annual revenue with over 6 million employees.

"The trade between the two countries is around 200 billion dollars and that is going up. The students number in the US is closer to 350,000 and that's also going up. We have around 5.5 million Indian Americans who are very very supportive of this relationship. So in every aspect, from technology perspective, from geopolitical perspective, the relationship will go in upward trajectory," he said.



Lanka appoints panel to review Adani wind power projects

PNS ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan government on Saturday said it has appointed a committee to review the Adani Green Energy wind power projects in Mannar and Pooneryn districts.

At the same time, it said there was no decision to cancel the projects.

Speaking to reporters here, government spokesperson Nalinda Jayathissa clarified that the government decided against signing an agreement based on the power purchase prices negotiated by the previous administration in 2023.

"There was no decision to cancel the Mannar and Pooneryn projects, but rather to appoint a committee to review them. The committee has started its work, and once

the review is complete, we will determine what changes need to be made," he said.

The previous government of Ranil Wickremesinghe in May last year signed a 20-year power purchase agreement for the 484 MW Adani wind plants at a rate of USD 0.826

per unit. This decision drew criticism as local bidders reportedly offered lower unit prices.

"We are not agreeable to the prices proposed. As a result, the previous pricing agreement was revoked, and the committee was tasked with revising the project, including its pricing structure," Jayathissa said.

He also said that five court cases, mostly filed by environmental organisations, are pending against the Adani agreement.

NTPC net profit dips marginally to Rs 5,169 cr in Q3

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned power giant NTPC on Saturday reported a marginal dip in its consolidated net profit to Rs 5,169.69 crore for the October-December quarter compared to the year-ago period due to higher tax expenses and adjustments.

The company had a consolidated net profit of Rs 5,208.87 crore in the quarter ended on December 31, 2023, a BSE filing showed.

Total income rose to Rs 45,597.95 crore in the third quarter from Rs 43,574.65 crore in the same period a year ago.

Total tax expenses in the quarter increased to Rs 2,075.12 crore from Rs 1,361.75 crore a year ago. Similarly, net movement in regulatory deferral account balances (net of tax) was (minus) Rs 343.09 crore in the quarter against Rs 1436.24 crore (plus) in the same period a year ago.

Net movement in regulatory



deferral account balances (net of tax) consists of exchange differences arising from settlement/translation of monetary item denominated in foreign currency to the extent recoverable from or payable to the beneficiaries in subsequent periods, deferred tax liability reversible in future periods when they become current tax and similar items which will be materialised in future considering the CERC Tariff

Regulations and the requirements of Ind AS 114- 'Regulatory deferral accounts'.

Board of Directors in its meeting on Saturday decided, inter alia, to pay second interim dividend at the rate of 25 per cent (Rs. 2.5 per share) on the face value of paid-up equity shares of Rs 10 each for the financial year 2024-25.

The average tariff increased to Rs 4.68 per unit in the nine month period from April to

December 2024 from Rs 4.57 per unit in the same period a year ago.

The gross generation of the firm increased to 91.25 billion units (BU) from 89.46 BU a year ago. The coal output also increased to 10.98 MMT in the quarter from 8.09 MMT.

Plant load factor or capacity utilisation of coal-based plants also increased slightly to 75.98 per cent from 75.95 per cent.

TiE marks 25 year of service in building entrepreneurship

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The TiE (The Indus Entrepreneurs) Chennai, a not-for-profit organisation marked the successful completion of 25 years of building an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the state, a top official said on Saturday.

TiE Chennai has been a driving force behind innovation, mentorship and collaboration, shaping the success stories of startups and various business leaders.

The silver jubilee celebration under the theme 'The Legacy of TiE Chennai: Transform, Thrive, Triumph' consisted of past presidents and industry leaders taking part in the inaugural session, a release said.

Founder and Chancellor of Sai University KV Ramani,



former CEO and Vice Chairman of Cognizant and Krea University Chancellor Lakshmi Narayanan, Serial Entrepreneur Naru Narayanan, Chairman and Managing Director of FMCG major CavinKare CK Ranganathan among others participated.

"As we celebrate 25 years of

empower entrepreneurs, drive innovation, and propel Tamil Nadu to global leadership in entrepreneurship," Subramanya, the Founder and Managing Director and CEO, Integra Software Services Pvt Ltd said.

The panellists on the occasion highlighted the enduring commitment of TiE Chennai towards fostering entrepreneurship. They emphasised the pivotal role played by TiE Chennai in enabling businesses from the city to thrive and triumph.

TiE was founded in 1992 in Silicon Valley by a group of successful entrepreneurs, corporate executives and senior professionals. The mission of TiE is to foster entrepreneurship through mentoring, networking, education, funding and incubation.

"We are proud of our past accomplishments and committed to a brighter future, where we will continue to

Over 7,500 delegates to attend Odisha business conclave: CM

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

More than 7,500 delegates, including many from 20 foreign countries, will attend a business conclave in Odisha's Bhubaneswar scheduled to be held from January 28-29, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the event on January 28 at Janata Maidan, the conclave venue, he said.

The state is in all readiness to host the "biggest" business summit 'Utkarsh Odisha - Make In Odisha Conclave 2025', Majhi said on Friday after taking stock of the preparations at the venue.

"The conclave would prove to be a historic one and it will not only lay a foundation for a strong and vibrant economy but also create vast opportunities for farmers and labourers," the CM said.

Majhi said more than 100 MoUs would be signed during the two-day conclave, which has the potential to create

employment for 3.5 lakh people.

Around 100 foreign delegates would come to the conclave from various countries, including Singapore, Australia and Malaysia, the chief minister said.

The summit, which will also include various interactive sessions featuring the delegates, will enhance Odisha's profile in the international industrial sector, Majhi said.

Thematic sessions on start-up Odisha, skilled in Odisha and women entrepreneurship will also be held, along with various round table meetings.

Majhi said the 'Make in Odisha Expo' will also be held during the conclave.

Around 150 exhibitors will showcase their products, services and innovations at the conclave which will be open to the public on January 30.

The state's culture department has also made arrangements for a performance by renowned Odissi dancer Padma Shri Aruna Mohanty and drone shows.

AMFI-AMII sign MoU to strengthen economic cooperation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) and the Asosiasi Manajer Investasi Indonesia (AMII), the Indonesian Investment Managers Association, on Saturday inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen bilateral financial and economic best practices.

This partnership is set to strengthen the mutual fund sectors in both countries, enrich industry standards, and promote investor education and financial literacy, paving the way for a more dynamic, transparent, and globally inte-

grated mutual fund ecosystem. The MoU will create a platform for India and Indonesia to exchange best practices, insights, and strategies aimed at boosting the mutual fund industries.

The partnership will cover understanding and need of broad spectrum of areas, including requirement for regulatory reforms, governance standards, essential investor protection steps, data analytics, research, product innovation, and risk management ensuring that both countries benefit from each other's expertise and experiences.

The MoU was signed here where a delegation of 12 top



The partnership will cover understanding and need of broad spectrum of areas, including requirement for regulatory reforms, governance standards, essential investor protection steps, data analytics, research, product innovation, and risk management ensuring that both countries benefit from each other's expertise and experiences

CEOs from Indonesia's mutual fund industry accompanied the Indonesian President on his state visit to India.

"This partnership resonates with India's commitment to

the leadership of the Global South, fostering economic collaboration and mutual growth. A strong capital market and a thriving asset management industry, as exemplified by

the success of India's mutual fund sector, will play a crucial role in achieving these milestones. This collaboration will lay the foundation for a sustainable and globally compet-

itive mutual fund industry in both countries," Navneet Munot, Chairman, AMFI, said.

The AMII delegation, which includes senior officials such as the Commissioner of the Indonesian Stock Exchange, the Chairman of AMII, and top leaders from Indonesia's asset management sector, engaged in discussions that promise to be instrumental in shaping the future of mutual funds in both countries.

Hanif Mantiq, Chairman of AMII, emphasized, "By learning from each other's regulatory frameworks and governance structures, we will be able to offer our investors greater security and innovation





Culinary heritage meets innovation

Foodstories, a fresh new gourmet food experience launched in March 2024 has launched its second store at Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, after launching its first store in New Delhi. This experiential food destination caters to a well-travelled consumer who is passionate about food, is continuously on the lookout for standout ingredients and experiences, and appreciates the value of eating good food with a hope for a better and longer life.

The Foodstories multi-channel experience has been designed by Malherbe, a Paris-based architectural agency that's built experience centres for some of the most luxurious brands in the world like Dior, Moët-Hennessy, Paris Aeroport, and Givenchy. Foodstories also offers same-day home delivery through their own website and a quick-response WhatsApp channel to bring over 8000 of the finest ingredients from around the world to your door in under 4 hours.

"At Foodstories, we believe our mission is to improve the quality of life of our consumers by sourcing and creating the finest products where our consumers can taste quality, and celebrate the diversity of the world's food landscape by working with the finest growers and makers across provenance to bring exceptional ingredients and produce to the Foodstories shelves," says Ashni Biyani, co-founder at Foodstories.

"Foodstories was born out of Ashni's and my passion for food, as well as our obsession with delivering high-quality experiences and products to India's most discerning food connoisseurs. After launching our first store in Delhi in March 2024, we're excited to bring Foodstories to Hyderabad; a city that's stepped in culture and an appreciation for everything fine," says Anvi Biyani.

The Foodstories Cafe celebrates unique makers and growers from across the country by working with them to curate dishes that don't just satiate your hunger, but take you on a journey to the farms where our ingredients are grown and where the dishes draw inspiration from. The Foodstories Cafe also showcases 3 unique beverage offerings to cater to a consumer's every mood, desire and palate. The coffee program is helmed by Nandan Coffee, a generational estate to cup coffee brand crafted by the Marwala family and built out of their certified organic Coffee estate in Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu. Their signature blend, the Nandan Royale is an award winning blend that can be savoured in any form at the Coffee bar or taken home to enjoy by yourself. Customers can also enjoy a custom dark-roast blend curated especially for Foodstories while sipping on their next brew or to buy and take home.

At the Foodstories Juicery, customers can sip on a vast menu of juices, smoothies and bowls, matcha based beverages and freshly pressed sugarcane juice at the Foodstories Juicery. All the juices are freshly pressed and made using 100% fruit for maximum nutritional benefits and flavour. The rapidly growing Bubble Tea brand Boba Bhai also makes its way to Hyderabad's first Foodstories with a live station dishing out their signature drinks.

ROYCE CHOCOLATE

Luxury Japanese chocolate brand Royce is soon entering Hyderabad for the first time with Foodstories. From their bestseller Nama to their specialty snacking range, consumers can now add the elegance of this Japanese chocolaterie to their celebrations.

THE FOODSTORIES FARM

Foodstories' Fruits and Vegetables experience provides a wide assortment of farm fresh produce fairly sourced from local growers and global suppliers and carefully picked by their Farmer in Residence - a first of its kind for a food retail store - bringing with him a high focus on transparency and traceability. The team has stitched direct partnerships with farms and growers to bring only the freshest produce to its shelves right from an unparalleled selection of mushrooms from Uttarakhand to a wide range of pesticide-free hydroponically grown leaves and vegetables and a section filled to the brim with certifiably Organic produce.

BAKERY

The Foodstories Bakery houses a vast selection of freshly baked artisanal breads, crackers and entertaining essentials made by hand each morning by their Chefs with a spotlight on the quality of ingredients they use. Customers can savour a wide range of sourdoughs, sliced loaves, artisanal breads like Bagels, Focaccia and Baguettes as well as signature creations like the Croissant Loaf and Tissue Bread that have taken the internet by storm since its launch.

THE CHEESE CELLAR

Customers can savour and take home over 104 varieties of cheese sourced from growers all across India and the world. The Foodstories Cheese experience offers over a vast selection of homegrown and globally sourced cheese spanning DOP certifications, milk types, textures, and regions that can also be skillfully curated into bespoke Cheese Platters available in-store as well as for Home Delivery.

MEAT MARKET

The Meat Market houses a range of carefully sourced seafood, poultry, meat and ready-to-cook options that are held to the highest standards of hygiene and ethical sourcing courtesy their resident Chief Tastemaker. Consumers can also discover a luxurious caviar bar, ready-to-cook and eat meats and marinades; and a curated selection of seafood including stellar 10-count Tiger Prawns and smoked Norwegian Salmon.

SPICES

Foodstories firmly believes in the power of aroma to guide them to the cream of the crop. Noses have led them on an exploration of regional nuance to estates and spice plantations in the farthest corners of the earth. And everywhere, the most constant question is — is this the most fragrant variant the world has to offer? And only those variants make it to the shelves at Foodstories. All the ground spices and masalas are freshly milled and blended in micro batches to ensure what the customer gets is maximum potency. Customers can also customise their spice blends and have their favourite spices ground fresh for them for complete transparency and trust.

GLOBAL PANTRY

The Pantry includes over 2000 handpicked ingredients from around the world to help consumers cook, eat, and entertain the way they want. Customers can also discover an unparalleled selection of beverages and cuisine-specific sauces directly imported from native regions, as well as a wide range of truffle-flavoured products available in limited quantities.

A KITCHEN STUDIO AT THE HEART OF FOODSTORIES

The Foodstories Kitchen Studio is a multidisciplinary space designed for the modern day content creator. Equipped with state of the art kitchen equipment, the space allows content creators to bring their food stories to life with the finest ingredients from around the world. The Kitchen Studio is also a destination for food enthusiasts to deepen their relationship with food via guided tastings and engaging cooking demos led by Foodstories' chefs.

Top picks for tranquil long weekend with touch of culture

A long weekend is the perfect opportunity to connect with nature and align yourself before diving back into the everyday hustle. Whether you prefer the serene beaches or the wildness of the jungle, here are a few properties to consider for your getaway. Each of them celebrates the diversity, the cultural offerings and the richness of India.



WOODS AT SASAN

Woods at Sasan is an ideal getaway for families looking to escape the hustle and bustle of city life and immerse themselves in nature. Located on the edge of the Sasan Gir forest in Gujarat, this modern retreat offers a serene environment with luxurious, independent living spaces, each with its own private garden. Guided wildlife safaris offer thrilling experiences to spot Asiatic lions and local flora and fauna, connecting both adults and children with nature. Family-friendly activities include temple visits, traditional jungle meals, cultural dances and pottery making and interactive sessions with local artisans, promoting mindfulness, creativity and healthy living.

Culinary delights: The retreat offers nutritious, sattvic meals made with fresh, local ingredients, and includes cooking sessions for learning healthy meal preparation.

Personalised wellness journeys: Guests can enjoy Ayurvedic treatments, yoga sessions, and nature-based activities for a holistic experience.



RELAIS & CHÂTEAUX MALABAR HOUSE

The Malabar House: A Heritage Haven and Art Hotel. It is more than just a beautifully designed heritage hotel; it's an art hotel, showcasing a meticulously curated collection that celebrates Kerala's unique blend of Eastern and Western cultures. The rooms offer comfort, and the service is impeccable.

Malabar Junction, the hotel's acclaimed restaurant, and Divine, its wine lounge, meld South Indian traditions with exciting culinary innovations. Guests can enjoy classical music or dance performances on the patio stage, rejuvenate their body and soul at the ayurvedic center, delve into the history and culture of Fort Cochin, or explore Kerala's backwaters on the hotel's eco-friendly houseboat.

Purespa introduces a revolutionary concept that combines invigorating traditional Ayurveda therapies with specialized Kalarippayat, or Kalari Ayurvedic oil massages. As one of Asia's oldest martial art forms, Kalarippayat has developed its own Ayurvedic oil massage system over centuries. Purespa offers a wellness journey of distinct treatments aimed at relaxation, detoxification, and enhancing beauty.

HERITAGE VILLAGE RESORTS AND SPA, MANESAR

Located amidst verdant surroundings and exuding an old-world charm, Heritage Village Resorts and Spa, Manesar, provides an ideal retreat for those seeking a long weekend getaway. Situated a short drive from the bustling urban centers of Delhi and Gurgaon, the resort offers a harmonious blend of luxury, relaxation, and cultural heritage, designed to rejuvenate the senses. It serves as a sanctuary of tranquility, seamlessly integrating traditional elements with contemporary comforts. The resort's architecture is inspired by the Rajasthani haveli style design, with beautifully landscaped gardens, courtyards, and stunning interiors that transport you to a bygone era. Each room and suite is meticulously designed, offering a blend of luxury and traditional aesthetics.

SANGAM FARMS

Sangam Farms is born from a passion for agriculture, is dedicated to locally grown produce, reducing carbon footprints, and delivering fresh, nutritious products. With hydroponic gardens and dairy farms, it ensures quality from healthy environments. They offer a slice of paradise with swanky tent stays nestled in nature's embrace, offering an authentic taste of rural life in Rajasthan. It offers a variety of activities and experiences that allow visitors to immerse themselves in the world of agriculture and nature.

Farm-to-table dining: Guests can enjoy delicious meals made from fresh, locally sourced ingredients. It offers personalised tours of hydroponic gardens and dairy farms, ensuring nutritious and flavorful dishes. Enjoy a Rajputana dining experience with a royal feast. Kids can have fun with the mini tractor & barn camping experience, picking strawberries, riding tractors, pitching tents, and roasting snacks over a bonfire.

Ideal for experiencing the countryside's simplicity and beauty, perfect for those who enjoy hands-on farm activities.



HOUSE OF ROHET

The House of Rohet is a family-run hospitality group based in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India. They offer a range of luxury boutique hotels and camps, including Rohet Garh, a heritage hotel; Mihir Garh, a desert boutique hotel; The Rohet House, a luxury residence and Rohet Wilderness Camp. Each property is known for its exceptional service, rich cultural heritage, and unique experiences. It offers unique experiences like village safaris, equestrian programs, bird watching, royal picnics, culinary workshops, and stays at their Wilderness Camp. These activities provide guests with immersive cultural and natural experiences in the beautiful surroundings of Rajasthan.

These experiences are designed to provide guests with a deeper connection to the local culture and environment, creating unforgettable memories.

WHAT'S NEW

INDULGE YOUR LIPS IN THE LUXURIOUS, NOURISHING CARE THEY DESERVE

Infused with a blend of hydrating ingredients, this lightweight, non-sticky formula provides long-lasting moisture while delivering a glossy, irresistible shine. Whether you're looking to enhance your natural lip color or simply add a touch of hydration, this lip oil is your go-to for a soft, smooth, and supple pout, giving honey like hydration.



SHAVE, TRIM, SPRAY

The season of celebrations is upon us, bringing with it a host of important moments. Bomb Shaving Company is offering innovative grooming solutions to keep things effortless. With their shave, trim, spray mantra, they simplify your routine, ensuring you're always ready for any occasion. Whether it's achieving a smooth shave, a precise trim, or quick hair removal, their range of products ensure you look sharp, confident, and ready to embrace every celebration.

2025 WINTER SKIN WARRIOR

Winter can be tough on your skin, stripping your skin's natural moisture, causing your skin feeling dry, dull and irritated. That's why it becomes so important to have a moisturizer that truly cares for your skin, providing a consistent protective barrier against the cold. This season, pamper your skin with Innisfree's deeply hydrating moisturizers, designed to combat winter dryness with ease. Formulated with natural ingredients and sourced from the pristine Jeju Island, Innisfree's moisturizers are the ultimate winter heroes to upgrade your skincare routine and keep your skin feeling healthy and moisturised all season long.



LIP LUSTRES GET REVAMPED!

Type Beauty has relaunched their lip lustres with improved formulation and extra hydration. These Lip Lustres made their debut last year, but have been revamped with enhanced features for a stunning comeback.

ELEVATE YOUR LOOK WITH LATEST MUST-HAVES!

Embrace the Mocha Mousse trend with Mila Beauté's latest must-haves! From velvety, soft matte lipsticks to radiant blushes and high-shine glosses, these new launches are perfectly curated to complement the earthy elegance of this chic, universally flattering trend. Don't miss out—elevate your makeup game today!



HOROSCOPE



ARIES

There will be career opportunities and successful ventures. Stay patient, communicate openly, and learn to forgive. Family challenges will ease with support. Business trips will be fruitful.



TAURUS

Your charm and humour attract others. Avoid criticism and self-pity; focus on family and career. Socialize to refresh life. New guidance and contracts promise stability and success.



GEMINI

Rely on trusted support as nervousness arises. Focus on self-improvement, confidence, and facing challenges. Handle family conflicts calmly. Embrace new opportunities with vigour.



CANCER

Find a stimulating partner and rise above frustrations. Success comes from tenacity, creativity, and cooperation. Avoid overreaction and ego clashes. Business trips bring success.



LEO

Embrace beauty, family support, and socializing to overcome insecurity and negativity. Avoid indecisiveness and seek guidance for new ventures. A stable career opportunity awaits.



VRGO

Stay composed and focused this week. Embrace shared interests, silence, and flexibility for success. Avoid emotional stress, assess relationships wisely, and trust guidance.



LIBRA

Stay gentle under pressure and persist with your goals. Loyalty earns acceptance, while guidance and reasoning inspire others. Students will be rewarded for creativity and effort.



SCORPIO

Support your loved ones with patience and commitment. Overcome workplace stress by staying calm. Embrace innovation and trust family advice before making decisions.



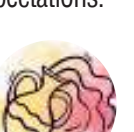
SAGITTARIUS

Stay patient through setbacks; your hard work will pay off. Seek guidance for insecurities and avoid depression. Trust your ethics. Embrace new contacts and opportunities for success.



CAPRICORN

Be open in relationships, seek siblings' support, and practice humility. Forgiveness increases respect, while confusion limits progress. Offer guidance to others and fulfil their expectations.



AQUARIUS

Remain calm and patient through challenges. Seek support from trusted people. Spend time with family, avoid depression over setbacks, and stay cautious with commitments.

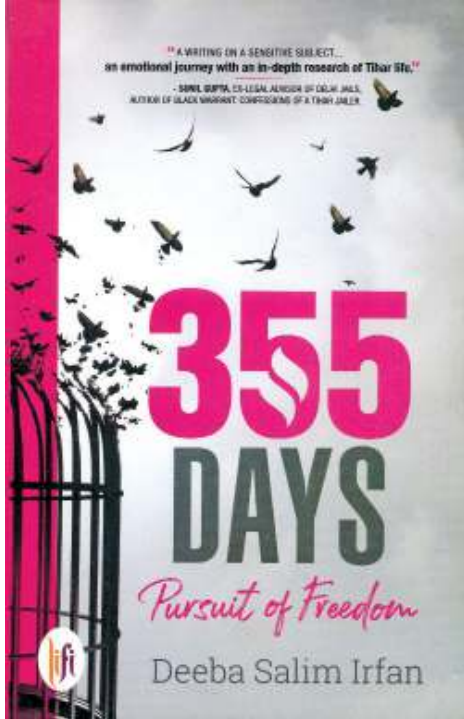


PISCES

Be cautious about changes. Offer support to others, be steady in harsh situations, and innovate when necessary. Embrace new challenges and stay strong through unexpected changes.

"Everything you've ever wanted is on the other side of fear"

— GEORGE ADDAIR



Tihar is more than just a correctional facility, it is a microcosm of society, brimming with stories of resilience, redemption and raw humanity. Following the excerpt from the book *355 Days: Pursuit of Freedom*.

With *Black Warrant* topping Netflix charts as the No. 1 show, the enigmatic world of Tihar Jail has captured the public's attention once again.

As one of Asia's largest and most complex prison systems, Tihar holds within its walls stories of resilience, despair, redemption and raw humanity. This newfound interest highlights society's fascination with the lives hidden behind prison walls, narratives that often remain untold but carry immense significance.

Tihar Jail is more than just a prison – it is a world within a world, housing individuals from all walks of life. From petty criminals to high-profile offenders, from activists to political prisoners, it is a microcosm of society where identities collide and stories unfold. Beneath the label of "convict" or "undertrial" lies a human being, grappling with remorse, survival, and perhaps even hope. Both *Black Warrant* and *355 Days* aim to shed light on this humanity, challenging the stereotypes often associated with prison life.

While *Black Warrant* provides chilling insights into executions and the inner workings of the prison system as a first-hand account by the former *Tihar Superintendent* and *ex-Legal*



The Changing Perception of Prison Life

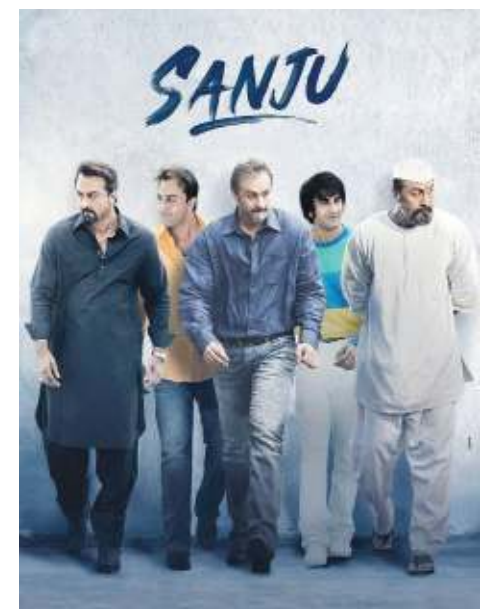
Advisor of Delhi Jails, Sunil Gupta, the novel *355 Days*, inspired by true events, delves into the emotional and psychological journeys of inmates. Together, these narratives as well as other stories inspired by true events compel us to confront questions about justice, survival, and the power of redemption.

355 Days, an Amazon bestseller, delves into the complexities of life within *Tihar Jail*. The novel, which features a quote from Sunil Gupta on the cover stating it offers "A writing about a sensitive subject. An emotional journey with in-depth research of Tihar life," reinforces its commitment to authenticity. The endorsement highlights the novel's connection to the realities of life within *Tihar Jail*, appealing to readers interested in stories inspired by true events. *355 Days* transcends the typical crime story, weaving together legal drama with profound exploration of the protagonist's inner journey. This unique blend positions the novel within the sphere of philosophical prison drama. *Tihar Jail*, in many ways, serves as a mirror to

larger socio-economic and judicial systems. It reveals the inequities that plague our society, the struggles and resilience of the marginalised. While the prison itself is often viewed as a place of punishment, it also serves as a crucible of transformation. Sunil Gupta's tenure as Superintendent of *Tihar Jail* was instrumental in bringing significant reforms, including the establishment of legal aid cells, the streamlining of jail procedures with the *Delhi Jail Manual*, and the introduction of yoga and meditation programs for inmates. The rehabilitation initiatives and the skill-building workshops offer inmates a chance to rediscover themselves and have been instrumental in improving the lives of those incarcerated. When asked about the recent success of *Black Warrant* on Netflix, he said, "I believe in the power of selfless acts! I firmly hold that when you work towards the betterment of others, the universe rewards you in abundance. God's blessings and gratitude from those you've helped are the greatest rewards. Keep spreading



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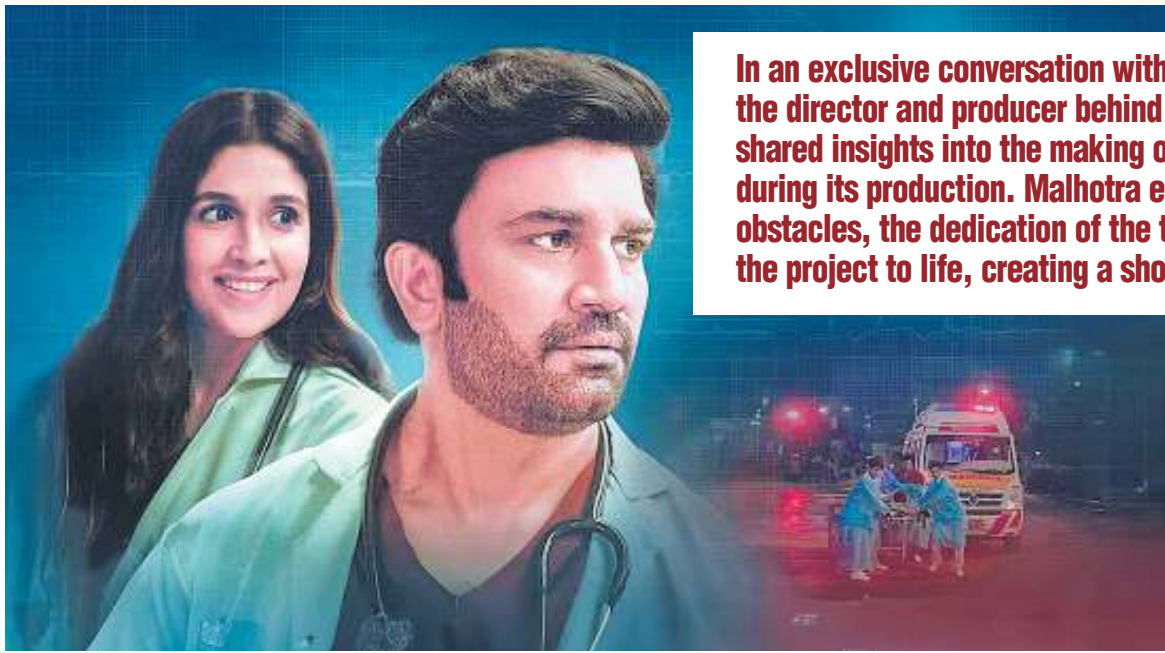


kindness, and making a difference!" Literature and media have the unique ability to humanise even the most vilified. By presenting detailed, empathetic narratives, they remind us that every prisoner has a story, a past and, perhaps, a chance at a better future. Stories like *Black Warrant* and *355 Days* do not shy away from the darkness but instead bring to light the glimmers of hope and humanity that exist even in the bleakest environments. Recent years have seen several films inspired by real-life incidents. Notably, *Shahid* (2012), a critically acclaimed biographical drama based on the life of human rights lawyer Shahid Azmi, garnered numerous awards for its portrayal of his fight for justice for the wrongfully accused. *Lucknow Central* (2017), exploring the realities of life within Indian prisons, received positive reviews and praise for Farhan Akhtar's performance. However, it was the 2018 biopic *Sanju* – depicting the life of Sanjay Dutt, that achieved blockbuster status, breaking several box office records. Through literature and media, we can begin to bridge the gap between perception and reality, inching closer to a more nuanced understanding of the world behind bars.

Title: 355 Days: Pursuit of Freedom
Author: Deeba Salim Irfan
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Paperback: 239 pages



'IT'S THE FLAWS AND EMOTIONS OF THE CHARACTERS THAT RESONATE WITH THE AUDIENCE'



In an exclusive conversation with The Pioneer, Siddharth P. Malhotra, the director and producer behind the acclaimed medical drama Doctors, shared insights into the making of the series and the challenges faced during its production. Malhotra emphasized that, despite numerous obstacles, the dedication of the team and their shared vision brought the project to life, creating a show that resonates deeply with audiences

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Siddharth P. Malhotra, the director and producer behind acclaimed films like *Hichki* (2018), *We Are Family* (2010), *Tribhanga* (2021), and *Dial 100* (2021), has once again struck a chord with audiences through his latest project, the medical drama *Doctors*. Streaming on JioCinema, the series has been met with widespread acclaim, thanks to its authenticity, emotional depth, and compelling storytelling. Known for his keen sense of storytelling, Malhotra has once again captured the audience's attention, but this time through a raw, authentic look at the world of healthcare. *Doctors* isn't just another medical drama—it's a deep dive into the emotional challenges and moral dilemmas faced by medical professionals, with a touch of reality that resonates far beyond the usual tropes. In this conversation, Malhotra opens up about the inspiration behind the show, the challenges faced during its production, and the unique approach that has made *Doctors* a standout success. The series has taken the Indian OTT space by storm, currently ranked number 1 on the Indian viewership charts, as reported by Ormax Media.

According to Malhotra, the success of *Doctors* lies in the power of good content and the organic growth it experienced. "It's the good content that has eventually led to the love that *Doctors* has received," he said. "I believe it's through word of mouth that people have watched it and spread the word to others. Doing a 7-episode series is challenging, but making a 10-episode series is even bigger. It had to be pure content, away from the usual glamour. The acting and the emotions resonated deeply with the audience." He added that the buzz around the show was purely organic, emphasizing the importance of authenticity in its success. "As I scroll through Instagram, I see people posting so many reels, and it's all organic. Otherwise, it wouldn't have reached where it has. The intentions of the entire unit have worked well."

For Malhotra, *Doctors* is a personal passion project rooted in his love for medical dramas. "If you look at my career graph, I feel like medical dramas are something I really gravitate toward as a creator and producer, but it's something I could never do on TV," he explained. Malhotra's family background also played a significant role in his affinity for the genre. "My Nana was a doctor, and my mother is half a doctor. Imagine doing a thousand episodes of medical dramas where nobody dies!" he said. In traditional TV, the focus is often on love stories, with very little room to show the harsh realities of medicine. "In TV, you can majorly show love stories. You can't show an operation. But here, we got to show a side of the reality that was often missing."

Siddharth pointed out that Indian medical dramas often fail to portray the true essence of a doctor's life, remaining stuck in the formulaic love stories. "For a long time, we haven't had Indian medical dramas that show doctors' real lives, their struggles, their flaws, death, and the harsh realities of medicine," he said. "We've always been stuck in the 'Hero, Heroine, aur unki kahani' format. But *Doctors* offers a different perspective. Of course, there is a hero, but there are also other characters with their own stories." He emphasized that OTT platforms have allowed creators more freedom to tell stories that are grounded in reality. "There have been medical dramas, but they often show things that are just impossible. Thanks to OTT, we can explore a more realistic and grounded perspective."

Creating *Doctors* was a meticulous process, and Malhotra emphasized that it took nearly a year to develop all the characters and plotlines. "It almost took an entire year for us to develop all the characters and plots. The entire process was extensive," he shared. He continued, "With *Doctors*, we wanted to show flaws. As we delved into the emotions and the execution of the show, we realized it was a process of constant writing and rewriting before we even started shooting." The show's success is also attributed to the cohesiveness within the team, with Malhotra praising the actors and director for aligning on the vision. "The beauty of it is that the actors were all on the same page, and the director did such a great job that the characters he created are exactly the ones that people have been asking about."

One of the major challenges while shooting *Doctors* was filming in a real hospital environment. Malhotra explained that each day brought new obstacles. "There were many scenes that were challenging for us because we were shooting in a real hospital. Every day was a challenge. There wasn't a day that went by without facing some challenges, but we had to

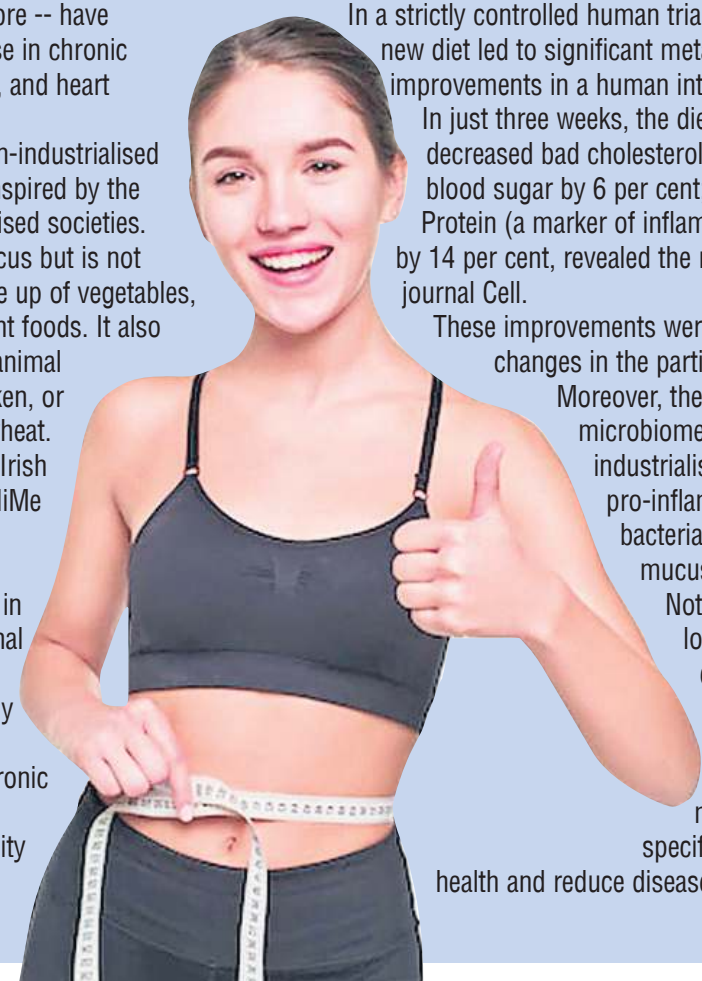
power through," he said. The production team also faced challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "We were shooting during COVID, so we had to adhere to all the safety protocols, like wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Making prosthetics was another struggle, but we managed it."

The level of authenticity in the show extended beyond just the setting—it also involved real-life medical professionals. "This was a show where we brought in real doctors to train our actors on how to perform medical procedures," Malhotra shared.

"When we were doing operations, we wanted the real doctors to perform them. We wanted everything to be as realistic as possible." However, ensuring that the entire production remained within budget was a constant challenge. "On top of that, making sure all of this fit within our budget was another huge task. But we managed to get it done."

When it came to casting, Malhotra and his team had a clear vision from the start. "We already had Harleen Sethi, Sharad Kelkar, and Aamir Ali in mind. The characters were clear in our heads, and the casting process was smooth. Within a month, we had our cast in place," he said.

For Malhotra, *Doctors* represents a turning point in Indian television, where storytelling can transcend traditional tropes to explore more meaningful and authentic narratives. "At the end of the day, *Doctors* is about showcasing a different side of the medical world, one that includes not just the medical procedures but also the emotional and personal lives of the doctors, their struggles, and the difficult decisions they have to make," he concluded. "It was a huge challenge to bring this vision to life, but I truly believe we've created something that resonates with viewers on a deep level."



Weight loss made simple

A novel diet that mimics traditional eating habits created by using non-industrialised style food can be key to reducing the risk of several chronic diseases, while also helping lose weight. Industrialised diets -- high in processed foods and low in fibre -- have contributed to a substantial rise in chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

The new diet titled "NiMe" (Non-industrialised Microbiome Restore) diet is inspired by the eating habits of non-industrialised societies. It consists of a plant-based focus but is not vegetarian. It is primarily made up of vegetables, legumes, and other whole-plant foods. It also includes one small serving of animal protein per day (salmon, chicken, or pork) with no dairy, beef, or wheat. The international study led by Irish researchers showed that the NiMe diet enhanced short-term persistence of *L. reuteri* -- a beneficial bacterium prevalent in the gut of people with traditional eating habits.

"Industrialisation has drastically impacted our gut microbiome, likely increasing the risk of chronic diseases," said Professor Jens Walter, scientist at the University College Cork in Ireland.

The NiMe diet is also very low in processed foods that are high in sugar and saturated fat, and is fibre-rich. The fibre content was 22 grams per 1,000 calories -- exceeding current dietary recommendations.

In a strictly controlled human trial, the team found that the new diet led to significant metabolic and immunological improvements in a human intervention study.

In just three weeks, the diet promoted weight loss; decreased bad cholesterol by 17 per cent; reduced blood sugar by 6 per cent; and reduced C-reactive Protein (a marker of inflammation and heart disease) by 14 per cent, revealed the results published in the journal *Cell*.

These improvements were linked to beneficial changes in the participants' gut microbiome.

Moreover, the NiMe diet also improved microbiome features damaged by industrialisation, such as reducing pro-inflammatory bacteria and bacterial genes that degrade the mucus layer in the gut.

Notably, the participants also lost weight, although they did not consume fewer calories.

The study shows that targetting the gut microbiome through specific diets can help improve health and reduce disease risk.

TRENDING

PERSON

RAM GOPAL VARMA



A court in Mumbai on Tuesday convicted filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma and sentenced him to three months of simple imprisonment in a cheque bounce case.

PARAGLIDING TURNS LIFE-TAKING



VIDEO

A Nagpur girl was killed after she fell into a ditch while paragliding in Goa. She had travelled to Goa with friends to celebrate the New Year when the accident occurred. While enjoying paragliding, the rope snapped which caused Shivani to fall from a height of about 100 feet into a ditch.

MOVIE

HISAAB BARABAR



The R. Madhavan, Kirti Kulhari and Neil Nitin Mukesh starrer *Hisaab Barabar* was released to mixed responses. The film revolves around Madhavan's character, who is an honest and determined ticket checker (TC) who sets out to expose a massive financial scam.

TU HAIN TOH MAIN HOON



SONG

Tu Hai Toh Main Hoon from *Sky Force* in Arijit Singh's soulful voice and featuring Veer and Sara's magical chemistry has been unveiled. The music video showcases the 'eternal love' between Veer Pahariya and Sara Ali Khatri's characters.

SDFSDFSDF

PICTURE



AP CM Chandrababu Naidu met Microsoft founder and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation co-chair Bill Gates at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland on Wednesday, January 22, to discuss groundbreaking initiatives aimed at transforming the state into a global hub for innovation and social development.

FROM SCALPEL TO STARS DR VINEETH GANGANNA'S JOURNEY FROM ORTHOPEDICS TO IPS



WHO DREAMS TO BE AN IPS FROM CHILDHOOD?

I have not believed in this concept of a dream since childhood. I have not had a dream of becoming an IPS officer. To have a simple question on little things in life, for instance hundreds of things go on in our head, it could be looking at a bus and thinking of becoming a driver, then to drive an auto, later a cinema actor and we grow up to become human accepting whatever comes our way.

BEING AN ASTRONAUT WAS MY DESIRE

As I said, childhood dreams are meaningless. I always liked stars and wished that if I became an astronaut I could go around driving and come back. Then I felt I would not be able to drive that far, so let me study to become a pilot and drive among clouds. Later, we understand with the family background we have, like middle class, we may not achieve certain dreams.

BEING A TELANGANITE

Dr Vineeth will also let you not know that he does not belong to Telangana. His Telugu is as fluent as one born in Hyderabad but still learning Hyderabad Hindi and manages during Press meets. Do you feel that you are talking to a Telangana person? Nothing much. I keep talking to everybody that's how I learnt. I also won the Union Home Ministry's Trophy for proficiency in Telugu language. In terms of food, non-veg is my favourite. I like to hang out or recommend the newcomers for Bawarchi biryani.

MISCHIEVOUS CHILD

I was born in Hassan, Karnataka. My father is a government employee and mother a homemaker. The mischievousness of my childhood is not to be recalled. Those days we did not know the limit. I was a backbencher who was always pulled to be seated in the first bench. One day my teachers, upset with me, invited my parents to school to complain and I think that was the last incident my parents would recollect of my schooling.



BOND WITH PONDICHERRY

It was never any individual that I take for my support system. Parents' sacrifice and blessings of course, rest is all self-made. I took a year's break. Nobody, not even my parents, insisted that I become something. It was to my satisfaction. Anyday, I prefer Pondicherry for beaches and it was the break that shaped my thinking because it was all hard work of 10 years for medicine as I was serving people as an Orthopedic, but wanted to do something more for society and hence choose the UPSC. So began my preparation for the UPSC.

AWAY FROM FAMILY

Stayed away from family from childhood until now. As I said, due to my mischievousness from Standard I, my parents were called every month. So, I was admitted to a Gurukul from grade Seven and it automatically taught me a disciplined life. Later, I moved to Mangalore for Intermediate and then MBBS, PG in Medical and PG College, Bangalore. Today, I am working as an IPS officer in Telangana. So it was and is away from my family, but I live with my wife and daughter currently in Hyderabad.

ORTHOPAEDIC JOURNEY, WISH TO CONTINUE

In 700 days of my Orthopedic journey, I was performing at least one surgery a day and I have completed nearly 1,000 surgeries, including minor and major. I would love to do it even now as a cop for the needy because Orthopedics is expensive.

MY LIKE FOR PHYSICS

If you look into my journey, I actually like Physics, which made me look at options of an engineer, aeronautics and a pilot. Karnataka had a common entrance exam for Engineering and Medical as one. I passed both and but missed Engineering counselling as I was a day late. So, I thought of studying medicine as I had my two sisters studying MBBS.



Generally, individuals have a dream they focus on alongside a few bucket-list goals in life. However, some go beyond pursuing a single profession, choosing instead to serve society and connect with people at a deeper level. One such individual is IPS officer but a doctor first - **Dr Vineeth Ganganna, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Madhapur.** Reflecting on his journey in an interview with **The Pioneer's Deepika Pasham**, he shared: **"It was always my priority to dedicate myself fully to my career, accepting whatever came my way. If not the UPSC, I would have been researching procedures in my specialty, Orthopedics, with AO."** His life journey until 2024 stands as a testament to his commitment, adaptability and passion for making a difference, whether in public service or specialized medical research.



RAPID FIRE

Favourite movies: Nothing favourite, it is the script that I am interested
Favourite food: Non-veg **Favourite colour:** Blue
Favourite destination: New Zealand **Favourite author:** Khalil Gibran



SIBLINGS AND FAMILY

My father was in government service and mother was a homemaker. I had two siblings, both are doctors. One is Paediatrician and another Obstetrician. They are settled in Karnataka. I am married to an engineer and have a four-year-old daughter.

PREFERRED TO GIVE ONLY ONE ATTEMPT

I was an Orthopedic and was appointed as Assistant Professor at Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma and Orthopaedics. So, the time I had before starting work and after work was my preparation for the UPSC. I had no ideas of giving another attempt. I wanted to write once and get over it, but we never know. My first attempt had hit me with luck.

IF NOT UPSC, WOULD DO MY FELLOWSHIP

After my masters, if we opt to do research, we will be offered a fellowship. So I had one from Germany. Once we step in, we will know the University we will be attached to. Through this I wished to go to AO in Switzerland, known as Mecca of Orthopedics, where most of the procedures are researched on and I wanted to research, write and have a surgery procedure in my name.



APART FROM WORK

We don't find time. The constant complaints in families are asking to give them some time. I do play with my daughter and I join my friends who are mostly from medical field and have settled in Telangana.



MEMORABLE CASE IN DISTRICTS

In regard to investigation of cases, while working in Bhadrachal Kothagudem district, I was an Investigation Officer of one case in Chintavarre village in Laxmidivipalli mandal where a teacher molests students from five years to twelve years. We arrested and investigated within a month and he got life imprisonment within four to five months.

TELANGANA SECOND OPTION

Karnataka was my first option as it is my home State and Telangana was second due to its policing. Institution-wise also it had the best training centre.

ADMIRATION

It is unfair to say one name. One could be good at law and order, other at investigation skills, other interacting with petitioners, some other will make good decisions for the public. I believe a village raises a kid, not parents. So a kid learns from everybody. It could be good or bad. Personality wise, it could be Ratan Tata. Basavanna who had teachings about casteless society. Looking at them, I think what are we (these generations) doing enough?



ATTACKS ON DOCTORS

Many things were there and I feel if one has to change the system, be one with it. There should be a different role I see this way when doctors become politicians, Doctors pursue civil servants, doctors must be in management and also in policy-making so that a change is made in the system. There are women-related issues in the field of medicine and women do achieve with a fighting spirit.

SADDEST MOMENTS

The limitations we have as IPS officers. I was in the districts of Khammam, Kothagudem, Nizamabad, but genuinely when you wish to help somebody but cannot do it. I am more like a societal person. That's where I understood that I belong to a service which can bring a change. Professionally for me, it is more philosophical- people losing originality is saddest. I work with detachment and only efforts are mine and results are not.