

DECCAN Chronicle

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HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | 18 JULY 2024

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Rainfall: 0.1 mm

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ASTROGUIDE

Krodhi; Uttarayana
Tithi: Ashada Shukla Dwadasi till 8.38 pm
Star: Jyeshtha till 3.23 am (Friday)
Varjyam: 8.49 am to 10.26 am
Durmuham: 10.13 am to 11.05 am; 3.23 pm to 4.15 pm
Rahukalam: 12 noon to 1.30 pm
HIJRI CALENDAR
Muharram 11, 1446 UH
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.43 am
Zohar: 12.32 pm
Asar: 4.56 pm
Maghrib: 6.59 pm
Isha: 8.15 pm
SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.51 AM
SUNSET TODAY 6.53 PM
MOONSET 2.27 AM
MOONRISE 4.13 PM

COUNTER POINT



Not only your son and grandson... even your degrees are fake, sir!

SHORT TAKES

2 MINERS DIE AS SIDE WALL CAVES IN AT SCCL

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC KARIMNAGAR, JULY 17

Two coal mine workers died when the side wall of the open cast mine-2 collapsed on them in Ramagundam of Godavari-khuni in Peddapalli district on Wednesday.

The incident occurred when the workers repairing a water pipeline and removing water that had collected in the mine due to the rain.

The victims were identified as Uppu Venkateshwarlu and Vidhya Sagar. Their bodies were shifted to the Singareni area hospital for postmortem. Union coal minister G. Kishan Reddy expressed deep condolences to the bereaved family members.

Various unions alleged that even though there has been a series of accidents like this, the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) management was not taking any steps for the safety of workers.

12 NAXALS KILLED IN ENCOUNTER AT MAHA BORDER

Gadchiroli, July 17: At least 12 Naxalites were killed and two security personnel injured in an encounter with police and commandos in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra near the Chhattisgarh border on Wednesday, officials said.

The heavy exchange of fire broke out in the afternoon between C60 commandos and Naxals in Wandoli village and continued for six hours, Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police Nilotpal said.

Full report on Page 7

First phase of process to involve ₹7,000 cr Crop loan waiver up to ₹1L by 4 pm today: CM

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said on Wednesday that farmers across Telangana who owe crop loans of up to ₹1 lakh will receive the crop loan waiver amount in their bank accounts at 4 pm on Thursday. By the end of the month, loans up to ₹1.5 lakh will be waived, and by August 15, the process will be completed with the waiver of loans up to ₹2 lakh.

The first phase will involve ₹7,000 crore. Revanth Reddy reiterated the Congress government's commitment to fulfilling the promises made to farmers in the Warangal Declaration of 2022 as well as for all sections in the party's manifesto for Assembly elections. He said the Congress government had spent ₹30,000 crore on welfare schemes in just seven months of coming to power. The Warangal Declaration, made by



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy along with Cabinet colleagues at a meeting at Praja Bhavan, in Hyderabad on Wednesday. — DC

Rahul Gandhi, assured a loan waiver of ₹2 lakh to farmers, a promise that the Congress government was determined to keep, he added.

The Chief Minister on Wednesday held a meeting with ministers, Congress MLAs, MLCs, MPs and party leaders at Praja Bhavan on the eve of launching of crop loan waiver scheme on Thursday. Addressing the

meeting, Revanth Reddy criticised the previous BRS government led by K. Chandrashekar Rao for its inability to waive ₹28,000 crore of farmer loans during its ten-year rule. He contrasted this with the Congress' pledge during the Lok Sabha election campaign to waive the loans by August 15.

Page 3: CM: Completing ₹2L loan waiver in 1 lump sum

Karnataka stalls 100% local quota

M.B. GIRISH | DC BENGALURU, JULY 17

Karnataka minister for heavy industries M.B. Patil announced on Wednesday that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has temporarily halted the approval for the Karnataka State Employment of Local Industries Factories Establishment Act Bill, 2024, which aimed to reserve 100 per cent of 'C' and 'D' category posts for Kannadigas in the private sector.

This decision follows criticism from industrialists, including members of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom), who warned that the Bill could hinder the state's progress and urged its withdrawal.

Initially, Siddaramaiah had announced Cabinet approval for the Bill on Tuesday, proposing 50 per cent reservation for Kannadigas in management roles and 75 per cent in non-management positions in private sector companies.

However, in response to industry opposition, the Chief Minister has opted to withhold final approval pending further consulta-



Siddaramaiah

tions. Minister Patil assured that the government is taking a cautious approach and urged industry leaders not to be alarmed by provisions in the draft Bill.

Siddaramaiah stated that a thorough discussion will occur during a Cabinet meeting scheduled for July 22 to finalise the Bill's contours, and emphasised that the legislation on the matter under at the drafting stage.

The initiative to introduce this legislation stems from demands by groups like Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (Narayana Gowda faction), a pro-Kannada organisation, advocating for job reservations for Kannadigas in the private sector through legal means.

More reports on Pg 2, 6



A Navy ship rescues nine Indians from a capsized vessel, near Oman. — DC

9 OF 13 INDIANS ON CAPSIZED TANKER SAVED

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JULY 17

Nine out of 13 Indians onboard a Comoros-flagged cargo vessel that capsized off Oman coast three days ago have been rescued, official sources said on Wednesday.

The vessel *MT Falcon Prestige* had capsized on July 14 southeast of Ras Madrakah. Thirteen Indian seafarers were onboard the ship.

Earlier, the Indian Navy had deployed its warship *INS Teg* and long-range maritime surveillance aircraft P8I to search for survivors.

The Oman Maritime Security Centre later said that one crew member was found deceased but did not disclose his nationality.

Search operations were continuing for the remaining six members, the Indian Navy said.

After poll loss, BJP group tries to get Yogi ousted

CM falls out with deputy; UP chief tells PM he wants to quit

YOJNA GUSAI | DC NEW DELHI, JULY 17

Amidst the ongoing power struggle and increasing pressure on the BJP high command for a change in leadership in Uttar Pradesh, BJP state unit chief Bhopendra Chaudhary met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday.

This meeting follows the party's poor performance in the recent Lok Sabha polls.

Union home minister Amit Shah also held a separate meeting with the Prime Minister later. Following Shah's meeting, Chaudhary met the home minister.

Prime Minister Modi and Chaudhary reportedly had discussions focused on various organisational issues and the party's preparations for the upcoming bypolls in 10 constituencies, for which the Election Commission is expected to announce dates soon.

The BJP's Lok Sabha performance and the lack of coordination between the government and the organisation in Uttar Pradesh were also topics of discussion.

Chaudhary had earlier offered to resign, taking moral responsibility for the party's electoral performance.

Despite a faction within the BJP calling for a change in leadership, a majority, including the state cadre, continues to support Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Reports of a rift between



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath meets Governor Anandiben Patel, at Raj Bhavan in Lucknow, on Wednesday. — PTI

SUVENDU JUNKS PARTY'S 'SABKA SAATH' POLICY

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JULY 17

West Bengal Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday called for an end to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' leaving the party stumped at its first congregation in the city after the Lok Sabha elections.

Full report on Page 7

BJP TO ANALYSE SHORTCOMINGS IN LS ELECTIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JULY 17

The BJP high command has scheduled a major introspection and brainstorming session over the disappointing results in the Lok Sabha and the recent bypolls. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address Chief Ministers of BJP and NDA-ruled states, with Union home minister Amit Shah.

Full report on Page 7

Adityanath and his deputy, Keshav Prasad Maurya, have also surfaced.

In Lucknow, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met Governor Anandiben Patel to discuss the

upcoming Assembly session, likely to start by the end of the month.

Earlier, Yogi Adityanath held a meeting with his ministers to strategise for the crucial Assembly bypolls.

HARYANA SETS ASIDE 10% QUOTA FOR AGNIVEERS

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, JULY 17

Haryana's BJP government announced on Wednesday plans to implement a 10 per cent reservation for Agniveers in various government recruitments ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said Agniveers will get quotas in positions such as constables, forest guards, jail wardens, and other civil posts.

Additionally, Saini disclosed that Agniveers will enjoy a relaxation of three years in the upper age limit for recruitment in Group B and Group C civil posts. For the inaugural batch of Agniveers, this age relaxation will be extended to five years, he added. The government will also allocate five per cent reservation for Agniveers in Group C direct recruitments and one per cent in Group B, which includes gazetted posts.

Saini said, "In direct recruitment for constable, mining guard, forest guard, jail warden, and special police officer positions by the state government, there will be a horizontal reservation of 10 per cent for Agniveers."

Page 7: Financial help for Agniveers announced

Beyond the juloos



The Old City wore black, the colour of mourning, as the faithful took to the streets to join the centuries-old Yaum-e-Ashura procession to mourn the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his family members. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE Report on Page 5

VISAS FOR CHINESE TECHIES ON FAST TRACK

New Delhi, July 17: India is expected to expedite the issuance of visas for Chinese technicians to address delays in manufacturing units, which have impacted investments worth billions of dollars, according to three government officials.

Following clashes on their Himalayan border in mid-2020, India had blocked nearly all Chinese visitors and investments. However, the country is now reconsidering its stance on visas due to the accumulating losses. The initiative to accelerate visa approvals is supported by the trade ministry and is being considered positively by the foreign ministry, despite initial reservations about the four-year freeze in relations with China, an official stated.

India received nearly 1,600 visa applications for Chinese technicians between last November and April this year. A new fast-track portal will be established to reduce visa approval times to less than a month, from the current duration of a year. The visa would allow Chinese technicians to stay for up to six months, another official added.

Domestic industry representatives and government officials urged the foreign ministry to revisit the issue, as the delays have posed challenges to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's goal of boosting local manufacturing, another official noted.

EXPANSION | PLAN About ₹900 cr will be infused by 2025, plans to hike workers to about 2.6K in 2 yrs

Sanofi to invest ₹3,600 cr in Hyd GCC by 2030

B. KRISHNA MOHAN I DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Close on the heels of medical devices player Medtronic announcing the setting up of its global capacity centre (GCC) in Hyderabad, Paris-based pharmaceutical and healthcare major Sanofi on Wednesday announced plans to invest 400 million euros (about ₹3,600 crore) in its Hyderabad global capacity centre by 2030. Of this, 100 million euros (about ₹900 crore) will be infused by 2025.

The company now has

about 1,000 employees and it has plans to increase it to about 2,600 in two years, making Hyderabad the largest of Sanofi's four global hubs.

Speaking after inaugurating Sanofi Healthcare India's expanded GCC facility at Hitec City, IT and industries minister D. Sridhar Babu said, "The expansion of Sanofi's GCC in Hyderabad marks a remarkable step forward for Telangana's ever-growing prominence in the global pharmaceutical landscape. This substantial additional investment of



Pharmaceuticals secretary Arunish Chawla, Madeleine Roach, IT minister D. Sridhar Babu, Thierry Berthelot, Emmanuel Frenehard, Mrinal Duggal at the inauguration of Sanofi's Hyderabad GCC Hub on Wednesday. — DC

over 400 million euros and the creation of over 2,600 jobs in the next two years underscore Telangana's

commitment to fostering a thriving environment for innovation and growth." Like its other GCCs,

ing several services to Sanofi's global functions and affiliates across the world. "Hyderabad is emerging as a preferred shared services destination with a large pool of talent. We are excited to invest and build this hub here to become a great global community striving for excellence, with digitalisation at the heart of our transformation," said Madeleine Roach, executive vice president, business operations, Sanofi.

This will offer services ranging from commercial, manufacturing and supply to research and development and digital.

Established in 2019, the Hyderabad hub has grown exponentially from being a medical hub to now provid-

ing several services to Sanofi's global functions and affiliates across the world. "Hyderabad is emerging as a preferred shared services destination with a large pool of talent. We are excited to invest and build this hub here to become a great global community striving for excellence, with digitalisation at the heart of our transformation," said Madeleine Roach, executive vice president, business operations, Sanofi.

Page 3: Want to work on AI at scale: Sanofi

EVENTS TODAY

Musical orchestra by Shruthi Layalu
Time: 3 pm
Venue: Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha

Bonala Utsav awards by Sri Mahankali Mahesh Goud Memorial Trust
Time: 6 pm
Venue: Ravindra Bharathi



Workshop on sahaaja yoga mediation
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Library Hall, AS Raonagar

GM Sampath Kumar basketball annual league championship
Time: 5.30 pm
Venue: YMCA Secunderabad

COMING UP NEXT:
Contemporary art exhibition
Time: July 20, 5 pm
Venue: Dhi Contemporary, Madhapur

REACH US AT
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Ramky deploys new technology at STPs

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

In a concerted effort to revive the Musi, the state and Central governments have sanctioned 70 sewage treatment plants (STPs) to prevent the city's dirty water from contaminating the river. Ramky Infrastructure, as part of this rejuvenation effort, has established five STPs with a combined capacity of 480.5 million litres per day (MLD). These plants are located at Kokapet (15 MLD), Mir Alam (41.5 MLD), Nagole (320 MLD), and two at Attapur (64 MLD and 40 MLD).

The STPs at Kokapet and MirAlam are operational, with the Nagole plant expected to start operations by July. The two plants at Attapur are slated for completion by October 2024. Equipped with 'sequential batch reactor' (SBR) technology, these STPs are the largest of their kind in India, designed to manage wastewater while consuming less power and being cost-effective compared to other technologies. The HMWS&SB has entrusted the project to

EQUIPPED WITH 'sequential batch reactor' (SBR) technology, these STPs are the largest of their kind in India, designed to manage wastewater while consuming less power and being cost-effective compared to other technologies.

Hyderabad STPS Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ramky Infrastructure Limited. Under the hybrid annuity model (HAM), Ramky Infrastructure has secured a contract worth ₹1,297 crore, with ₹908 crore allocated for construction and ₹389 crore for the operation and maintenance of the STPs over the next 15 years.

P. Ravi Prasad, director of Ramky Infrastructure Limited, highlighted the successful deployment of SBR technology, emphasizing its ability to significantly reduce the space required for plant setup. N.S. Rao, group CFO of Ramky Infrastructure, thanked the state and Central governments for their initiative in revitalising the Musi river.

K'taka locals job quota likely to find echo in Telugu states

NASSCOM objects to quota, says curbs could force companies to relocate

N. VAMSI SRINIVAS | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The controversy over the Congress-led Karnataka government's decision to bring in legislation reserving 100 per cent jobs for locals in private sector — since rescinded — may find its echo in the two Telugu states.

Trying to take the first mover advantage, AP human resources development minister Nara Lokesh invited Nasscom members to expand or relocate their businesses to the IT, IT services, AI and data centre cluster at Visakhapatnam.

RESERVATION BILL TALKS

TRYING TO TAKE the first mover advantage, Andhra Pradesh human resources development minister Nara Lokesh invited Nasscom members to expand or relocate their businesses to the IT, IT services, AI and data centre cluster at Visakhapatnam.

THE PRADESH CONGRESS Committee led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had promised in the 2023 election manifesto to reserve 75 per cent reservation to locals in industries set up with government incentives. After being elected to power, the party did not make any move on bringing the legislation.

reserve 100 per cent jobs for locals in the private sector if the industry availed state incentives. He later removed the post from the social media platform X.

But, Nasscom issued a statement saying: "The Bill's provisions threaten to drive away companies, and stifle start-ups, especially when more global firms (global capacity centres) are looking to invest in the state. At the same time, the restrictions could force companies to relocate as local skilled talent becomes scarce."

Maintaining that he could understand the dis-appointment of Nasscom, Lokesh said AP would offer "best-in-class facilities, uninterrupted power, infrastructure and the

most suitable skilled talent for your IT enterprise with no restrictions from the government."

However, for the TD-led NDA government in Andhra Pradesh to assure industry of "no restrictions", it has to repeal legislation passed by the previous Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy government. In 2019, AP was the first state to reserve 75 per cent of job for locals by law, and made it applicable to all private companies whether or not they availed of government incentives.

The legislation remained on paper: "It remained more of a political rhetoric. Instead, the government could improve the skills of local youth, create a talent pool and encourage the industry to make use of the talent instead of forcing them with a law," a senior state official told DC.

In Telangana, the Pradesh Congress Committee led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had promised in the 2023 election manifesto to reserve 75 per cent jobs to locals in industries set up with government incentives. After being elected to power, the party has not made any move to bring in the quota legislation.

The previous BRS government had taken a firm stand against reservations for locals and instead promised incentives to those who engaged locals. Then IT minister K.T. Rama Rao had opposed the quota for locals as it was proving counterproductive in states where it was implemented.

When contacted on Wednesday, Rama Rao chose not to comment on party's stand in the wake of the Karnataka developments.

Ayodhya Rama to star at Khairatabad

NABINDER BOMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

One of the major attractions at the Khairatabad Ganesha mandap this year will be the idol of Lord Rama, which will be similar to the one installed at the Ayodhya temple early this year.

As this year would be the 70th year of Khairatabad Ganesha celebrations, the organisers, Sri Ganesha Utsav Committee, have decided to install a 70-feet tall eco-friendly idol this year. Last year, the idol was around 63-feet tall, weighing 45 to 50 tonnes.

This year the Ganesha idol will be crafted in the

form of 'Saptamukhi Shakti Maha Vinayakudu', having seven faces, seven snakes and 14 hands. A poster of the idol will be released on Friday.

"The idol of Lord Rama will be one of the attractions," said Sandeep Raj, joint secretary of the Sri Ganesha Utsav Committee.

As many people are yet to visit Ayodhya to seek the blessing of Lord Rama, they can have a glimpse of him in Hyderabad, said another person, who monitors works at the pandal. According to committee members, elaborate arrangements will be in place for the smooth conduct of the festival and immersion.

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Shri Vardhman Sthanakvasi Jain Shrivak Sangh takes out a religious procession on the occasion of Chaturmas mangal pravesh of param puja Dr. Shri Samkitmuniji Adi Thana-3 at Kachiguda Jain Sthanak, from Tilaknagar to Kachiguda Jain Sthanak on Wednesday. —S. SURENDER REDDY

Devotees celebrate Tholi Ekadasi with devotion

SAALINI LOKESH | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

All temples of Lord Venkateshwara in the city saw a sea of devotees on the occasion of Tholi Ekadasi. A devotional atmosphere marked the day, for which several Lord Venkateshwara temples in the city were decked up in flowers, carried out rituals, and offered special prayers.

Since the government declared a holiday for Muharram, a large number of devotees, all dressed in traditional attire, visited the temples to worship Lord Venkateshwara and seek His blessings. 'This festival is celebrated for Lord Vishnu or His avatars. "The meaning of 'Tholi' is first or start, which denotes the beginning of all festivals. Festivals after Tholi Ekadasi include Krishna Janmash-tami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Makar Sankranti, Maha Shivaratri, Hanuman Jayanti, and Dasara," said Sasi Kumar, Lord



Devotees throng Venkateswara Swamy temple at Chikkadpally on the occasion of Tholi Ekadasi on Wednesday. — K. DURGA RAO

Venkateshwara temple priest in Srinagar Colony. People also celebrate Tholi Ekadasi at home with their families and some of the devotees join local rath yatras that temple hold to mark Tholi Ekadasi, the priest said. "This festival is seen as a way to cleanse the body and mind, bringing

health, wellness, and happiness," he added. "From the morning, the devotee turnout was higher compared to other days. With the festival falling on a holiday, people are visiting the temple with their families and distributing prasadam to others in the temple," the priest added.

TECH | SUCCESS HYLENR reactor does not emit N-waste, can be used in space

City start-up displays 'cold fusion' power

RACHEL DAMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Hyderabad-based start-up HYLENR demonstrated what it said was the world's first cold fusion technology designed to generate clean energy, on Wednesday. The low energy nuclear reactor (LENR) technology has received a patent from the government of India, marking a significant milestone in the realm of sustainable energy solutions, the start-up said.

In simple terms, cold fusion, often referred to as low energy nuclear reaction, involves fusing atomic nuclei at relatively low temperatures compared to traditional nuclear reactors. HYLENR said its technology amplified input electricity to produce



Siddharth Durairajan, CEO, HYLENR, demonstrates the working of the low energy nuclear reactor to T-Hub CEO Srinivas Rao Mahankali, in Hyderabad. — DC

heat, which could be harnessed for a variety of applications, from space missions to room heating in cold regions, and induction heating for domestic and industrial needs. Unlike conventional

nuclear fission reactors, HYLENR's devices do not emit nuclear waste or use radioactive materials, significantly reducing associated risks, the start-up said. During a live demonstra-

tion at T-HUB, HYLENR's reactor was shown to consistently achieve a heat amplification ratio of 1.5x, generating 150 watts of heat from a 100-watt electrical input. Explaining the details, Siddhartha Durairajan, chief executive officer of HYLENR, noted that the patent validated the inventiveness of the technology and its viability in enhancing efficiency with existing power generation systems. By leveraging LENR, the approach aims to amplify electricity from both renewable and non-renewable sources, ultimately targeting a 2.5 times increase in power output. Dr Prahlada Ramarao, Chief Innovation Officer of HYLENR, who is a former distinguished scientist at DRDO and a Padma

Shri awardee, spoke about the uniqueness of cold fusion technology, and its potential to provide a sustainable and easily attainable supply of clean energy. With advanced research and development facilities located at T-HUB in Hyderabad and another centre in Bengaluru's Electronic City, HYLENR hoped to scale up LENR units for field testing and demonstration projects. The start-up also said that it aimed to partner with research institutions and regulatory bodies to establish safety standards and ensure the successful deployment of its LENR technology. HYLENR is also seeking strategic investments of \$10 million to further accelerate production, enhance efficiency, and drive business development.

SHORT TAKES
WANT TO WORK ON AI AT SCALE, SAYS SANOFI

FROM PAGE 1

Madeleine said, "This hub will be a catalyst enabling Sanofi to accelerate efficiency and reinvent how we work, as we chase the miracles of science to improve people's lives."

"Our ambition is to be the first biopharma company powered by artificial intelligence (AI) at scale. From discovery to treatment, we are using AI ethically and safely to get to market faster with our drugs as there are plenty of unmet needs," said Emmanuel Frenehard, executive vice president, chief digital officer, Sanofi.



CPM state politburo member B.V. Raghavulu speaks to the media in Ramnagar of Hanamkonda district on Wednesday. —DC

CPM WANTS CROP LOAN WAIVER FOR ALL FARMERS

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, JULY 17

The crop loan waiver should be applicable to all farmers, demanded CPM state politburo member B.V. Raghavulu. He said there are many defects in the guidelines pertaining to farm loan waiver.

"How can the government forget tenant farmers and Rythu Mitra groups? Loan waiver should be extended to them too. The government should not delete their names by finding lame excuses," he said. Even though some farmers do not have passbooks, they have their names in the pahan records and the government must consider such farmers, he said. In the undivided Warangal district area, thousands of tribal farmers, especially in the Mulugu and Eturnagaram areas, did not have passbooks, Raghavulu pointed out.

On the local bodies elections, the CPM leader said that they should be held only after conducting a population and caste census. "There is a dispute regarding how much percentage should be allocated to the BC community. That is why the government must conduct a caste census immediately," Raghavulu said.

HC NOTICES TO STATE ON PAYMENT OF I-T OF CM, MINS.

VUJJINI VAMSHIDHAR | DC
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The Telangana High Court has issued notice to the state government, seeking its contentions in a PIL challenging the practice of the public exchequer paying income-tax of the Chief Minister, Cabinet ministers and others.

The income-tax of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Legislative Council and all government advisers with Cabinet rank is also paid from the public exchequer. The Forum for Good Governance (NGO) had filed the PIL challenging the provisions under Section 3(4) of the AP Payment of Salaries and Pension and Removal of Disqualification Act, 1953 that states that income-tax payable by people in positions mentioned in the PIL shall be borne by the state government.

A division bench, comprising Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Jukanti Anil Kumar, heard the PIL and directed the Chief Secretary and principal secretary (GAD) to file the counters. The petitioner contended that the Chief Ministers and others were public servants and get their salary from the state. When they are paid salaries, they are liable to pay income-tax like all other citizens.

The petitioner submitted that after bifurcation, the Telangana government had adopted Section (4) of Section (3) of the AP Payment of Salaries and Pension and Removal of Disqualification Act, 1953 as amended, under which the state government is paying the income-tax of the public servants cited. The petitioner asked the High Court for a direction to set aside the provision.

₹2L loan waiver at one go in state is a record, says Bhatti

Scheme to cover 6 lakh families without ration cards, declares Dy CM

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that the Congress government had created a record by deciding to waive crop loans of farmers up to ₹2 lakh each in one go starting from Thursday in spite of severe financial constraints.

He said the Congress government had inherited a huge debt burden of ₹7 lakh crore from the previous BRS government.

Despite this, the Congress government has decided to waive off crop loans of farmers up to ₹2 lakh which the former BRS government did not do even for ₹1 lakh when there was surplus budget, he said.

Bhatti added that the crop loan waiver process would be completed in August 15.

Speaking to key party leaders here on Wednesday, Bhatti said that the government had mobilised rupee by rupee and to go about the loan waiver programme.

He said that apart from all farmers' families, the scheme would cover six lakh families without ration cards.

"Holding your heads high, publicise the loan waiver scheme," he urged them.

Everyone was surprised when Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy announced before the Lok Sabha elections that the loan waiver scheme would be completed by August 15. Some thought it was meant to attract voters but we will implement loan waiver in letter and spirit," Bhatti, who holds the finance portfolio, said.

Implementation of the scheme would improve the image of all Congress leaders and it is imperative that they reach out to every village and tell people that the Congress government was implementing loan waiver as per its promise.

EVERYONE WAS SURPRISED when Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy announced before the Lok Sabha elections that the loan waiver scheme would be completed by August 15.



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, ministers Ponnam Prabhakar, Tummala Nageswara Rao and others at review meet at Praja Bhavan on Wednesday. —BY ARRANGEMENT

CM: Completing ₹2L loan waiver in lump sum

FROM PAGE 1

REVANTH REDDY will himself interact with farmers at Rythu Vedikas through video conferencing, and take part in celebrations. Ministers, Congress MLAs, MLCs, MPs were asked to participate in these celebrations.

done. "We should proudly say that we have kept the loan waiver guarantee. There should be a national level discussion on loan waivers, and MPs should mention in Parliament that the guarantee given by Rahul Gandhi has been implemented in Telangana."

To mark the occasion, bike rallies will be organised on Thursday in villages and mandal centres, culminating in a festive atmosphere at Rythu Vedikas. Revanth Reddy will himself interact with farmers at Rythu Vedikas through video conferencing, and take part in celebrations. Ministers, Congress MLAs, MLCs, MPs were asked to participate in these celebrations, highlighting the government's achievements in welfare spending, which has amounted to ₹30,000 crores in just seven months.

"Financial experts may argue that a loan waiver is difficult and could lead to financial challenges for the government, but we are committed to our word," Revanth Reddy stated. He praised former Congress president Sonia Gandhi for her bold decision to grant Telangana statehood, despite the political risks.

"When the Gandhi family gives their word, it is a commitment etched in stone. Rahul Gandhi has promised to waive farmers' loans, and it is our responsibility to make him believe that we can deliver on that promise," the Chief Minister said.

"The Congress government's aim is to make every farmer debt-free. Unlike KCR, who only made empty promises, our government is serious about the farmer loan waiver. We are completing the ₹2 lakh loan waiver in one lumpsum to maintain the self-respect of the farmer," Revanth Reddy asserted.

He called on Congress leaders to organise programmes at village, mandal, and constituency levels to inform people of the good work being

Farmers' bodies doubt waivers, demand clarity

G. RAM MOHAN | DC
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Farmers groups, while welcoming the announcement to allow passbooks as the basis for availing farm loan waiver, have expressed fears that the other pre-conditions would deprive many of them of the benefits. This is because GO RT No. 567 has not been amended as yet, they said.

First, the government had encouraged the formation of self-help groups, joint liability groups, Rythu Mitra groups but the GO in its clause 4.13 (1) specifically exempted them from the waiver, they said.

Further, the GO mentions loan eligibility cards (LEOC) from the scheme despite these cards being specifically given to tenant farmers as per the AP Land Licensed Cultivators Act, 2011.

These are mostly availed by small and marginal families belonging to SC, ST and BC communities. Nearly 12 lakh farmers had applied under Dharani seeking passbooks and the then government had accepted them. Of the 1.3 crore

applications received during the Congress government's Praja Palana, 70 lakh were regarding land issues.

These have not been resolved, said Sarampally Malla Reddy, All India Kisan Sabha state vice-president. Banks had rescheduled loans even after the new government took over before the cut-off date of 9/12/2024 and they will now be excluded, he said. Such rescheduling had happened before the bifurcation of the state. Waivers done earlier did not have such riders.

Applying the PM Kisan modalities would deny the benefit to many.

Of the 65 lakh beneficiaries of Rythu Bandhu, only 29,78,394 were considered eligible for PM Kisan, the associations said.

The government instructing farmers to avail the waiver after repaying the remaining amount of the loan violated the Reserve Bank guidelines, which specifically barred banks from putting additional financial burden between July and September when farmers invest in crops. Such conditions will push them to avail private loans, Malla Reddy said.



Irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy holds review meet with senior irrigation department officials at Jalasoudha on Wednesday. —BY ARRANGEMENT

Uttam sees ₹11K cr hole to expedite irrigation projects

BALU PULIPAKA | DC
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy announced on Wednesday that the department will seek an additional ₹11,000 crore this year to expedite the completion of ongoing projects, to bring more areas under irrigation. He cited the need for additional funds as over two-thirds of the current allocation were required to service debts and pay salaries.

During a review meeting with senior irrigation department officials at Jalasoudha, the department's headquarters, the minister outlined the state government's plans to complete ongoing projects within a year, targeting irrigation for approximately six lakh acres.

Regarding budgetary concerns, Reddy stated that of the ₹28,000 crore allocated to the department, ₹18,000 crore was needed to pay interest on loans taken by the previous BRS government, while ₹2,000 crore was required for employee salaries and pensions.

"We will be requesting the Chief Minister and the finance department to increase the department budget by another ₹11,000 crore to speedily complete some ongoing projects and expand the irrigated area in the state," Uttam Kumar Reddy said.

Projects have been categorised into A, B, and C classes. Category A includes projects nearing completion that can be operational quickly with an investment of ₹240.66 crore, enabling irrigation facilities for 47,882 acres. Categories B and C comprise projects that will take longer to complete. When finished, the ongoing projects are expected to irrigate an additional 5,84,770 acres.

The irrigation minister also reviewed the progress of various projects, including the Palamuru-Rangareddy lift irrigation scheme, Kolsagar, Rajolibanda,

UTTAM TO MEET NDSA OFFICIALS IN DELHI ON JULY 20

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy will meet officials from the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) in New Delhi on July 20 to discuss the safety and protection of the Kaleshwaram project barrages on the Godavari River.

The Telangana government has been awaiting the NDSA's final report on measures to ensure the safety of the Sundilla, Annaram, and Medigadda barrages, following issues that emerged in October last year.

The NDSA had provided interim measures, including repairs to downstream flood protection structures, filling voids under the foundations, and keeping all barrage gates open to allow free water flow in the Godavari. These measures have been implemented, but not all could be completed due to rising river flows.

Some critical tests, including core sample studies, geotechnical, and geophysical tests, were delayed by the increased water flow, preventing final conclusions on the way forward.

Uttam Kumar Reddy told reporters on Wednesday that he has discussed these issues with NDSA chairman J. Chandrashekar Iyer and other officials. He will further address these matters during his meeting in Delhi.

Dindi, SLBC, Bima, Chinnna Kaleshwaram, Nilwai and Mattadivagu. He received updates from department engineers on these projects. Officials estimated that around ₹8,000 crore would be required to complete these projects, prompting the request for an increased budget allocation.

Odisha coal mining in 4 months, says Bhatti

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, who holds the energy portfolio, has directed the officials of the state energy department and the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) to complete the pending works and start production in the Naini coal block within four months.

He was speaking at a review meeting on Naini Block at the Secretariat on Wednesday with the energy secretary Ronald Ross, Singareni chairman and managing director (CMD) N. Balram and other officials.

The Naini coal block is located in the Talcher coalfield in the Angul district of Odisha. The Union coal ministry had allocated the block to SCCL in 2015.

Bhatti said the coal block secured all the permissions from the Odisha government, and the Odisha forest department had transferred 783.27 hectares of forest land to the Singareni company.

Production never started due to the lack of interest from the previous BRS government.

To discuss the pending matters pertaining to the coal block, the Deputy CM met Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan

BOOST TO ENERGY

THE NAINI coal block is located in the Talcher coalfield in the Angul district of Odisha. The Union coal ministry had allocated the block to SCCL in 2015.

Bhatti said the coal block secured all the permissions from the Odisha government, and Odisha forest department.

He suggested appointing the Naini block general manager as the special officer for these works.

The Deputy CM also directed the officials to make rehabilitation plans for the displaced people and corporate social responsibility programmes to create livelihood opportunities for the village youth, as discussed by him with MLA Behera and the local representatives.

Bhatti also directed the officials to conduct the rehabilitation and periphery development advisory committee meeting soon to discuss rehabilitation and compensation issues.

Majhi on July 12, as well as Chhendipada MLA Agasti Behera and local representatives of the displaced villages.

In the review meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister said that since the 135-year-old state-owned enterprise was taking up its first project outside Telangana, the officers have work to hard to enhance the reputation of SCCL and Telangana state government.

He suggested that officials hold continuous consultations with the Odisha forest, roads and electricity departments to expedite the road-widening work till Chhendipada and complete the work on high-tension electricity lines at the earliest.

MISUSE OF SOP A report on this will be tabled in Budget session on July 24

State to weed out bogus beneficiaries

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The state government has initiated the process to identify bogus beneficiaries of welfare schemes to assess the loss caused to the state exchequer in the last 10 years of the previous BRS regime, official sources said.

A report on the matter will be tabled in the upcoming Budget session of the Assembly expected to begin from July 24, they added.

The government in its probe found that a few pensioners and family

members of retired government employees who are getting pensions were also availing Aasara pensions.

Officials identified 5,650 such bogus beneficiaries across the state so far and inspection is going on.

In combined Khammam district alone, 427 bogus beneficiaries of Aasara pensions were found on which ₹2.50 crore was spent.

Based on these findings, the officials in a few districts issued recovery notices to bogus beneficiaries of Rythu Bandhu and Aasara pensions and directed them to return

THESE RECOVERY notices created a furore after they took political colour with opposition BRS attacking the Congress for targeting beneficiaries instead of helping them.

the amount.

These recovery notices created a furore after they took political colour with opposition BRS attacking the Congress for targeting beneficiaries instead of helping them.

Following this, the government issued strict instructions to officials

not to issue recovery notices until the inspection of all welfare schemes is completed, all bogus beneficiaries are identified and the report placed in the Legislative Assembly to facilitate a comprehensive debate in the House to arrive at a consensus on how to proceed against bogus beneficiaries.

Previous BRS government implemented Aasara pensions, Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bima, free power to agriculture, 2BHK houses for poor, sheep distribution scheme, spending thousands of crores of rupees every year.

Congress government reviews the implementation of the schemes to plug loopholes and check leakages.

Check on Rythu Bandhu reveals BRS government had paid out ₹80,453 crore under Rythu Bandhu Of this amount, ₹25,672 crore was wasted by paying Rythu Bandhu to land converted into real estate ventures or industrial and commercial purposes, roads, highways, irrigation projects, barren land and even hillock areas.

The government orders inquiry into Aasara pensions social welfare pensions.

Career Chronicle

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IN BRIEF

Parked private bus set on fire

Hyderabad: Unidentified persons set on fire a parked bus of a private travels company on Tuesday night, Tappachabutra police said on Wednesday. The vehicle was gutted completely. Police is collecting CCTV footage at the spot to identify the rioters.

Woman held for abetment to suicide

Hyderabad: Railway police arrested Kankolla Laxmi of Hegldoli of Pothangal mandal on Wednesday for the suicide deaths of Bandaru Anil Kumar and his wife Bandaru Sailaja. The deceased had alleged that Laxmi, aunt of Sailaja, had blamed them over a sensitive issue.

Driver held for dumping garbage

Hyderabad: The GHMC caught a trolley auto driver who dumped garbage on the road in Gudimalkapur, based on a complaint reported on the social media platform X by an advocate. The garbage was wrapped in huge plastic bags. The GHMC said it caught the driver within 30 minutes and made him take the garbage back.

FOUR DROWN IN TWO INCIDENTS IN NALGONDA

P. SRINIVAS | DC SURYAPET, NALGONDA, JULY 16

Three persons, including a 12-year-old girl, drowned in a pit at Bopparam of Athmakur (S) mandal in the district on Wednesday morning. The victims were identified as K. Sripal Reddy, his daughter Usha and his friend P. Raju, all residents of Hyderabad. They came to Bopparam two days ago to attend a function at their relative's house. In another incident, a person named K Jagadish, a native of Korremula of Ghatkesar mandal in Rangareddy district, drowned in the backwaters of Nagarjunasagar at Vizag Colony of Neredugumma mandal in Nalgonda district. He had gone for a holy dip in Krishna river

CYBERCRIME SLEUTHS HELP IN RECOVERY OF ₹28L

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The Hyderabad cybercrime police said they had prevented fraudulent transactions and recovered ₹28 lakh that was filched by fraudsters from victims in the city. In the first case, on July 16, a victim approached the cybercrime NCRP police after losing ₹2 lakh from his bank account due to a KYC fraud. The team immediately registered the online complaint in the NCRP portal and informed the bank. The bank responded blocked the fraudster's transaction for ₹1.75 lakh. In the second case, the team prevented the transaction of ₹5.9 lakh. In this case, the victim lost the money from his bank account after he was tricked by the fraudsters, who posed as TRAI officials and Mumbai police. In the third case, the cybercrime police stopped the fraudulent transaction of ₹20.08 lakh from a victim's bank account. The cybercrime team could save money by immediately registering the complaint on the NCRP portal and escalating the issue with ICICI Bank.

Stray dogs maul baby boy to death in Jawaharnagar

Mother unaware when stray dogs pounced on her child playing outside

MANVI VYAS | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

In yet another gruesome incident, an 18-month-old boy died after being brutally attacked by a pack of five to six stray dogs, Jawaharnagar police said here on Wednesday. According to Jawaharnagar circle inspector G. Nagaraju, the boy, Vihaan, had come to the city with his parents Bharat and Lakshmi from Siddipet district. At around 7 pm on Tuesday, Lakshmi stepped out of the house for some work. Vihaan, who was playing outside, followed his mother, who had no idea about him following her.



The grieving family members of the deceased child at Jawaharnagar on Wednesday. — DC

In the meantime, a dog attacked Vihaan and dragged him to an isolated place, where more dogs came and attacked the boy, the CI said. A neighbour, who came to know of the incident, informed the boy's parents, who immediately shifted him to Meenakshi hospital, where the doctors urged that the boy be shifted to Gandhi hospital. In the meantime, Vihaan succumbed to his injuries.

In an unfortunate turn, horrific visuals of the boy's badly bruised mauled body were circulated widely on social media platforms. His relatives staged a protest in front of the Jawaharnagar municipal office demanding ex-gratia, the CI said. Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, the victim's father Bharat said, "We had shifted to this locality only a month back. Our neighbours have told us that they have complained to the municipal authorities several times about 40-50 dogs in our locality." Vihaan's mother, Lakshmi said "They have been complaining about this for so long, yet the authorities did nothing to address this menace. We have lost our only son. This has happened before. I'm sure nothing will change."

Another resident and also a relative of the deceased, Venkatesh, said, "Our area has become a dumping yard, leading to more animals coming here. We are now tired of telling the authorities and mutton shops to stop disposing waste in our area." "Not just dogs, there are around three to four snakes moving around in our neighbourhood. As the authorities are doing nothing, in order to save our lives, we kill them," Venkatesh added. Venkatesh said that his sister's family only wanted financial compensation. He said dengue and viral fevers had become very common because of poor maintenance of sanitation in the locality.

Meanwhile, the victim's family went to their native place in Siddipet to perform Vihaan's last rites. **● IN AN unfortunate turn, horrific visuals of the boy's badly bruised body were circulated widely on social media.**

WHAT EXPERT SAY
Piled up garbage, climate play key role in dog bites

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

There are around 3.79 lakh dogs within the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation limits of which, 80 per cent or 3,03,200 dogs have been sterilised, according to a veterinary doctor at GHMC.

According to data provided by the Institute of Preventive Medicine, stray dog attacks have seen a steep rise in the city. In 2022, Hyderabad recorded 19,847 dog bite cases, 26,349 in 2023 and 9,208 in the first four months of 2024. Fiftyfour rabies-related cases were recorded between January 2019 and April 2024, and 3,36,767 cases were recorded over a decade, from 2010-2020, according to the data.

In just three days as many cases of dog attacks were reported in Hyderabad. On July 14, a four-year-old boy was chased by a dog in Ghatkesar and was saved by his father. On July 17, a seven-year-old boy was chased by a dog, while an 18-month boy was mauled to death by another dog. According to GHMC chief veterinary officer Dr Abdul Wakil, several factors have contributed to this growing menace, one of them being the breeding season. "During the breeding season, male dogs are overly aggressive due to increased testosterone levels. Female dogs, after giving birth, become aggressively protective of their puppies, often leading to attacks on perceived threats," he said. Improper garbage management played a major role, attracting stray dogs. For most part, dog bite cases have occurred somewhere close to a dumping yard



Street dogs roaming on Fever Hospital premises at Nallakunta on Wednesday. — S. SURENDER REDDY

or a place swamped with garbage. Seasonal changes also play a crucial role. "The heat and lack of water during summer, followed by the early rainy season, make dogs restless and more prone to aggression due to skin infections and other health issues," Dr Wakil said. In 2001, highly rabid dogs would be anaesthetised and killed. In 2011, the High Court imposed restrictions on this practice and directed the state government to only sterilise dogs. "During the sterilisation process, dogs are vaccinated against rabies," Dr Wakil said. Additionally, Ivermectin injections are given to tackle both external and internal parasites, although they do not completely prevent fungal infections. Dr Wakil said the Supreme Court and the Centre had framed laws regarding the sterilisation and management of street dogs, with amendments in 2023 to enhance control measures. "The primary method for controlling the dog population is

through animal birth control (ABC) programmes. Euthanasia is prohibited except in cases of rabid or terminally ill dogs," he said. In order to ensure appropriate adoption techniques, the law-enforcement authorities have ensured that dogs older than two months are given up for adoption under strict guidelines, with follow-up checks, he said. Speaking of behavioural changes, Dr Wakil said, "Dogs undergo major behavioural changes like increased aggression during the hot summer months and the early rainy season, causing them physical discomfort and health issues. Now there is no water to drink as all the nalas are covered, and who would give them water instead?" He said, "Although sterilisation helps in reducing aggression by lowering hormone levels, it does not rule out all sources of aggressive behaviour as some hormones are produced by the brain and other glands."

7-yr-old hurt in stray attack

DC CORRESPONDENT KARIMNAGAR, JULY 17

A seven-year-old boy was seriously injured when stray dogs suddenly attacked him when he was playing in front of his house in Mangela village of Birpur mandal in Jagtial district on Wednesday. Noticing the dogs attacking the boy, named P. Devendar, women rushed to his rescue and drove away the strays. Hearing the

commotion, the boy's father Pendram Maruthi came out of his house and shifted the injured child to the government hospital at Jagtial where the boy is said to be undergoing treatment.

Sorry | State Pending bills of ₹1.4 lakh have put sterilisation on backburner

Engineer doubles up for vet, other work

NABINDER BOMMALA | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The Jawaharnagar Municipal Corporation (JMC) like other urban local bodies (ULBs) located in the vicinity of the GHMC does not have an exclusive veterinary wing. One environmental engineer is deputed in each ULB to take up sanitation and related works, and also veterinary-related tasks. In order to execute the animal birth control oper-

ations and anti-rabies vaccinations (ABC & ARV) for street dogs, ULBs have entered into a MoU with Blue Cross, a non-profit registered society. A source in the corporation said that as bills of ₹1.4 lakh were yet to be paid to Blue Cross, sterilisation of stray dogs had taken a backseat in Jawaharnagar, under whose limits an 18-month-old boy was mauled to death by stray dogs. It was only after this incident that GHMC rushed vehicles to catch the stray



Municipal workers catch stray dogs at Jawaharnagar where a boy was mauled by strays. — BY ARRANGEMENT

dogs. JMC officials claimed that 60 dogs were captured from the location where the boy was mauled to death.

In addition, areas like Narsingi, Manikonda, Bairagiguda, Boduppall

and Nizampet are densely populated. However, ULBs still lack a basic mechanism to address the stray dog menace. "As per AWBI guidelines and court orders, stray dogs can neither be shifted to other locations nor left abandoned elsewhere. If we flout these norms, we will lose our jobs. Several attempts to fix the issue, including having common feeding places for strays, have failed," said the municipal commissioner of an ULB.

Kothapet jewellery shop theft accused in Delhi police net

MOULI MAREEDU | DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

In a major development in the Mahadev Jewellery shop robbery case investigation, the key accused, who has been absconding for the last two years, was arrested by the anti-gang squad (AGS) of Delhi on Wednesday. The Delhi police alerted Rachakonda police in connection with the arrest of the Nandu gang member.

On December 1, 2022, Nandu gang members opened fire inside Mahadev Jewellery shop located at Kothapet under Chaitanyapuri police limits and decamped with four kg gold ornaments. Two persons suffered injuries when the robbers opened fire. Even though some persons were arrested, the key

accused Sumit Dagar remained absconding.

After getting a tip-off, the Delhi police conducted raids in Rohini locality and arrested Dagar, a repeat offender who was also involved in a murder case in Delhi.

Chaitanyapuri inspector G. Venkateswarlu said that Delhi police had informed them on Wednesday of Dagar's arrest.

"We will file a petition before the court seeking permission to shift the accused under Prisoner Transit (PT) warrant to the city. We will question him in connection with the burglary," he said.

During investigation it was found that Dagar met other Nandu gang members in jail. On their release, they hatched and executed the plan to rob the jewellery shop.

DON'T REMEMBER THE CASE, SAYS RADHA KISHAN RAO DURING INTERROGATION

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Retired task force DCP P. Radha Kishan Rao, accused in the phone-tapping case, told the police that he had forgotten the case in which he is named for kidnapping, threatening and extorting Manikonda businessman Venu Madhav Chennupati, 46. The investigator gave more time to recollect and showed him the preliminary evi-

● THE INVESTIGATOR gave more time to recollect and showed him the preliminary evidence. Rao will be grilled again on Thursday.

dence. Police will question him again on Thursday before producing him in court for judicial remand.

In the complaint lodged in April, Madhav said Rao along with others had forced him to transfer his shares in his firm Kria Healthcare to others.

2nd Death Anniversary
Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Ps: 116:15
JOSHUA Y. MIDDY
DOD: July 18, 2022
We miss you every moment.
Your presence continues to surround us.
You will forever be in our hearts.
Inserted by:
Mrs. Sathyamma and Dr. M V Yesurathnam
(Parents)
& Family
Mob: 9951405930, 7569106849

SHRADDHANJALI
Smt. N SAROJINI
Left for her heavenly abode on 10th July 2024
Pedda Karma will take place on Thursday, 18th July 2024 12:00 noon onwards followed by Lunch at GC Hall, Exhibition Grounds Nampally, Hyderabad
N. Surender & Family
(M) 9440040689, 8019999399
(CA-4254)

PAGDI
My Beloved Wife
Smt. UMA RUPANI
left us for heavenly abode on 15th July 2024
Pagdi Ceremony at Sindhu Bhavan, Sindhi Colony on Thursday, 18th July, 5 pm to 5:30 pm.
In Grief: NARI RUPANI & FAMILY
(S/2425/D00379)

REMEMBRANCE
A.S. DAYAKER & Smt. VIJAYA
It's hard to forget someone like you both Nanna & Amma because you gave us so much to remember.
AMMA and NANA
Inserted by: Hema and Family
Ph: 9849042899
(S/2425/D00381)

OBITUARY
Mohammed Yousuf
DOB: 14.08.1963 DOD: 17.07.2024
May his soul rest in peace.
Inserted by: Vijayavani Limited
Kharkhana, Secunderabad
(S/2425/D00373)

8th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Smt. T. JYOTHISWARI
W/o T. Motan
DOB: 9.5.1952 DOD: 18.07.2016
1st Thessalonian-4:14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will take back with Jesus those who have died believing in him. Hope to see you one day in Heaven.
Inserted by:
Family Members.
(S/2425/D00373)

21st DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Mrs. RATNA VIJAY KUMAR
DOB: 21-08-1951 | DOD: 18-07-2003
WE MISS YOU
FAMILY MEMBERS
RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

16th ANNIVERSARY
SRI BODA SIVADASS
Asst Mechanical Engineer (C&W) Sc. Ry (Retd)
D.O.B: 21-05-1921 D.O.D: 18-07-2008
Your affection and ideas remain throughout in our lives.
Inserted by: Sons, Daughters - in - Law
Grand Children, Great Grand Children, Relatives & Friends

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Late VEMPATI AMARAIAH SHARMA
@Amaraiah Panthulu
DOB: 4-7-1937 DOD: 30-6-2023
Date: 18-7-2024, Ashada shudha Dwadashi Prathamam Aabdhheekamu.
to informed by son's
VEMPATI LAXMAN PRASAD
VEMPATI MALIKARJUN SHASTRY - Advocate.
Ph: 9908744449, 985641103
Venue: at our Home H.NO. 14-3-213, Goshamahal Road, Begam bazar, Hyd-12

OBITUARY
Shri Dilip Vallabhdas Mehta
DOB: 28/03/1949 - DOD: 16/07/2024
Uthavana will be held on 18th July 2024
Time: 4:30 PM to 5:00 PM at Gujarati Seva Mandal, R P Road
Inserted by: Premal Mehta & Divya Mehta
Ketan Mehta & Kunjli Mehta & family members

12th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Smt. Dr. SAVITRI KHOLEY
DOB: 19.09.1933 DOD: 18.07.2012
Your Kindness, love and affection always remain in our hearts forever.
Inserted by:
Dinesh Kholay & Family Members.

4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
SRIDHAR SAMBRANI
Retired Deputy Commissioner,
Panchayat Raj
DOB: 2-12-1936 DOD: 2-7-2020
(Ashada Dwadashi)
We miss you every moment in our life, your presence continues to surround us, in our hearts you are always there.
Inserted by: Sambrani Family and Near and Dear ones

5th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Late. SHRI PREM DAS
D.O.D: 18-07-2019
We miss you every moment & you live in our hearts forever.
Inserted by: Wife: Ratna
Son & Daughter-in-Law: Prathap - Sngidha
Daughter & Son-in-law: Preethi - Pradhep
Grand Children: Niharika & Bittu

SHORT TAKES

SBI CALLS FOR REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT IN TG

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The State Bank of India (SBI) Hyderabad circle organised a cyclothon at PV Gyan Bhoomi, in which probationary officers of the 2023 batch along with senior officials participated. The theme was 'Pedal for the Planet.'

The event was flagged off by Rajesh Kumar, chief general manager, Hyderabad circle. "To reduce the carbon footprint, the circle is participating in enhancing generation of renewable energy and increasing carbon offsetting," he said.

General managers Prakash Chandra Baror and Ravi Kumar Verma spoke of the importance of inculcating sustainable practices.



Participants of Pedal for the Planet cyclothon at PV Gyan Bhoomi on Wednesday. — DC

MESCO ASSERTS IT FOLLOWED ALL NORMS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

City-based Mesco group of educational institutions maintained that it has been operating pharmacy, MCA and MBA colleges with separate faculty and in different premises as mandated by All India Council of Technical Education and other statutory bodies.

In a rejoinder to the report "RTI reveals huge fraud in Mesco ops and land use" published in these columns recently, Mesco said all the staff members were qualified as per norms and selected through a rigorous process.

It said the institution issues internship completion certificates to PharmD students strictly in accordance with the regulations framed by the PCI. The management also said their land and infrastructure requirements complied with AICTE, PCI, and Osmania University norms and were built after obtaining approvals from the GHMC. It denied allegations of tampering with records.

Reporter replies;

Deccan Chronicle stands by the report.

Information obtained under the Right To Information Act from the Telangana Board of Intermediate Education and AICTE website clearly establish that several faculty members were working in more than one educational institution run by Mesco.

One faculty member, listed as a full-time faculty at Mesco, is also registered as a full-time PhD candidate at a college in Karnataka as per another RTI response obtained from that institution. Another faculty member was still mentioned in the list of faculty submitted to Osmania University even after his retirement at the time of seeking renewal of permission for the academic year 2023-2024.

The documents provided by Mesco to the AICTE with regard to the land and infrastructure referred to only MBA, MCA and College of Pharmacy.

However, they kept under wraps the functioning of Government Girls High School, MESCO Junior College, Mesco Grade School (I to X), and Mesco Degree College on the same premises. The group has been operating seven institutions in three buildings located in around two acres which is equivalent to the land requirement for just three colleges.

RTI responses from Niloufer Hospital confirmed that the hospital did not issue internship certificates to Mesco students in 2019 and 2021, yet students were given internship certificates in the hospital's name.

Students also revealed that they were taken on a one-day industrial tour to Zaint Healthcare and Pharma Deep Remedies but were later given one-month internship certificates upon payment of ₹2,000.

The Government Hospital for Mental Care, Erragadda also confirmed that no internship was offered to Mesco students in the past three years, yet students were issued certificates in its name.

Shias mark Ashura by chanting Noha in Hyd

Thousands clad in black, walk barefoot, follow the Alam

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL I DC
HYDERABAD JULY 17

Shia Muslims observed Yaum-e-Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram on Wednesday with solemn processions commemorating the martyrdom of Hazrath Imam Hussain. The procession, led by an elephant carrying the alam, started from Bibi-ka-Alawa, the ashooorkhana in Dabeerpura, and saw thousands of participants engaging in 'Noha' chants. Participants, clad in black attire and walking barefoot, followed the alam. The tradition of decorating the elephant before it reaches Bibi-ka-Alawa dates back more than 400 years to the Qutb Shahi era.

The procession, a significant event observed nationwide during Muharram, attracted devotees from various parts of the country. Along the route, stalls set up by community members offered sharbat (juice) and food to participants and bystanders alike.

Mir Muhammad Azmet Ali Khan Jah Bahadur, grandson of the Seventh Nizam, along with family members, performed the traditional Dharti and Nazrana at Peeli Gate, opposite Princess Durru Shehvar Hospital in Purani Haveli.

Passing through Yakutpura, Alijah Kotla, Charminar, Gulzar Houz, Mir Chowk, Miralam Mandi, Zehranagar, Darul-Shifa, Imliban, and concluding at Chaderghat, the procession provided a moment for reflection and mourning for participants like Syed Mehdi Ali Abedi from Chadarghat.

Government officials, including Chief Secretary A. Santhi Kumari and city police commissioner K. Sreenivas Reddy, oversaw the arrangements and offered prayers to the Alam. Community leaders thanked the state government for ensuring proper arrangements, with chairman of the Waqf Board, Syed Azmatullah Hussaini, personally overseeing preparations at Bibi-ka-Alawa on Wednesday.



A child hands over a glass of juice to a passerby on the occasion of Muharram in Secunderabad on Wednesday. — K. DURGA RAO

Concerns over procession elephant's health allayed

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The forest department on Wednesday said the health of the elephant Roopavati, who was brought to the city from Karnataka a few days ago for taking part in the Muharram and Bonalu processions here, was good, and there was no cause of concern on this front.

In a press release, the department said a team of veterinary doctors from the Nehru Zoological Park and the state veterinary department had conducted a thorough examination and ruled that she was in good health, and her behaviour was normal for that of an elephant.

There have been concerns over the fitness and the health of Roopavati ever since she began her road journey on a truck to Hyderabad from Davanagere in Karnataka.

Following a complaint from the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta), the Union ministry of environment, forests and climate change had directed



A team of veterinary doctors from the Nehru Zoological Park, and the state veterinary department checking on the health of Roopavati, the elephant that was brought to the city from Karnataka to take part in the Muharram and Bonalu processions. — DC

● **ROOPAVATI WAS** being looked after by staff from the city zoo and was kept in comfortable conditions at a stadium in Purani Haveli, the press release added.

However, with complaints from animal welfare group activists that Roopavati was suffering from arthritis in her front legs, and could not see from one of her eyes, the Telangana forest department conducted another health check on her on Wednesday.

Roopavati was being looked after by staff from the city zoo and was kept in comfortable conditions at a stadium in Purani Haveli, the press release added.

that a full examination be conducted of Roopavati's health.

Following this, the pachyderm was examined by a veterinarian in Karnataka at a stopover while she was on her way to Hyderabad.

two cars and mortgaged them. The accused introduced her two friends as police officers and bought three high-end cellphones with the complainant's money.

When the complainant realised he had been cheated, he demanded the return of his money and vehicles. Devi Reddy in return, tried to blackmail him. Based on the victim's complaint, the EOW police arrested Devi Reddy.

Elsewhere, the cyber-crime police arrested one Binde Pavan Kalyan, 38, of Khammam for cheating a city resident of ₹5,73,208. According to the com-

plaint, given by a private company employee, he received a phone call from an unknown number offering him a data entry job. He agreed and paid ₹2,000 to join, as demanded. The complainant said Kalyan would give him data entry jobs but point out errors and collect a penalty of ₹1,000 each time.

In this manner, he paid up ₹5,73,208 and then approached the police who took up investigations. Police found that Kalyan had uploaded his details on an app while posing as a consultancy manager to cheat people.

Minister credits women for party's poll win
Uttam: Cong. focus is to empower womenDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Civil supplies and irrigation minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Wednesday said that the Congress government in Telangana was redefining women's empowerment in the state as a majority of schemes being implemented by it were focused on empowering women.

Speaking at the swearing-in ceremony of Nerella Sharada as chairperson of the Telangana Commission for Women at Buddha Bhavan on Wednesday, Uttam Kumar Reddy highlighted several innovative schemes launched by the Congress government to ensure the economic empowerment of women.

The minister emphasised that women played a crucial role in the Congress party's victory in the last Assembly elections. He assured that all promises made to the people would be fulfilled, and the Congress party was committed to the socio-economic empowerment of women, providing them equal opportunities for growth in all sectors. He mentioned that several schemes were in the pipeline to empower women in Telangana fur-



Irrigation minister N. Uttam Reddy congratulates activist Nerella Sharada on taking charge as chairperson of Telangana State Women's Commission in Hyderabad on Wednesday. — BY ARRANGEMENT

ther. Uttam Kumar Reddy criticised the previous BRS regime for neglecting women. While the Congress government, headed by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, had given cabinet berths to two women, there were no women ministers in the first term of the BRS government.

He cited the example of the Global Entrepreneurship Summit 2017 in Hyderabad, attended by Ivanka Trump, where no woman minister represented Telangana.

He expressed hope that Nerella Sharada, as the new chairperson of the Women's Commission, would play an active role in women's empower-

ment. He assured that the Congress government would adopt a zero-tolerance policy regarding women's safety, ensuring that women felt safe at their workplaces, on roads, and in their homes.

He mentioned that schemes like Maha Lakshmi, Gruha Jyothi, and Indira Gandhi had benefited lakhs of women daily, monthly, and permanently. More than 14 lakh women were utilising the free travel service in RTC buses across Telangana daily.

Under the Mahalakshmi Scheme, TGSRTC had issued nearly 55 crore zero tickets to women passengers, providing them the independence and freedom to travel.

TOMATO RATES SHOOT UP, NOW COST ₹100/KG

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

The price of tomatoes went through the roof on Wednesday. In several local markets, the rate of the vegetable crossed the ₹100 mark. Experts said the price has gone up due to damage caused to the crop by heavy rains.

Tomatoes are an essential commodity in many kitchens. Each house uses an average of 250 grams of tomato daily in curries and dal. However, now, the price hike of the humble vegetable is giving jitters to consumers.

According to the Telangana agricultural marketing department, on Tuesday, tomato prices crossed the ₹60 mark in the Bowenpally vegetable market, which is Hyderabad's main supply market. The consumers are spending ₹100 to buy a kg of tomato at Monda Market, Secunderabad. Most hotels, canteens and messes get their supplies from this market. Most of the vendors expressed dismay over the sudden price rise.

This is not the first time the tomato price has gone up this year. The vegetable price was hovering around ₹100 per kg in the second week of June too. However, the prices of other vegetables are still reasonable in these markets.

Parent-teacher meet in schools from July 20

NARENDER PULLOOR I DC
NIZAMABAD, JULY 17

The directorate of school education (DSE) asked district level educational officials to conduct parent teacher meetings (PTM) in state schools from July 20.

The government has taken this initiative to involve parents in school administration.

Children from poor families, migrant workers families study in nearest ZP, MPP and government schools. However, due to their daily works, parents are unable to attend the PTMs. Only a few parents attend these meetings and their involvement in the school administration is minimal.

Lack of drinking water, toilets, sanitation and other problems are affecting studies. Lack of coordination among teachers is worsening the situation. In this context, the DSE directed the district educational officers to conduct parent teacher meetings in schools.

Officials are busy collecting data of students and their parents for finalisation of parent teacher meetings. Teacher union leaders are also extending their cooperation in this regard.

ANGANWADIS TO CONDUCT MASS AKSHARABHYAS

PILLALAMARRI SRINIVAS I DC
ADILABAD, JULY 17

The women and child welfare department will conduct mass Aksharabhyas (initiation of education to a child) on July 20 for students who were admitted to pre-primary classes in anganwadi centres which were converted into pre-primary schools from this academic year.

The government is focusing on creating basic amenities at anganwadi centres and taking safety and security measures for children. It is also decorating the centres with paintings and equipping them with playing materials.

The Aksharabhyas will be part of the Amma Mata-Anganwadi Bata programme which began on July 15. The programme was aimed at strengthening the anganwadis by enrolling children and providing them with basic amenities. It was also meant to see that children would be in the anganwadis.

Scamster arrested for ₹3cr fraud

MANVI VYAS I DC
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

● **ELSEWHERE, THE** cybercrime police arrested one Binde Pavan Kalyan, 38, for cheating a city resident of ₹5,73,208.

● **POLICE FOUND** that accused impersonated as a consultancy manager to cheat people.

and a food industry at Nagole. She claimed fake ownership of several properties in gated communities.

Promising the victim of high returns, the accused took an amount of ₹3.06 crore. The accused also took the complainant's

L. RAVICHANDER
HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy of the Telangana High Court took on file a writ plea challenging the Siddipet station house officer and others for not taking action against a police officer who allegedly manhandled an advocate. The judge was hearing a writ plea filed by Maraboina Ravi Kumar, advocate. The petitioner alleged that he was manhandled by a police officer at the Siddipet police station when he went to furnish sureties for the release of an accused in accordance with the orders of Telangana High Court. The petitioner alleged that the police officers kept him waiting for an unreasonable length of time. Assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Uma Reddy took the accused to a government hospital without any purpose and forced him to undergo a medical check-up. The

petitioner alleged that the ASI beat up the accused when he became agitated. The ASI forcibly stopped the petitioner when he started recording his actions. In this alleged clash, the petitioner was allegedly injured and his phone broken. The judge addressed the protest called in lower courts all in respect of the incident. The judge directed the government pleader to seek instructions and posted the matter after a week.

SURGEON FILES PLEA ON TRANSFER

Justice Pulla Karthik stayed the transfer of Dr Kalavathi, civil surgeon working at the district hospital at Parkal, Hanamkonda. The judge was hearing a writ petition in which the ongoing transfer was faulted as being unjust. According to the petitioner she was entitled for promotion against a Scheduled

HC SEEKS DISASTER MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Telangana High Court directed the state to file a compliance report about implementation of provisions of Disaster Management Act, 2005. A panel, comprising Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J. Anil Kumar, was dealing with a PIL filed by Dr Cheruku Sudhakar challenging the action of the government in not implementing National Disaster Management minimum standard relief, medical cover and ex gratia to people affected by floods. The petitioner sought a direction to provide ex gratia to the flood-hit. The panel earlier directed the state to furnish the steps taken under Section 39 of the Act, which prescribes measures for prevention of disaster, mitigation and integrate its development plans and projects, and the measures for prevention of the same and

LEGAL STORIES

Caste (SC) vacancy. At the time of counselling, the vacancies shown did not include the district hospital at Mancheril and therefore she had no choice but to opt for the community health centre at Parkal. She alleged that the authorities had intentionally suppressed the vacancies at district headquarters hospital for the posts of civil surgeon specialist (general surgery). The petitioner was deprived of her chance to opt for and posted for the places which were clear existing sanctioned vacancies by the government and as such she was entitled to be posted in these clear vacancies.

PLEA FILED ON JNTU AFFILIATIONS

Justice C.V. Bhaskar Reddy took on file writ pleas challenging the action of the JNTU and others, in not granting affiliation for running courses approved by AICTE. The judge was hearing writ pleas filed by Tarakarama Educational Society, Ramappa Engineering College, Kamareddy College Educational Society and Auroras Technological Institute. The petitioners also alleged that they satisfied all the criteria for being entitled to avail of the affiliation. The judge directed the government pleader to get instructions and posted the matter for adjudication.

Full report on deccanchronicle.com

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY		E-Tendering Tender Notice	
Divisional Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work:			
E-Tender No.:	JHS-ENGG-HQ-2024-142	Approx Cost:	12471102.06
Description of work : Part (A)- JHS/East- Construction of new office and store for SSE/SIG/Mainline/JHS depot along with modernization of signaling and telecom depot cover Jhansi division. Part (B)- Construction of workstation in new shed of TMD, Jhansi.			
Earnest Money : 212400.00, Date of closing Tender : 12.08.2024 at 15:00 hrs., Date of completion/period from issue acceptance letter : 12 Months.			
Tender online can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs on 12.08.2024. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in 1237/24 (D)			
North central railways @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @northcentralrailway @CPNCR			

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY		Tender Notice		
Tender Notice No. 4720242025 Tender Notice Dated: 13.07.2024				
Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering) North Central Railway/ Prayagraj for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs. on 05.08.2024. The details of the tenders are as under:				
Name of work: Kanpur-Central: Construction of new hostel building of 100 bed capacity at MDDTI/CNB under ADEN/HQ/II/CNB.				
SN.	Tender No.	Approx. Cost of work	Earnest Money	Completion period
1.	124	₹ 4,72,13,468.88	₹ 3,86,100.00	08 Months
Name of work: Pre & Post BCM work in CNB-RRH Section under ADEN/Line/CNB.				
SN.	Tender No.	Approx. Cost of work	Earnest Money	Completion period
2.	125	₹ 2,70,79,058.58	₹ 2,85,400.00	10 Months
For both tenders Date of Opening of tender is-05.08.2024, Similar work for Eligibility Criteria: Sr.No.1- Building work, Sr.No.2- P-way work Note:- 1. Tender on line can be submitted up to 13.30 hrs. on 05.08.2024. 2. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.ireps.gov.in, up to 13.30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 05.08.2024. 1233/24 FA				
North central railways @CPNCR @northcentralrailway www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in				

SHORT TAKES



Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka

BHATTI LAUNCHES PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka launched the Telangana State Photojournalists Association's statewide best news photograph competition to mark World Photography Day here on Wednesday.

Inviting competitors, Bhatti said "Participating in the news photo contest offers many benefits, especially those looking to hone their skills and gain recognition in the news photography community. Competing with talented magazine photographers will inspire them to try new techniques, experiment with different styles and take on new challenges."

Association general secretary K.N. Hari said the competition was being organised for 30 years, and around 200 photojournalists from across the state participate in them.

The first prize earns the winners ₹10,000, the runners up will get ₹8,000, ₹5,000 and there are also 25 consolation prizes of ₹2,000 each. Winners will be given certificates and mementoes.

To contest, photojournalists must send three 8x12 colour or black & white photographs to association office at TWJ Building, Desodharaka Bhavan, Basheerbagh, before August 10.

● **BHATTI SAYS** participating in the news photo contest offers many benefits, especially those looking to hone their skills and gain recognition in the news photography community.

UoH hostellers decry inhumane conditions

Students body to stage protest outside warden's office today

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

With hostels in the University of Hyderabad (UoH) being in a state of disrepair, the student body will stage a protest around 2.30 pm in front of the chief warden's office on Thursday. Students said they have been struggling with the appalling conditions in the hostels for long.

"In ladies hostels 1 and 2, students are forced to share single occupancy rooms with insufficient storage and unsanitary washrooms. Even the few washrooms that are available are unusable due to lack of plumbing and electrical maintenance. This situation is particularly dire for physically-chal-

● **THE QUALITY** of food in the mess has also plummeted, students said, while prices in campus canteens have skyrocketed, making it difficult for underprivileged students to afford meals.

lenged students, who have very few accessible facilities," said a second year student.

A recently renovated washroom door in LH 3 recently fell off and nearly injured a hosteller.

"The absence of maintenance has led to an overgrowth of weeds, and the presence of snakes and frogs has become a common sight. The lack of proper thresholds has resulted in these creatures entering the rooms, caus-

ing panic among students," she said.

"We often have to walk to another hostel at midnight just to find drinking water. Non-functional water coolers have not been replaced, leading to severe water shortage," said a PG student. The quality of food in the mess has also plummeted, they said, while prices in campus canteens have skyrocketed, making it difficult for underprivileged students to afford meals.

Despite these pressing issues, the chief warden has chosen to respond with eviction drives, slapping extraordinary fines and issuing threatening circulars, the students alleged.

The eviction notices have particularly targeted

2017 and 2018 batch PhD scholars, who are paying to stay on campus even without any impending PhD admissions.

Transparency in hostel purchases remains a significant issue, with no clear mechanisms for buying essential plumbing and electrical supplies. The students' union has listed several demands, including hostel extensions for the 2018 PhD batch, withdrawal of circulars 817 and 813, revocation of fines for summer vacation stays and immediate construction of new hostels.

They are also calling for transparency in hostel purchases, resolving mess issues and cessation of threats towards union representatives.

Housing board cries for attention

G. RAM MOHAN I DC HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Officials from the Telangana Housing Board, which in its better days earned plaudits for developing colonies like KPHB in Kukatpally, Ameerpet, SR Nagar, Baghlingampally and Vengal Raonagar, among others, are now sitting idle without any projects.

The board hasn't been allowed to take up any schemes since the formation of Telangana under the BRS regime.

Officials are worried that in a few months the board will be hard pressed for funds to pay salaries and pensions. Rent overdues from the government for its properties stand at ₹100 crore.

Officials contended that the rot had set in during

BEGINNINGS

THE HOUSING BOARD traces its beginnings to the time when the Nizam started to rebuild the city after the devastating floods in 1908.



THE NIZAM FOUNDED the Hyderabad City Improvement Board (CIB) for Hyderabad and TIT (Town Improvement Trust), which functioned in Secunderabad.

the YSR regime, which saw it as a cash cow to fund the Jala Yagnam programme to build irrigation projects.

The BRS's flagship scheme of double bedroom houses was given to different bodies like the GHMC, R&B and the board was finally merged into the R&B. They pointed out that they had proposed 10 projects to the BRS government in 2017 but were ignored. The Housing Board does not even have a properly functional website. The last

press note issued by the department was on 30/1/2013. The corporation does not have a full-time vice-chairman, housing commissioner or a chief engineer. Of the sanctioned strength of 290 personnel, there are only 45 regular employees while a few work on contract and outsourcing basis.

The disgruntled employees are hoping that the Congress government will restore its independent status by demerging it from the R&B department. "We have been collecting

dues from former beneficiaries of our houses for the past 10 years. With division of assets remaining unsettled with AP, a land bank of 3,200 acres is caught in litigation. The Sheela Bhide committee recommended division of assets with AP in the ratio of 52:48, though 95 per cent of the assets are in Telangana. Further, the corporation has a land bank of 700 acres, which is dispute-free and is valued at around ₹25,000 crore," said an official on condition of anonymity.

Pending division of assets in court, the board is paying pension to the tune of ₹2 crore to employees hailing from Andhra Pradesh. The employees are hopeful that the government gives a fresh lease of life to the board and to them.

Tribals to take legislative way after SC verdict on jobs quota

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17



From left: Advocate Palla Trinadha, Khanapur MLA Vedma Bhoju Patel, Aadhaar society president Gondi Venkataramana and Metla Papaiah attend the symposium at Guruswamy centre in Secunderabad on Wednesday.

A brainstorming symposium organised by Aadhaar Society at Guruswamy Centre in Secunderabad on Wednesday resolved to find ways and means to evolve a remedy via the legislative route to contain the impact of the Supreme Court ruling annulling GO MS No. 3, which had reserved 100 per cent jobs for tribals.

The participants expressed dismay that the five-judge bench judgment was part of the descheduling of tribals from scheduled areas. Fear was also expressed that the judgment given on April 20, 2020, may open the gates for dilution of legislation like Regulation 1/70, Record of Forest Rights (RoFR), Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996 (PESA).

Addressing the meeting Vedma Bhoju, MLA from Khanapur, said, "Our struggles are not bearing the results we seek. Tribal sarpants are facilitating settlers from outside by giving permissions. Tribal public representatives are ready to accept suggestions from intellectuals like Prof. M. Kodandaram, Prof. Kasim among others."

Bhoju said that Adivasi

organisations should come together to achieve the goals. "Seven tribal MLAs met the Chief Minister to seek remedy for the scrapped GO 3. He has responded positively," Bhoju said.

Expressing fear that protections accorded to scheduled areas are being whittled down bit by bit, Palla Trinadha Rao, forest and tribal rights activist, said, "The GO was scrapped citing Indra Sawhney case which limits reservations to 50 per cent. The judges opined that reserving 100 per cent of jobs to tribals was against the Constitution."

"Now the district has been made a unit in calling for notifications and nearly 23 of them were issued after the judgment. Non-tribals hold 51 per

cent, 71 per cent and 61 per cent land respectively in the erstwhile Khammam, Warangal and Adilabad districts. With non-tribals exceeding 50 per cent in the scheduled areas, the court might find justice in descheduling these areas in the future."

On the contrary demand for including 240 tribal dominated villages in scheduled areas has been pending for years. A reverse process is happening in the name of projects like Polavaram, he added. The meet paid homage to Komaram Bheem, Birsa Munda and other tribals who lost their lives in Chhattisgarh recently. It was attended by the society members Gondi Venkataramana, Metla Papaiah and Gedam Janardhan.

Revanth not helping Brahmin students abroad, alleges NVSS

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

BJP leader N.V.S.S. Prabhakar said that the denial of funds to the Brahmana Sankshema Parishad had affected students who had gone abroad.

He said those who have set up enterprises of their own have also been hit. He

● **HE ALSO** said that priests in temples were neglected and promised to raise the issue in the Assembly.

said Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy was not helping Brahmin students who were unable to pay their fee abroad. He said the government

had only helped fund their first semester fee.

"They are in trouble after Revanth became CM. This situation should be remedied by providing funds to the Brahmana Parishad," Prabhakar said.

He also said that priests in temples were neglected and promised to raise the issue in the Assembly.

SOUTH

SHORT TAKES

THREE GET BAIL IN GAURI LANKESH MURDER CASE

Bengaluru, July 17: The Karnataka High Court has granted bail to three accused arrested in connection with the murder of journalist-activist Gauri Lankesh.

Justice S Vishwajith Shetty on Tuesday granted bail to Amit Digvekar, H L Suresh and K T Naveen Kumar.

Citing delay in the trial, the trio had sought bail. In December last year, the court had granted bail to another accused N Mohan Nayak.

Gauri Lankesh, an outspoken critic of Hindutva groups, was shot dead on September 5, 2017 outside her house in Bengaluru.

₹10 L TO DROWNED SANITATION STAFF KIN IN KERALA

DC CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 17

The Kerala government on Wednesday announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh to the family of Joy, a sanitation worker who died while cleaning the Amayizhanchan canal in the heart of Thiruvananthapuram city.

A Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan decided to sanction the compensation to Joy's mother from the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund.

Joy who was cleaning the canal along with two other workers, went missing on July 13 after a sudden current swept him away following heavy rains.

The NDRF, fire force, and police carried out a massive rescue operation for nearly 48 hours. His body was spotted on the third day by health workers about a kilometre away.

Meanwhile, the Thiruvananthapuram corporation which came under severe criticism over Joy's death, has decided to build a house for the sanitation worker's family.

The corporation will convey its decision to the state government for necessary follow-up action. Mayor Arya Rajendran said in a statement here on Wednesday.

Nasscom warns K'taka quota bill threat to tech

Industry reminds that sector contributes 25% of state GDP

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO | DC NEW DELHI, JULY 17

Software body Nasscom on Wednesday said that Karnataka's job reservations for locals in the private sector would hamper growth of tech industry and impact jobs. As the move could force companies to relocate, it also sought urgent meetings with state authorities.

However, Karnataka chief minister office sources said that the bill approved by the cabinet to provide reservation for Kannadigas in private sector organisations, industries and enterprises has been temporarily put on hold. "This will be reviewed and decided in the coming days," it said.

The apex IT industry body's statement comes after the Karnataka State Employment of Local Candidates in the Industries, Factories and Other Establishments Bill, 2024 was approved by the state cabinet on Monday, and it sought to reserve 50 per cent of management positions and 75 per cent of non-management positions

CONTROVERSIAL BILL

NASSCOM HAS exhorted the state government to withdraw the bill as soon as possible

THE BILL has triggered controversy and criticism from across the private sector

THE INDUSTRY body also argued that globally, there is a huge shortage for skilled talent

NASSCOM CONTENDED that the restrictions could force companies to relocate as local skilled talent becomes scarce

in the private sector for the locals. Expressing deep concern over Karnataka's quota-for-locals bill mandating reservation for locals in the private sector, Nasscom has exhorted the state government to withdraw the bill as soon as possible. The Bill has triggered controversy and criticism from across the private sector where industry veteran Mohandas Pai termed the Bill 'very regressive' and 'draconian'. The IT industry body has sought an urgent meeting with state authorities to discuss the concerns and prevent the state's progress from being derailed. "Nasscom members are seriously

concerned about the provisions of this bill and urge the state government to withdraw the bill. The bill's provisions threaten to reverse this progress, drive away companies, and stifle start-ups, especially when more global firms (GCCs) are looking to invest in the state," a Nasscom said in a statement. Stating that the tech sector contributes to 25 per cent of the state GDP, houses a quarter of the country's digital talent, has over 11,000 startups and 30 per cent of the total GCCs, Nasscom contended that the restrictions could force companies to relocate as local skilled talent becomes scarce.

The industry body also argued that globally, there is a huge shortage for skilled talent and Karnataka despite the large pool, is no exception. "In today's highly competitive landscape, knowledge-led businesses will locate where talent is as attracting skilled workers is crucial for success. For states to become a key technology hub a dual strategy is key - magnet for best talent worldwide and focussed investment in building a strong talent pool within the state through formal and vocational channels," it said.

The technology sector has been crucial to Karnataka's economic and social development, with Bengaluru known globally as India's Silicon Valley. "The technology sector contributes almost 25 per cent of the state GDP and has played a key role in enabling higher growth for the state, higher per capita income than the national average. With over a quarter of India's digital talent, the state houses over 30 per cent of the total GCCs and around 11,000 start-ups," it said.

LAST JOURNEY Deceased were walking on NH to fulfil prayer

Van knocks down 5 devotees

G. SRINIVASAN | DC THANJAVUR JULY 17

Five persons, including four women, were killed and one person was injured when a loaded van hit them as they were walking on Thanjavur-Tiruchy national highway at Valambakudi near here on Wednesday morning.

According to the police, four persons died on the spot and one later at Thanjavur Medical college hospital where she was admitted. The deceased were Muthusamy,

● **THE POLICE SAID** THAT, the deceased were going to Samayapuram by walk to fulfil their prayer. They belong to Kannukudi patti near Kantharvakottai in Pudukottai district. As they were walking at Valambakudi, the van which lost control hit them one by one.

Meena, Rani and Mohanambal, who died on the spot and Lakshmi died at hospital. The police said that the

deceased were going to Samayapuram by walk to fulfil their prayer. They belong to Kannukudi patti near Kantharvakottai in Pudukottai district. As they were walking at Valambakudi, the van which lost control hit them one by one.

Two injured persons, Sangeetha and Lakshmi were rushed to Thanjavur Medical College hospital. Lakshmi, however, died later. Sangeetha is taking treatment at TMCH.

Sengipatti police registered a case and sent the

bodies for post mortem. Driver of the loadvan was arrested by the police.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has announced a solatium of ₹2 lakh to be paid to kin of each of the five deceased in the accident. A press release said the Chief Minister conveyed his condolences to the relatives of the victims in the accident and ordered to pay a solatium of ₹2 lakh each to kin of deceased and ₹1 lakh to Sangeetha, injured and taking treatment at TMCH.

Kerala, Karnataka on alert as heavy rains likely to intensify

Thiruvananthapuram, Bengaluru, July 17:

With the rains not letting up and the monsoon still vigorous, the India Meteorological Department has extended the red alert for coastal Karnataka till July 18.

Since the intensity of rain has reduced in south interior Karnataka, the weather department has retracted the red alert for the region and has issued an orange one till July 20. Even in coastal Karnataka, the downpour is

expected to become less intense from July 19 onwards, with the weather department predicting that it would be under orange category for now.

As heavy rains continued to lash Kerala, IMD issued an orange alert in eight districts of the state for Wednesday. The heavy rains caused landslides, property damage, water logging of roads and flooding of acres of farmland with the Central Water Commission (CWC) issuing a warning about a

dangerous rise in levels of various rivers in the southern state.

The IMD sounded orange alerts in Kottayam, Ernakulam, Idukki, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kararagad districts for the day. It also issued a yellow alert in the remaining six districts of the state for the day. An orange alert means very heavy rain of 11 cm to 20 cm and a yellow alert means heavy rainfall between 6 cm and 11 cm. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

THREE MILITANTS KILLED IN ASSAM ENCOUNTER

MANOJ ANAND | DC GUWAHATI, JULY 17

The Assam police in an early morning encounter on Wednesday killed at least three militants of the Hmar People's Convention-Democratic in Assam's Cachar district near the Assam-Mizoram border.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said police killed three Hmar militants from Assam and neighbouring Manipur. Police also recovered 2 AK rifles, 1 other rifle, and 1 pistol. Police said the militants were shot dead during an exchange of fire. Earlier in the day, three militants were arrested with weapons in Dhalai Ganga Nagar, Cachar.

Three policemen also sustained injuries in the incident, and the Cachar police vehicle was damaged.

HINDU BODY TO CRACK WHIP ON 'FAKE' GOD MEN

RABINDRA NATH CHOUDHURY | DC BHOPAL, JULY 17

Ravindra Puri Maharaj, head of the Akhil Bharatiya Akhada Parishad, a body of Hindu religious leaders, on Wednesday vowed to crack whip on the god men. He said a disturbing trend had emerged in which seers were seen identifying themselves as God.

He described such actions by the seers as 'anti-Sanatani' and said the Akhada Parishad had decided to rein them and they will be barred from the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj, scheduled to be held in 2028. The spiritual leader visited Ujjain to review preparations for Mahakumbh in the holy town.

UPENDRA JOSHI TAKES CHARGE AS GM, NCR

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JULY 17

Upendra Chandra Joshi, an officer of the Indian Railway Traffic Service, has assumed the charge of general manager of North Central Railway. Prior to this, he was the chief operations manager in Northern Railway. Joshi is a 1988 batch officer and has served Indian Railways in various capacities.

He started his Railway Service as assistant operations manager, Samastipur. Thereafter, worked as DOM & DCM, Lucknow. He has also served as the deputy chief operations manager and deputy chief commercial manager at Northeast Frontier Railway.

As CCM/IT in Northern Railway, he had contributed in implementation & integration of control office application resulting in automation of control offices. He also held important positions as EDDPM in Railway Board, divisional manager, Kota and joint secretary in ministry of mines.



Upendra Chandra Joshi

BADRINATH TEMPLE DENIES GOLD IS MISSING

PRITHVIRAJ SINGH | DC DEHRADUN, JULY 17

The Badrinath Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) has strongly refuted allegations made by Shankaracharya Avimukteshwaranand of the Badrinath seat, accusing him of advancing the Congress' agenda with baseless claims regarding missing gold from the Kedarnath temple. The controversy arose after Avimukteshwaranand alleged that 228 kg of gold plating was missing from the temple's sanctum sanctorum walls.

BKTC chairman Ajeyendra Ajay criticised Avimukteshwaranand for sensationalising his allegations and urged him to present any evidence he has to law enforcement and investigative agencies. "If Shankaracharya Avimukteshwaranand has evidence to support his allegations, he should submit it to the state and central authorities or approach the courts, rather than politicising the issue," Ajay stated. He emphasised that while the BKTC respects Avimukteshwaranand's religious authority, promoting political agendas is inappropriate.

Ajay further demanded that Avimukteshwaranand file a PIL in the High Court and seek a high-level investigation.

28 from Ajit's team join Pawar

Significant move as Maharashtra Assembly polls likely to be held in Oct.

SONU SHRIVASTAVA | DC MUMBAI, JULY 17

In a major jolt for the Ajit Pawar faction, 28 members of NCP including leaders and office bearers from Pimpri-Chinchwad joined the Sharad Pawar faction. NCP leader Ajit Gavhane, who was Pimpri-Chinchwad president amongst 28 members, has shifted loyalties to Sharad Pawar. The cash-rich Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) has long been under the control of Ajit Pawar.

The development assumes political significance in the backdrop of the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly election, which is expected to be held in October. In the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar was defeated in Baramati Lok Sabha constituency by Supriya Sule.

Besides Gavhane, former MLA from Bhosari Assembly constituency Vilas Lande, student leader Yash Sane, former corporators Pankaj Bhalekar and Rahul Bhosale quit the Ajit Pawar-led party to join the NCP (SP) in the presence of Sharad Pawar.

In a response to the query over "Ghar Vapasi" of Ajit Pawar, the NCP founder said that there is a place for everyone in the



NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) chief Sharad Pawar during the launch of chroma studio at Pune Union of Working Journalist in Navi Peth in Pune on Wednesday. — PTI

home but whether there is place in the party or not, it would not be his decision. "During the crisis time, my colleagues stood firmly with me. I will ask them first and if they are ready, then we will decide whether to allow anyone to return," Pawar said.

Two days ago, Maharashtra Cabinet minister and senior NCP leader Chhagan Bhujbal met the NCP founder Sharad Pawar at his residence in Mumbai. About his meeting with Bhujbal, Sharad Pawar said that the minister had arrived at his home asking him to work for improvement of the current situation over the reservation issue. "Bhujbal came to meet me. I had fever because of which I took two days off. I was

told that he has come, that he has been waiting for an hour and does not want to leave. After that, I met him and he spoke to me at length. He asked me to work together to improve the social environment in Maharashtra, to work together in the state's interest," the veteran Maratha politician said.

The 83-year-old leader also said he did not know about the discussion of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde with Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange and what assurance has been given to Jarange and OBC activists. "Unless the promises, which were made to them, do not come in the public domain, we will not attend the meetings called by the government. This is our stand," he said.

FINANCIAL HELP FOR AGNIVEERS ANNOUNCED

FROM PAGE 1

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced financial incentives, stating, "Any industrial unit hiring an Agniveer at a salary exceeding ₹30,000 per month will receive an annual subsidy of ₹60,000 from the government."

Highlighting other benefits under the Agniphath scheme, Saini assured that Agniveers taking loans up to ₹5 lakh for business startups would not incur interest charges. He criticised the Congress for misinformation about the military recruitment scheme, asserting that the Agniphath initiative was introduced in public interest.

Further, Saini pledged priority issuance of arms licenses to Agniveers and emphasised their preferential treatment in the matrix scoring system for employment in government departments, boards, or corporations.

The Agniphath scheme, launched by the BJP government at the Centre in June 2022, has faced criticism, particularly from Opposition parties. In the context of the recently held Lok Sabha elections, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had vowed to scrap the scheme if the Opposition came to power in Haryana's Mahendragarh constituency.

Previously, in 2022, former chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar had assured guaranteed employment for Agniveers after their four-year tenure in the armed forces under the Agniphath scheme. This initiative targets youths aged between 17 and a half to 21 years, with provisions allowing for retention of 25 percent of recruits for an additional 15 years.

Controversial probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar is landing deeper in trouble every day. Now it has emerged that she allegedly used a fake residential address and bogus ration card to obtain her disability certificate from YCM (Yashwantrao Chavan Memorial) hospital, Pimpri. While obtaining the disability certificate, Puja had used her ration card as residence proof and obtained the certificate on the address "Plot number 53, Dehu-Alandi, Talwade Pimpri Chinchwad" in Pune district, which was mentioned on the ration card.

It is the registered address of Thermoverta Engineering Company Pvt Ltd, which is defunct and not paid tax to Pimpri-Chinchwad tax collection department for three years. Her car was also registered in the name of the same company. She has been accused of misusing OBC non-creamy layer to clear the UPSC exam, police said.

MORE TROUBLE Officer used ration card as residence proof, got certificate on another address

Khedkar used fake address for certificate: Cops

DC CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, JULY 17

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An illegal structure near trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar's family bungalow being cleared, days after the Pune Municipal Corporation issued them a notice to remove it on Wednesday. — PTI



An illegal structure near trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar's family bungalow being cleared, days after the Pune Municipal Corporation issued them a notice to remove it on Wednesday. — PTI

RSS-linked weekly raps pact for failure

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC MUMBAI, JULY 17

After the magazine *Organiser*, another RSS-linked weekly has lashed out at the BJP over its alliance with the Ajit Pawar-led NCP. The decision to join hands with Ajit Pawar did not go down well with the BJP workers and the unrest among the party cadre was just the 'tip of the iceberg,' it said.

Vivek, a Marathi weekly devoted to the RSS ideology, claimed the BJP's alliance with the Ajit Pawar's NCP was one of the major reasons for the party's debacle in the recently held Lok Sabha elections.

In an article titled *Worker not disheartened, but confused*, the weekly said, "Almost every party worker starts from the alliance with the NCP while explaining the reasons for the BJP's failure in the Lok Sabha or expressing their displeasure and discomfort (over it). It is clear that the BJP worker did not approve joining hands with the NCP."

While the party workers accepted the BJP's tie-up with the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena as a 'natural alliance,' their sentiments went exactly opposite when it decided to go together with the Ajit Pawar's NCP, said the weekly.

According to *Vivek*, the alliance with Shiv Sena was always perceived as natural because of the common thread of Hindutva. Hence, the party workers accepted the rebellion in the Shiv Sena and Eknath Shinde becoming a chief minister. However, the sentiments went totally against the party (BJP) after it joined hands with NCP," the article said.

In the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP's seat tally in Maharashtra came down to nine from 23. Its ally Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena won seven seats, while another Mahayuti constituent - Ajit Pawar's NCP could just bag one. The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising the Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (SP) and Congress, performed superbly by together winning 30 out of the 48 seats.

The BJP high command has scheduled a major introspection and brainstorming session over the disappointing results in the Lok Sabha and bypolls. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address BJP chief ministers and deputy chief ministers of BJP and NDA-ruled states, with Union home minister Amit Shah and BJP president J.P. Nadda also in attendance.

The meeting, set for later this month, will focus on analysing the LS results, reviewing the implementation of welfare schemes, and discussing coordination between the Central leadership and state organisations. Preparations for the upcoming Assembly polls in Jharkhand, Haryana, and Maharashtra will be reviewed. The LS verdict marked a setback for the BJP, which got an absolute majority in 2014 and 2019 but fell short of the halfway mark in 2024. Despite being the largest party, it now relies on its allies.

BJP TO ANALYSE SHORTCOMINGS IN LS ELECTIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JULY 17

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Strongly reacting to Adhikari's observations, Majumdar said, "Our party does not support his statement. He was invited as a delegate. He made some proposals. Now it is the prerogative of the state president and his team to accept or reject them."

Adhikari later issued a clarification and said in a post on X, "My statement is being taken out of context. I am not in charge of the organisation. You must have noticed that I did not make any comment before or after the LS polls so that our booth level workers and voters feel dejected."

debacle here, Adhikari then pointed out, "There is a need for an in-depth analysis. But the place for this should be elsewhere, not in front of the media. I'm Leader of the Opposition. I'm not in charge of the organisation. You must have noticed that I did not make any comment before or after the LS polls so that our booth level workers and voters feel dejected."

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Suvendu calls for end to PM's Sabka Saath slogan

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC KOLKATA, JULY 17

West Bengal Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari of the BJP on Wednesday called for an end to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', leaving the party stumped at its first congregation in the city after the Lok Sabha elections.

Adhikari said at the working committee conference of the state BJP: "I have talked about nationalist Muslims and all of you said, 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas.' But I won't say it further. Instead, we will say: 'Jo Hamare Saath, Hum Unke Saath. Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas bandh karo. (We are with those who are with us. Stop 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'). There is also no need for a minority morcha."

Two Union ministers, Sukanta Majumdar, the state BJP chief, and Manohar Lal Khattar, and some central party leaders including Sunil Bansal and Mangal Pandey were present when Adhikari spoke.

In bid to shrug off the blame on him for the poll



Union power minister Manohar Lal Khattar, centre, receives a memento from Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari, left, and Union minister of state for education Sukanta Majumdar in Kolkata on Wednesday. — PTI

12 Naxals killed in Maha encounter

Gadchiroli, July 17: At least 12 Naxalites were killed and two security personnel injured in an encounter with police and commandos in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra near the Chhattisgarh border on Wednesday, officials said.

The heavy exchange of fire broke out in the afternoon between C60 commandos and Naxals in Wandoli village and continued for six hours, Gadchiroli SP Nilotpal said. Police have recovered 12 bodies from the spot besides seven automotive weapons, including 3 AK-47s, 2 INSAS rifles, a carbine and an SLR. One of the slain Naxals was identified as DVCM Laxman Atram alias Vishal Atram, incharge of Tipagad Dalam.

Maharashtra home minister Devendra Fadnis has declared a ₹51-lakh reward for C60 commando teams and Gadchiroli Police, Nilotpal said. Further identification of Maoists and area search is continuing.

"The injured persons include a sub-inspector of C 60 and one jawan. They are out of danger, evacuated from the spot, and shifted to Nagpur," the SP added. — PTI

ILLEGAL STRUCTURE CLEARED NEAR KHEDKAR'S HOUSE, SAY OFFICIALS

Pune, July 17: An illegal structure near trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar's family bungalow in Pune has been cleared, days after the civic body issued them a notice to remove it, an official said on Wednesday.



An illegal structure near trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar's family bungalow in Pune has been cleared, days after the civic body issued them a notice to remove it, an official said on Wednesday. — PTI

FIR OVER PRO-PALESTINIAN SLOGAN DURING J&K MUHARRAM RALLIES

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, JULY 17

The Jammu and Kashmir police have registered an open FIR under the relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita following pro-Palestine and pro-Hezbollah slogans were allegedly chanted by a section of mourners during a Muharram procession taken out in Srinagar on

Monday. Justifying it, IG (Kashmir range), Vidhi Kumar Birdi, said, "Certain conditions were laid down to ensure smooth conduct of the procession. But some mischievous elements violated these conditions and tried to vitiate the atmosphere, prompting the police to act as per law."

The police have cited concerns over the potential for such slogans and flags 'inciting unrest'.

HC RESERVES ORDER ON KEJRIWAL PLEAS

New Delhi, July 17: The Delhi High Court reserved on Wednesday its order on Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's pleas challenging his arrest by the CBI in the excise policy case and seeking interim bail.

Kejriwal's senior counsel not only assailed his arrest by the CBI but also sought his release on bail in the case. Justice Neena Bansal Krishna, who conducted the proceedings, heard the arguments and reserved its order on petitions. — PTI



A portrait of martyred Army Captain Brijesh Thapa, kept near his mortal remains after his body was brought back to his home at Bagdogra of Siliguri subdivision, in Darjeeling on Wednesday. — PTI

Location tip-off militants' trap, doubt veterans

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC SRINAGAR, JULY 17

Jammu areas have become a terrorism staging ground again and, in the past less than three years more than 50 Army men and other security personnel have been killed — 10 of them this month only — in sneak attacks or gun fights with militants.

Often the security forces suffered casualties after they moved in distant forested and hilly areas considered as being tough terrain for a ground war in the districts of Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Kathua, Poonch and Rajouri on "tip-offs" or "credible human intelligence" about presence of militants.

The latest such incident occurred in the Uran Baggi woods of Doda's Dessa area on Monday night in which Captain Brijesh Thapa and three other soldiers of the Army's counterinsurgency Rashtriya Rifles laid down their lives.

While the Army with Jammu & Kashmir police and various Central Armed Police Forces are currently spearheading a series of operations to hunt down and eliminate militants in the upper reaches of these districts, some security forces officials who have vast experience in combating militancy have reportedly called for acting "very cautiously and carefully" on such "tip-offs" to avoid possible dangers.

They believe that it is possible that the militants may be deliberately getting the information about their locales leaked to trap the security forces. "It has happened in the heyday of insurgency in the Kashmir Valley also that the security

forces were tipped off about the presence of militants in a particularly area and when they reached there, they discovered that they (militants) were in a good attack position," corroborated a retired police officer who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

He added, "Militants and terrorists use a variety of dangerous tactics to surprise their opponents and win the game. You must be very careful while acting on such tip-offs and human intelligence."



10th Muharram Ashoora procession in Srinagar, Zadibal. — H.U. NAQASH

HC RESERVES ORDER ON KEJRIWAL PLEAS

DC CORRESPONDENT SRINAGAR, JULY 17

The Jammu and Kashmir police have registered an open FIR under the relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita following pro-Palestine and pro-Hezbollah slogans were allegedly chanted by a section of mourners during a Muharram procession taken out in Srinagar on

Monday. Justifying it, IG (Kashmir range), Vidhi Kumar Birdi, said, "Certain conditions were laid down to ensure smooth conduct of the procession. But some mischievous elements violated these conditions and tried to vitiate the atmosphere, prompting the police to act as per law."

The police have cited concerns over the potential for such slogans and flags 'inciting unrest'.

HC RESERVES ORDER ON KEJRIWAL PLEAS

New Delhi, July 17: The Delhi High Court reserved on Wednesday its order on Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's pleas challenging his arrest by the CBI in the excise policy case and seeking interim bail.

Kejriwal's senior counsel not only assailed his arrest by the CBI but also sought his release on bail in the case. Justice Neena Bansal Krishna, who conducted the proceedings, heard the arguments and reserved its order on petitions. — PTI

SHORT TAKES

DEMS AIM TO NOMINATE PREZ IN AUG. 1ST WEEK

Washington, July 17: Democrats will look to hold a virtual vote to make President Joe Biden their party's nominee in the first week of August, as Biden has rebuffed calls from some in his party to quit the race after his disastrous debate performance against Donald Trump.

The Democratic National Convention's rules committee will meet on Friday to discuss its plans, according to a letter sent to members obtained Wednesday by *The Associated Press*, and will finalise them next week.

NEPAL PM OLI TO SEEK VOTE OF TRUST ON SUNDAY

Kathmandu, July 17: Nepal's newly appointed Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli will take a vote of confidence in Parliament on July 21, as required by the Constitution, a media report quoted the chief whip of his party as saying on Wednesday.

The 72-year-old veteran leader was sworn in on Monday as the Himalayan nation's prime minister for the fourth time. Oli needs to secure a vote of trust within 30 days of appointment, which he is likely to secure, as the minimum number to form a government in the 275-strong House of Representatives is just 138.

N. IRELAND AMNESTY SCHEME TO BE SCRAPPED

Belfast, July 17: Britain's new government said on Wednesday it would scrap an amnesty scheme for ex-soldiers and militants involved in decades of violence in Northern Ireland that has been opposed by all major parties in the region and by the Irish government.

The move fulfils a promise in the Labour Party's election manifesto.

At GoP convention, Trump watches ex-rivals fall in line

Haley says unified Republican Party is essential for saving the nation

Milwaukee, July 17: Donald Trump returned to the Republican National Convention on Tuesday for a night intended to unify the party, as his failed primary challengers displayed their fealty to the now official US presidential candidate.

Three former rivals took the stage during prime time to publicly throw their support behind the former president, including onetime UN ambassador Nikki Haley who told delegates that "a unified Republican Party is essential for saving" the nation.

Trump, again wearing a white bandage on his ear that was injured in Saturday's assassination attempt, waved, shook hands and said "thank you very much" as delegates burst into an ovation.

While he made no formal remarks, the 78-year-old backslapped and chatted with his new running mate J.D. Vance and others, pumping his fist and looking visibly more relaxed than during his emotional entrance the previous night.

The Republican leader has been widely feted at the four-day convention, where on Thursday he is set to formally accept his party's nomination as the flagbearer to challenge Democratic President Joe Biden in November.

Tuesday was an exercise in presenting a unified front, but the smattering of boos that echoed with cheers across the convention floor when Haley took the stage — with Trump looking on — suggested the party had work to do to gather the base's four corners for the final four months of a bruising presidential campaign. — AFP



Republican presidential candidate, former US president Donald Trump stands with Republican vice presidential candidate, US Senator J.D. Vance on the second day of the Republican National Convention at the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee. — AFP

Will let Fed Chair Powell finish term, says Donald

Washington, July 17: Donald Trump, the Republican presidential candidate, said in an interview with *Bloomberg Businessweek* that he would allow Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell to complete his term if he won the November election.

"I would let him serve it out, especially if I thought he was doing the right thing," Trump said.

President Joe Biden had nominated Powell for a second four-year term as Fed chief in May 2022. Powell will also remain a Fed governor until January 31, 2028.

Trump's remarks represent a noteworthy change in stance, given his historically contentious relationship with Powell.

I WOULD let him serve it out, especially if I thought he was doing the right thing.

— DONALD TRUMP
US ex-president (on Fed Chair Powell's term)

During the *Bloomberg* interview, Trump also stressed that the Federal Reserve should avoid cutting interest rates before the November elections, where he faces Democrat Joe Biden.

Over the past week, Powell has been repeatedly questioned about whether the upcoming election would influence the Fed's decision on rate cuts. Powell reiterated on Monday that he and other policy-

makers do not consider political factors in their decision-making.

Apart from the Fed, the former US President discussed several other key points on his plans for a potential second term.

If re-elected, Trump said he would implement new tariffs to extract trade concessions from both allies and adversaries. He plans to renew expiring tax cuts, reduce regulations, increase domestic energy production through more drilling, and support the crypto industry while curbing big tech companies.

Trump believes higher tariffs will benefit the US, as opposed to mainstream economists, who warn they could increase inflation. — Agencies

MAN WIELDING 2 KNIVES KILLED BLOCKS AWAY FROM THE RNC

Milwaukee, July 17: Ohio police officers in Wisconsin for the Republican National Convention shot and killed a man who was wielding two knives just blocks away from the convention, Milwaukee's police chief has said.

Five members of the Columbus, Ohio, police department fired on the man, who had a knife in each hand, refused police commands and charged at an unarmed man before police fired, Milwaukee Chief Jeffrey Norman said at a news conference on Tuesday. Two knives were recovered from the scene, the chief said. "Someone's life was in danger," Norman said.

TRUMP SECURITY STEPPED UP DUE TO PLOT BY IRAN

Washington, July 17: The US Secret Service increased security for Donald Trump weeks ago after authorities learned of an Iranian plot to kill him, although it was not linked to the recent attempt on his life, US media reported on Tuesday.

CVN reported that United States authorities received intelligence from a "human source" on a plan by Tehran targeting the former president, causing protection to be boosted for Trump. — AFP

China shopping centre fire kills 6

Beijing, July 17: Firefighters pulled six bodies from a shopping centre on Wednesday, with an unknown number still trapped after the building set ablaze sending plumes of thick black smoke into the air. Around 30 others have been rescued from the shopping complex in the city of Zigong in southwestern Sichuan province with the blaze extinguished by rescuers, state broadcaster CCTV said.

"Six people have been killed," CCTV reported, adding that search and rescue operations were continuing with people still trapped.

Footage broadcast by the channel and shared on social media showed thick black smoke towering above the building.

"By 8:20 pm (1220 GMT), the fire had been extinguished," CCTV said.

The fire started in a shopping centre at the foot of a 14-storey building, the channel said.

Other images shared on social media — which AFP could not immediately verify — show people gathered in front of the burning building.

Fire engines and ambulances could be seen nearby. Zigong's emergency services department received news about the fire at around 6:10 pm and immediately dispatched firefighters to extinguish the blaze, the broadcaster said. The emergency department has called on the public to "not believe or amplify rumours" about the fire.

Zigong, some 1,900 kilometres from the capital Beijing, is home to nearly 2.5 million people.

Fires and other deadly accidents are common in China due to lax safety standards and poor enforcement. — AFP

War crimes in Oct. 7 attack, says HRW

Jerusalem, July 17: Hamas led other Palestinian armed groups in committing hundreds of war crimes in the surprise October 7 attack on Israel that set off the Gaza war, Human Rights Watch said in a report released on Wednesday.

One of the most in-depth international studies on the unprecedented incursion into southern Israel outlined a host of potential war crimes cases.

"It's impossible for us to put a number on the specific instances," HRW associate director Belkis Wille said, adding that "there were obviously hundreds on that day". The crimes include "deliberate and indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian objects; wilful killing of persons in custody; cruel and other inhumane treatment; sexual and gender-based violence; hostage taking; mutilation and despoiling (robbing) of bodies; use of human shields; and pillage and looting", said the report. It focuses on violations of international humanitarian law, rules mostly rooted in the Geneva Conventions for conduct in war.

Although Palestinian Islamist group Hamas is recognised as the orchestrator of the attack, the report lists other armed groups that committed war crimes on October 7, including Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

— AFP

LIVE RICH FINANCIAL Chronicle

HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | 18 JULY 2024

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	80,716.55	0.06
Nifty 50	24,613.00	0.11
S&P 500*	5,598.42	-1.21
Dollar (₹)	83.58	0.03
Pound Sterling (₹)	108.44	0.03
Euro (₹)	91.1	0.14
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	74,565.292	0.39
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	84.78	1.25
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.966	-0.014
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.173	0.006

*As of 8:30 PM IST

Citroen inks pact with Refex Green for 500 vehicles

French automaker Citroen has signed a memorandum of understanding with Refex Green Mobility, a subsidiary of Refex Group, towards the procurement of 500 Citroen e-C3 electric vehicles. "Our partnership with Refex underscores Citroen's commitment to our customers, the reliability of our products and a strong sustainable operation," said Citroen India Brand director Shishir Mishra.

Musk to move X, SpaceX offices out of California

Texas, July 17: Elon Musk said he will relocate the headquarters for X and SpaceX to Texas, adding more fuel to the billionaire's efforts to align himself with the political right and distance himself from left-leaning California.

Musk made the announcements on his X social media site, citing frustration over a new law in California related to transgender children in public schools. California became the first US state to ban school districts from requiring teachers to notify parents about changes to a student's sexual orientation and gender identity.

"This is the final straw," Musk said in the post announcing SpaceX's relocation.

He has long criticised California's liberal politics, and has threatened to pull X and his other businesses out of the state on numerous occasions.

SpaceX's headquarters is currently in Hawthorne, California, but it has been building out a large facility in South Texas dubbed Starbase over the last few years.

The site in Boca Chica is the primary location where SpaceX builds and launches its massive Starship rocket system, and the company recently added a massive warehouse factory at Starbase known as the Starfactory, which replaced many of the site's production tents. X's headquarters is currently in San Francisco, though the company put several floors of its main



● **SPACE X'S HEADQUARTERS** is currently in Hawthorne, California, but it has been building out a large facility in South Texas dubbed Starbase over the last few years.

building up for lease last week. It was still expected to retain some of that space for employees. In January, X said it was planning to open a small office in Austin to help deal with content moderation problems.

SpaceX has roughly 13,000 employees. Its Hawthorne facility has been the primary location for production and processing of the company's Falcon 9 workhorse rocket, as well as the larger, more powerful Falcon Heavy rocket.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott said in an X post that the move "cements Texas as the leader in space exploration."

Musk also has several ties to Texas already. His electric car company, Tesla, earlier this year moved its business incorporation to Texas from Delaware, and similarly moved its headquarters from California to Austin in 2021. — Bloomberg

SUZUKI PLANS LIGHTER BODIES, SMALL BATTERIES FOR ITS MODELS

New Delhi, July 17: Suzuki Motor Corporation on Wednesday said it will focus on aspects like light body structures and usage of small batteries to power its models including electric vehicles (EVs) across various markets, including India.

Outlining the company's technology strategy for the next ten years, the Japanese automaker stated that compact and light vehicles that not only reduce CO2 emissions during use, but also reduce the resources and CO2 emissions in production, thus contributing to resource conservation and CO2 reduction.

The automaker, which has around 58 per cent stake in the country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India, said it will further evolve the light-weight and safety body 'Heartect', and also work to minimise energy consumption through weight reduction technology.

For battery EVs and hybrid vehicles, the company said it aims to provide its customers with the most energy-efficient electric vehicles based on the renewable energy ratio and usage conditions in each country and region.

"Suzuki will be developing EVs that minimise energy consumption by combining components that embody... small and efficient electric units, and a small and light battery," the automaker said. — PTI

Thematic funds garner favour of retail investors

There are about 60 thematic funds now and more are in pipeline

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, JULY 17

Thematic funds are the new mutual fund offers that have flooded the market over the last few months with fund houses trying to compete with each other in collecting fresh funds to manage through this category.

For fund managers, high valuations make it challenging to find undervalued opportunities under the existing themes of large, mid-cap and small-cap funds and their other variants like flexi-cap fund, multi-cap fund or large and mid-cap fund etc.

Last month nine out of 17 new fund offers (NFOs) were from thematic funds category that mobilised ₹12,974 crore (cr). In May though only one thematic fund NFO - HDFC manufacturing fund was launched

Thematic Funds Attracting MF Investors	
Month	Inflows (₹ crore)
June 2024	22,351.69
May 2024	19,213.43
April 2024	5,166.05
March 2024	7,917.72
February 2024	11,262
January 2024	4,804.69
December 2023	6,005.49
November 2023	1,964.67

Source: AMFI

hed but the collection and response was huge as it collected ₹9,563 crore.

Kenneth Andrade, CIO, Old Bridge Mutual Fund sees "goldilocks period" for the Indian economy; and recommends aligning with growth businesses amid scarce undervalued opportunities.

Soon thematic funds are likely to become the largest pool of funds to be

managed by the fund houses. As of now there are about 60 thematic funds managed by the fund houses and more are in pipeline.

The thematic funds launched so far cover manufacturing, transportation and logistics, defence, housing opportunities, innovation, business cycle, automotive, special opportunities, and

financial services.

MF industry's thematic funds with total assets under management of over ₹3.83 lakh crore are the second largest equity fund category after flexi cap funds (₹4.01 lakh cr) as of June 30, 2024 in terms of AUM among the equity fund categories.

The growth has been rapid over the last three months as total AUM of thematic funds rose from being the fourth largest in April 2024 at over ₹3.13 lakh crore to now second highest at ₹3.83 lakh crore.

The inflows too have been rising to thematic funds since Dec. 2023 instilling investor confidence in thematic funds. Where there are limited stocks in business theme with high growth opportunities fund houses are launching exchange traded fund or ETFs as NFOs.

Silver to touch ₹1.5 lakh per kg in 18 months

SANGEETHA G.
CHENNAI, JULY 17

The current gold-silver ratio indicates a significant bull-run for silver. In the next 18 months silver prices in the domestic market can touch ₹1.5 lakh per kg level.

The gold-silver ratio, which indicates how many ounces of silver it takes to buy one ounce of gold, usually stays between 40-1 and 60-1, but when it gets far above the high end of that historical aver-

age, it tends to return to the mean with a vengeance, said Ajay Kedia, managing director, Kedia Commodities.

It had touched high levels of 87-1 three months ago and currently stands at 79-1. Historically, such elevated ratios have been a precursor to substantial silver price appreciation.

Silver could see a significant bull run, given the scenario still looks bullish for gold with the likelihood of a rate hike increasing. Silver histori-

● **SILVER DEMAND** is expected to hit the 1.2 billion ounces this year, the second-highest annual silver demand on record.

cally outperforms gold in a gold bull market, with gold charting a gain of around 40 per cent during the pandemic and silver up a whopping 141 per cent.

Silver demand is expected to hit 1.2 billion ounces this year, the second-high-

est annual silver demand on record. This level of demand would create a structural market deficit of 176 million ounces, cutting further into global silver reserves.

"We are witnessing a 'once-in-a-decade opportunity' for silver investors. My analysis suggests that silver prices could reach ₹1,50,000 per kg within next 18 months," said Kedia.

The price of silver in MCX currently stands at ₹93,047 per kg.

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SHORT TAKES

Surya stays on second spot

Dubai: The big-hitting Suryakumar Yadav is the highest placed Indian at second spot, while young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal occupies the sixth position in the ICC T20I batting rankings issued on Wednesday. Ruturaj Gaikwad has dropped a place to the eighth position in the T20I batters' list, which was updated following India's recent 4-1 series triumph over Zimbabwe. Jaiswal was the big winner following his 141 runs in the series as he rose four places, behind No.1 ranked batter Travis Head of Australia and Suryakumar. Shubman Gill, who led India against Zimbabwe and was the leading run-scorer of the series with 170 runs from five innings, moved up a whopping 36 places to 37th. No Indian features in the top 10 of the T20I bowlers rankings. Axar Patel, who was rested for the Zimbabwe series, dropped four places to 13th spot. Fast bowler Mukesh Kumar and spinner Washington Sundar also made upward movements. Mukesh, who scalped eight wickets from three games, has gained 36 places to rise to 46th — PTI

Messi to miss next two games

Miami, United States: Lionel Messi will miss Inter Miami's next two Major League Soccer matches after injuring his right ankle in Argentina's Copa America final triumph, Miami coach Gerardo Martino said Tuesday. The 37-year-old Argentine star went down in the 64th minute of a 1-0 victory over Colombia, hobbling off the field with cameras showing a huge swollen ankle. Messi is set to miss Inter Miami home matches on Wednesday against Toronto FC and on Saturday against the Chicago Fire. "There will be further testing to determine the severity of the situation," Martino said. "He has to have more tests and wait for the results." Messi, in an Instagram posting, was thankful for messages of concern and support he received after Sunday's match. "I want to thank everyone for the messages and greetings. I'm fine, thank God, and I hope I can soon be on the field again enjoying what I like to do most," Messi wrote. — AFP

1.2 million tickets left for Olympics

Paris: Organisers of the Paris Olympics said on Wednesday that there were still 1.2 million tickets left for the Games, mostly for football, basketball and handball. Team sports such as football have struggled to sell out the large venues chosen for the matches, while organisers are also set to release new more sought-after places for the finals of swimming and athletics. "More than 50,000 tickets will be put on sale in more than 30 sports (on Thursday)," deputy director general Mickael Aloisio told reporters. The Paris Games have set a new record for the total number of tickets sold, with the 8.7 million purchased surpassing the previous high of 8.3 million at the Atlanta Games in 1996. "More than 60 per cent" of tickets have been sold in France, Aloisio said. Organisers faced severe criticism from fans and even some athletes over the cost of tickets when they were first released last year. — AFP

Nagal-Drzewiecki pair crashes out

Bastad, Sweden: Olympic bound Indian tennis player Sumit Nagal and his Polish partner Karol Drzewiecki made a first round exit after suffering straight-set loss in the Nordea Open here. The Indo-Polish pair suffered a 3-6, 4-6 defeat in the hands of the French duo of Alexandre Muller and Luca Van Assche in a round of 16 contest on Tuesday. Nagal, who is now placed 68th in the ATP singles chart, next faces world number 36 Mariano Navone from Argentina. Meanwhile, veteran Rohan Bopanna and N. Sriram Balaji's men's doubles first round match against the German duo of J. Schnaitter and M. Wallner at the Hamburg Open has been postponed to Thursday. — PTI

BONJOUR PARIS

IOA releases list of 117 athletes, 140 support staff for Olympics

New Delhi, July 17: India will be represented by 117 athletes at this month's Paris Olympics after the sports ministry cleared the final contingent that also features 140 support staff and officials, of which 72 have been approved at "cost to the government" to meet the "requirements" of the travelling sportspersons.

The only qualified athlete missing from the list is shot-putter Abha Khatua. The Games will run from July 26 to August 11. Khatua, who made the cut through world rankings quota, has been dropped without any explanation after her name was found missing from the World Athletics' list of Olympic participants a few days ago.

There is no word yet on whether her name has been knocked off owing to injury, a doping violation or any other technical issue.

The rest of the contingent that has been cleared is on expected lines with London Olympics bronze medal-winning former shooter Gagan Narang as chef-de-mission. Narang is also a vice president in the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

"The permissible limit for stay of support personnel in the Games Village against accreditation as per norms of the Paris Organising Committee for the 2024 Olympic Games is 67 including 11 IOA Contingent Officials, which includes five Medical Team Members," stated a letter from the ministry to IOA President P. T. Usha, explaining the ratio of support staff allowed as per the size of the contingent.

"For catering to the requirements of the athletes, additional coaches and other support staff numbering 72 have been approved at cost to the Government and arrangements for their stay have been made in Hotels/in locations outside the Games Village," it added.

Despite Khatua's absence, athletics will make for the biggest group in the contingent with 29 names (11 women and 18 men), followed by shooting (21) and hockey (19).

Table tennis will be represented by eight players, while badminton (7) will feature seven competitors, including two-time Olympic medalist P. V. Sindhu.

Wrestling (6), archery (6), and boxing (6) will have six representatives each, followed by golf (2), tennis (3), swimming (2), sailing (2), and one each for equestrian, judo, rowing and weightlifting.

The shooting contingent, which is the second biggest, consists of 11 women and 10 men, while table tennis will have four players each in both categories. — PTI



Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo swims in the Seine river in Paris on Wednesday to fulfill a promise she made months ago to show the river is clean enough to host open-swimming competitions during the 2024 Olympics — and the opening ceremony on the river nine days away. — AP

Paris mayor swims in 'clean' Seine

Paris, July 17: The mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, took a long-awaited swim in the murky waters of the Seine on Wednesday amid joy and relief that the river is finally clean enough for Olympic swimming events later this month.

Wearing goggles and a wet suit, the 65-year-old city leader swam breaststroke under bright sunshine before immersing her face and beginning a front crawl, covering around 100 metres (yards) downstream.

"It's wonderful, very, very pleasant. It's fresh but not cold," Hidalgo told reporters of the greenish water.

She was joined by senior local officials and chief organiser of the Paris Games, Tony Estanguet, a gold medal-winning canoeist who has been

returning to the waterway in greater numbers. Hidalgo had originally planned to swim last month, but had to delay because water tests showed that E.Coli bacteria — a key indicator of faecal matter — were sometimes up to 10 times higher than authorised limits.

Her swim had sparked jokes and memes on social media, with one viral AI-generated image showing her looking like the wrinkled Gollum character from the Lord of the Rings movies after her amphibious exploit.

President Emmanuel Macron, who had promised to join the Seine bathers, was a notable absentee as he is occupied by a political crisis caused by his decision to call snap parliamentary polls. elections last month. — AFP

swearing on the state of the Seine ahead of the opening of the Paris Games next week. "Today is a confirmation that we are exactly where we meant to be. We are now ready to organise the Games in the Seine," Estanguet said.

The swimming leg of the Olympics triathlon is set to take place in its waters on July 30-31 and August 5, followed by the open-water swimming on August 8-9.

Despite an investment of 1.4 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) to prevent sewage



Nadal, Murray could be bidding adieu to tennis after Olympics

Paris, July 17: All the way back when he first discussed the likelihood that 2024 would be his final season as a professional tennis player, Rafael Nadal made sure to refer to the Paris Olympics as "one of the important competitions I would like to be at."

If, indeed, this is his last hurrah, and if, indeed, he does make it to the Summer Games a little more than a year after hip surgery — neither of which is an absolute certainty — it would be fitting that the site of the French Open is also the site of this goodbye.

No event, at least in this sport, defines an athlete's legacy the way the clay-court Grand Slam tournament does for Nadal. And the opposite is true, too, which is why there is a statue of the Spaniard at Roland Garros, the site of a record 14 of his 22 major trophies and where the Olympic tennis begins on July 27. — AP

GIVEN THE BEST BUT STILL BEING CRITICISED: USHA

New Delhi, July 17: Indian Olympic Association President P. T. Usha on Wednesday said "unprecedented teamwork" between the sports ministry, IOA and the national federations ensured that Paris-bound athletes got the support staff of their choice and lashed out at critics for turning a "blind eye to such synergy".

"At IOA, we have embarked on an era when athletes are at the centre of our planning and preparations. Instead of the usual 3:1 ratio between athletes and support staff, we have worked hard to change it to slightly better than 1:1 ratio," said Usha in a statement on Wednesday.

Usha said despite the efforts to ensure athletes' demands were met, it was "disappointing" to hear that some reports were still painting a negative picture of the work. — PTI

IOA chief chides WFI for axing Antim's coaches

New Delhi, July 17: IOA President P. T. Usha on Wednesday came down heavily on the ad-hoc panel that managed the suspended WFI, saying the committee did not do due diligence and missed out on giving the names of wrestler Antim Panghal's coaches in the long list, sent to the Paris Olympic Games organisers.

The IOA's reaction came in the wake of delay in visa clearance for Panghal's preferred coaches for the Games.

The 19-year-old was the first Indian wrestler to qualify for the Paris Games when she won a bronze at the World Championship in 2023.

She wants her coaches Bhagat Singh and Vikas to travel with her along with physiotherapist Heera.

The IOA has cleared all the names but the support staff members attached with Panghal are still awaiting visa clearance. — PTI

MONSOON REGATTA

Gritty Lahiri makes waves

Hyderabad, July 17: Telangana Sailors dominated the Under 16 Optimist fleet at the 15th Monsoon Regatta with Govardhan Pallara, Lahiri Komaravelli and her sister Deekshita Komaravelli winning one race each at the Hussainsagar lake here on Wednesday.

Govardhan continued his winning spree and is well ahead of the second position but with four races to go he needs to maintain his composure and stay in top position.

Lahiri was the heroine of the day. She fractured her left arm in an accident having been run over by a vehicle and was out of practice for two months. She cajoled her doctor who finally allowed her to participate after she missed the first two races. Lahiri finished first in a race and despite setbacks is commendably positioned at 19th in a 39 sailor fleet.

The Monsoon Regatta also sailed the Half Rig Fleet for lighter and

younger sailors and Sayyad Ashraf (11) topped the fleet to win a gold medal and the Light Fleet Trophy. Yuvraj Gupta (9) and Pardhu Telugu (11) finished with a silver and bronze respectively.

In the girls Half Rig fleet Akhila Koppula (13) won gold and Nikitha Jeeru (12) got the silver.

POINTS TALLY

- Under 16 Optimist Class: 1. Govardhan Pallara (TSA) Telangana 20, 2. Shreya Krishna (RMYC) Tamil Nadu 34, 3. Deekshita (TSA) Telangana 36.
- Under 18 29er Skiff Doubles: 1. Nikhil Mandavkar & Satyam Jha (NBSC Goa) 8, 2. Mallesh Gadham & Karthik Korrolla (NBSC Goa) 13, 3. Ajay Yadav & Adiraj Yadav (NSS MP) 19.
- Under 18 International 420 Mixed Doubles: 1. Vaishnavi Veeravamsam & Shravan Kathravath (TSA Telangana) 10, 2. Thanuja Kameshwar & Ganesh Peerkata (TSA Telangana) 10.
- Under 18 ILCA 4 Single Hander Girls: 1. Somya Singh (NSS Madhya Pradesh) 10, 2. Alia Sabreen (OYA Orissa) 11, 3. Manya Reddy (SSC Telangana) 22.
- Under 18 ILCA 4 Single Hander Boys: 1. Krishna Divakar (TSC Mysore) 15, 2. Shashank Batham (NSS Madhya Pradesh) 13, 3. Ekalavya Batham (NSS Madhya Pradesh) 16.



Ashraf Sayyad (left) and Akhila Koppula (right) topped the Light Fleet on the third day of the 15th Monsoon Regatta at Hussainsagar in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

CITY CLIPS

Rich haul for state chess players

Telangana's Pranay Akula scored a double as he won the Under-16 team gold medal and Under-16 blitz individual medal in the Western Asian Youth Chess Championship 2024 which concluded in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on Tuesday. Telangana's T. Sridharshini scored 6.5 points from nine rounds to return with a silver medal in the Under-12 girls Standard Format while another state girl Yashvi Jain won silver in the U-12 girls' rapid section.



V3-B register comfortable victory

Relying on their outside shooting, V3-B scored a comfortable 76-57 win over State Bank of India, Hyderabad after leading 35-24 at half time in a first round match of the Hyderabad District Basketball Association's Level-II Annual League at YMCA Secunderabad on Wednesday.

THE RESULTS

- V3-B 76 (Chandu 15, Sathesh 16, Kannarao 10) bt State Bank of India, Hyd 57 (Samuel 29, Sudheer 12, Sukumar 9). HT: 35-24
- Rare Virus 60 (Abhi 23, Dhanush 10, Roy Joseph 9) bt Raheemura Playground 23 (Prudhvi 8, Vaideya 7). HT: 34-8.

Royal United beat Deccan Dynamos

Royal United FC defeated Deccan Dynamos FC 1-0 in the Shiv Kumar Lal 'B' Division Football League organised by the Telangana Football Association at Gymkhana ground on Wednesday. Farhan scored the lone goal for Royal United in the 49th minute. Telangana Football Association felicitated Sanghita Basfore, a prominent player of the Indian football team.

Simha roars with an unbeaten double century

Mazhar, Abhirath, Abhishek, Varun, Surya, Shrunjith also do well in three-day league

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, JULY 17

Hrishikesh Simha smashed an unbeaten double century to emerge the top performer in Wednesday's action of the Hyderabad Cricket Association's three-day league matches played in the City.

The right hand batsman scored 229 in 262 balls with the help of 23 boundaries and 11 sixes to propel Balaaji to 380 for 9 while chasing 137 of India Cements, for whom pacer A. Shrunjith Reddy took 5 for 132 in their Elite-B match.

Off-spinner Varun Dhattrak was the other performer in the group, taking 5 for 33 as his side BDL drew with Combined Districts.

In Elite-A, M. Abhirath Reddy (179) of Jai Hanuman and N. Surya Teja (108 n.o.) scored cen-

turies. The Plate-C group had two performers — Syed Mazhar (7 for 34) of Zinda Tilismath and Sportive's Abhishek Murugan, who scored 136.

Brief Scores:

THREE-DAY LEAGUE

Elite-A

Day-2: Jai Hanuman 377/9 in 90 overs (M. Abhirath Reddy 179 — 201b, 22x4, 4x6, Rohit Rayudu 69, Prateek Reddy 64, M Sai Karthikeya 31, Karthikeya Kak 4/32) vs Sporting XI 99/3 in 26 overs (Takshit Rao 35).

Central Excise 336/9 in 90 overs (J Mallikarjun 84, N. Surya Teja 108 n.o. — 174b, 8x4, 2x6, Y Chaitanya Krishna 33) vs Deccan Chronicle 29 for no loss in 7 overs.

MP Colts 324 in 86.1 overs (Rishith Reddy 42, S Vaishnav



Hrishikesh Simha



Syed Mazhar



Varun Dhattrak

Reddy 34, B Sudhakar 4/62) vs SCRSA 121/4 in 44.3 overs (B Sudhakar 43, Dharani Kumar 32, Dane Johnson 3/19).

R. Dayanand 246 in 78.3 overs (S Dheeraj 86, M Sai Prateek 56, M Ruthik Yadav 4/77, Nitin Sai Yadav 3/76) vs UBI 210/3 in 57 overs (Ronald Rodrigues 37, K Kritih Reddy 88 batting, P Shiva 63).

(Junaid Ali 55 batting) vs AOC.

Elite-B

India Cements 137 vs Balaaji 380/9 in 90 overs (Hrishikesh Simha 229 n.o. — 262b, 23x4, 11x6, Paras Raj 50, A. Shrunjith Reddy 5/132 — 30-5-132-5).

Combined Districts 131 in 37.2 overs (Mohd Afreedi 39, Varun Dhattrak 5/33 — 10-4-33-5, Madhuveer Reddy 3/20) drew

with BDL 135/4 in 32.2 overs (K Hima Teja 33 n.o). Points: BDL 3, Districts 1.

Budding Star 229 & 99/1 in 23 overs (Jay Ram Kashyap 48 batting) vs Cambridge XI 224 in 72.3 overs (K Bhagath Varma 69, Ranjith Kumar 31, B Punniiah 3/75, Ajay Yadav 3/29).

EMCC 254 & 135/8 in 36.2 overs (A Avanish Rao 52, S Rohit Reddy 38, VVS Akshay Krishna 3/27) vs PKMCC 207 in 65.2 overs (G Rithish Reddy 53, Nishanth S 3/32, Ashwad Rajiv 4/63).

SBI 190 in 69.5 overs (Danny Derek Prince 57, M Ravi Kiran 31, Shreyansh Pandey 4/37, Aniketh Reddy 3/51) vs Evergreen 26/2 in 7 overs.

Continental vs Income Tax (washed out without a ball being bowled).

Apex 134 & 122/3 in 30.5 overs (P Koushik 54, Ayaan Mohd Ahmed 44) vs Khalsa 192 in 61.1 overs (J Ashrith 40, Syed Abubaker Siddiqui 52, Kankshith Reddy 3/34, Ayaan Mohd Ahmed 4/45).

Deccan Wanderers 215 in 62.2 overs (Aawez Ahmed 46, M A Malik 91, Avik D 3/37) vs Future Star 60/4 in 19 overs.

Plate-C

Classic 80 in 23.2 overs

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glam sham

Is Dubai princess Sheikha Mahra divorcing her husband?

3 >>



hyderabad CHRONICLE

THURSDAY | 18 JULY 2024

matinee

No fad diets for me, says Deepika

8 >>



PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: PTI

NATASA FLIES OUT WITH AGASTYA



Netizens are wondering what this could mean for Hardik Pandya's marriage, which is rumoured to be in trouble

Hardik Pandya's wife Natasa Stankovic's travel plans have set social media buzzing. The cricketer has been in the news for some time now, for personal and professional reasons. While speculation continues to swirl around "problems in his marriage", Natasa's Instagram story with images of her packing her bags fuelled a fresh spate of rumours.

"It's that time of the year," wrote Natasa, and added some aeroplane and house emojis. The Serbian model was later spotted at the airport with her young son Agastya.

IIM LOV'IN IIT MATRIMONIALS

India's intellectual crème de la crème from IITs and IIM are searching for their soulmates on elite matchmaking sites that cater exclusively only to alumni of these premier institutes



VAANYA SHUKLA

In a world where elite degrees open doors to prestigious careers, could they also unlock the key to finding true love? Welcome to the world of elite matchmaking platforms, where India's intellectual crème de la crème seeks not just partners, but equals in both heart and brain, their one true shot at intellectual compatibility.

Matchmaking platforms tailored specifically for alumni of prestigious institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are emerging as a niche, yet influential market. Interestingly, this very influence reflects a broader trend towards personalised and targeted matrimonial services — a niche that not only identifies a market but also marks a significant cultural shift, one that keeps education and intellectual capabilities over caste, race, colour, or religion in partner selection.

“IN TRADITIONAL SETUPS, PEOPLE WOULD PROBABLY MEET 5-10 TIMES BEFORE GETTING ENGAGED, AND HERE, IT MAY TAKE MONTHS.”

— TAKSH GUPTA, Founder & CEO, IITIMShaadi.com

DECODING MATCHMAKING

Ayesha (28), a marketing whiz from IIM, had always admired structured thinking. When she connected with Vivek (name changed), an IIM alumnus, their conversations flowed seamlessly. "We bonded over case studies and chai." It was her parents who initially forced her into getting registered. "They wanted a man who understood what I did, and where I came from. They wanted intellectual equity, and I liked that thought very much," Ayesha adds.

Perhaps one might ponder whether

matrimonial apps exclusive to alumni of premier institutions represent the epitome of intellectual compatibility or a novel manifestation of elitism in contemporary romance. The answer unfolds through the experiences of those navigating this distinctive matrimonial terrain.

Ria (name changed), a Computer Science graduate from IIT-Bombay, initially joined IITIMShaadi, a matrimony app, out of curiosity. It was on this platform that she encountered an alumnus from the same institute, albeit from a different and older batch, who piqued her interest. "Our initial conversations on quantum computing and campus anecdotes gradually evolved into late-night chats on philosophy and life," Ria says, adding, "There's a profound sense of mutual understanding and a heightened exchange of ideas when you share similar educational backgrounds and career paths."

Big B says, '₹1000 cr may be routine for Prabhas, but a big deal for me'

Is grateful to be part of *Kalki*

The team of the sci-fi film released on June 27 has posted a video by the veteran actor, in which he says "For Prabhas (the lead actor) this may be something of a routine because a lot of his films cross this ₹1000 crore figure. But for me, I am truly indebted and very grateful to have been made a part of this huge concept called *Kalki*..."



Big B says "I want to also express my thanks and gratitude for the honour it has given me in being with my co-artistes, and the stratospheric presence they have had in the film industry and still do — Kamal Haasan,

Prabhas, Deepika." Describing the success of the film as 'no mean achievement', Amitabh says, "I have already seen the film four times... and each time, I have discovered something new, something that I may have missed when I saw it the first time."

Meanwhile, Kamal, has lavished praise on Amitabh. "I don't know if I should call him a veteran or a fresh actor. He has done the film that well," he reportedly said.

TURN TO PAGE 2

Working with masters

Costume designer Aritha Ram brings the director's vision to life

RESHMI AR
DECCAN CHRONICLE

Famed costume designer Amritha Ram has carved a niche for herself in the South film industry after working with legendary actors like Kamal Haasan and ace director Mani Ratnam. She has also showcased her designing skills in the latest Nag Ashwin blockbuster, *Kalki 2898 AD*, and is raring to go. Amritha explains what it takes to collaborate with icons in the film industry.

COLLABORATIONS WITH ICONS

"I wouldn't say it's nerve-racking, but you need to be extremely careful about what you do, how you do it, and what you take to them. When you meet

him (Kamal), you can't talk much; you just listen to him. You leave with a hundred questions and blame yourself for not asking them," says Amritha.

But as a huge fan of Kamal and following his fashion through all the films he has done, Amritha says, "He is somebody who's always open to experimenting with anything, as long as there is a reason behind it and it works for him."

The designer says it is so easy with someone like Kamal Haasan, directors like Nag Ashwin, and Mani Ratnam. "When it comes to putting a look together, a costume designer is a tool that brings out the visions of the director, the actor, the cinematographer, and everyone involved," she says.



Aritha Ram with Kamal Haasan (above); and Mani Ratnam (right)



IT'S A CREATIVE PROCESS

When the director creates a character, the actor anticipates specific aspects because he will be the one wearing the clothing. "He prefers to portray the character in a manner that aligns with the director's vision," she says. The Director of Photography (DOP), who is responsible for bringing this visual to life on screen, has specific preferences for colours that complement the character, as well as for textures, fabrics,

and overall composition.

When working with such masters, just follow intently, she says. "Follow what they say, and pay attention to their words. It's a very creative process." The stylist advises that you must be prepared to adjust and adjust within the given timeframe.

Nobody takes no for an answer. "I try my best to be put together in terms of my work and try to do my research before I present a look. Then I take inputs and create the final look," she signs off.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

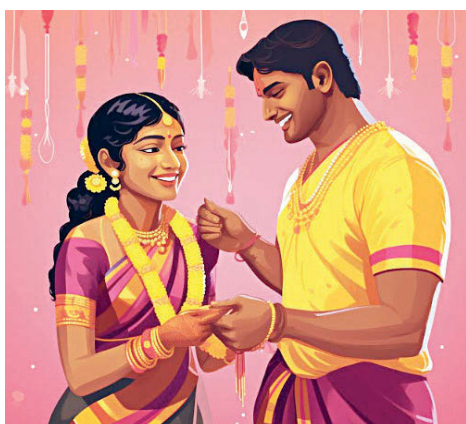
Sameer (name changed), IIT Delhi alumnus who later pursued his passion for art, was reluctantly signed up on an app by his sibling. Soon, he found a match that seemed like a perfect match on paper. However, their coffee date felt like a job interview as his career choices were analysed like a project proposal. "It felt more like an exchange of resumes," recalls Sameer. "I met a fellow IITian, but our personalities clashed. It turns out, shared academic backgrounds don't guarantee compatibility." He found the concept of limiting dating prospects to similar educational pedigrees "a tad bit appalling and egomaniacal" emphasising that intellect goes beyond institutional affiliations and degrees.

READY TO MINGLE

The National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) highlights a statistical correlation between education levels and marital stability in the West, which may roughly mimic Indian trends as well,

"WE BONDED OVER CASE STUDIES AND CHAI."

— AYESHA (28), marketing whiz, IIM



IIM lov'in IIT matrimonials

revealing that couples with similar education levels exhibit a higher likelihood of marital longevity. Specifically, couples where both partners possess college degrees demonstrate a 78% probability of their marriage lasting at least 20 years. However, tonnes of external factors influence the Indian matrimonial market, especially one that is niche in comparison to matchmaking by general platforms.

Arjun Bhatia, Chief Marketing Officer at Matrimony.com, sheds light on the evolving dynamics within the matrimony sector, highlighting stark differences between mainstream and niche platforms. Regular matrimony brands traditionally report a gender ratio of 75% male to 25% female. However, platforms like IIT-IIM Matrimony challenge this norm with a more balanced 60% male and 40% female ratio, reflecting a distinct preference among highly educated professionals. The consumer base is mostly from tier 1 and tier 2 cities like Delhi NCR, Bangalore, Mumbai, etcetera. Bhatia notes that the matrimony landscape has evolved significantly, influenced notably by the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, women typically registered in their early to mid-20s, while men ranged from mid-20s to late 20s. Post-pandemic, registrations now span a broader age range, with both genders seeking matches from late 20s to early 30s, reflecting a societal trend towards delaying marriage in favour of career and personal growth.

Taksh Gupta, Founder and CEO, IITIMShaadi.com, who pioneered his hold on the niche markets observes a few trends unique to it, "It is often observed that there exists a preference among our community for an extended period of courtship, characterised by a thorough getting-to-know-each-other phase before the Roka. In traditional setups, people would probably meet 5-10 times before getting engaged, and here, it may take



"THE CHOICE TO MARRY WITHIN SIMILAR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS CAN YIELD DUAL EFFECTS. IT MAY FOSTER ELITISM AND REINFORCE SOCIAL STRATIFICATION, LIMITING DIVERSITY IN RELATIONSHIPS. IT CAN ALSO FACILITATE GENUINE CONNECTIONS BASED ON SHARED VALUES AND UNDERSTANDING."

— Dr SHIVANI MISRI SADHOO, psychologist & marriage counsellor

months." This, Gupta states, is possibly due to their educational backgrounds and the well-thought-out approach of couples before they decide to get engaged. He also notes that involvement of parents in these set-ups is also relatively less.

ELITIST APPROACH

When asked about how he responds to the app propagating a sense of elitism among alumni from premiere institutions and discrimination, Gupta says, "Our intention is straightforward: to cater to a specific demographic. Just as Ferrari targets customers with the means to afford their

luxury cars, we focus on serving highly educated individuals. This doesn't imply discrimination— which would be if we charged higher prices based on education levels or offered different rates for different backgrounds; rather, it's about meeting the needs of a particular group."

Dr Shivani Misri Sadhoo, psychologist and marriage counsellor states, "The choice to marry within similar educational backgrounds can yield dual effects. It may foster elitism and reinforce social stratification, limiting diversity in relationships. It can also facilitate genuine connections based on shared values and understanding." While these marriages can strengthen personal bonds and contribute to stable relationships, it's essential to recognize their potential to perpetuate socioeconomic divides, as educational pedigree mostly correlates with economic status. Dr Shivani adds, "Marital success hinges on a complex interplay of factors beyond education alone; divorces within professions like film stars, doctors, lawyers, and IAS officers demonstrate that diversity in backgrounds does not guarantee or hinder relationship success."

Bhatia highlights the growing demand for exclusive matrimonial platforms for IIM and IIT alumni. "New IITs and IIMs open annually, increasing the alumni base ready for marriage," Bhatia notes. This surge is driven by professionals seeking partners with similar educational and professional backgrounds. These exclusive sites, according to Bhatia foresee a higher market growth. Gupta says, "AI and social networking could revolutionise matchmaking by predicting compatibility with advanced algorithms tailored to user preferences. This shift from traditional methods like horoscopes to AI-driven insights will be fascinating to watch, blending scientific precision with community-building features."

HAPPILY SEPARATED

Sheikha Mahra Bint Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the daughter of the ruler of Dubai, has put a tumultuous post on Instagram, claiming "divorce" from her husband, slightly over two months after they greeted their first child.

"Dear husband, as you are occupied with other companions, I hereby declare our divorce. I divorce you, I divorce you, and I divorce you. Take care. Your ex-wife," the Dubai princess wrote in an Instagram post. She has also extracted pictures with her husband from social media.

Mahra married Sheikh Mana bin Mohammed bin Rashid bin Mana Al Maktoum, an Emirati businessman, in May last year. A year later, they welcomed a daughter. Mana, who is in his 20s, has multiple business ventures.

In May this year, the Dubai princess released photos from the hospital moments after childbirth. She thanked her doctor and the hospital staff for ensuring she got the "most memorable experience for bringing baby Mahra to this world."

Sheikha Mahra



Sheikha Mahra bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Dubai princess, divorces her husband on Instagram

MANISH REDUCED TO 'LOCAL DESIGNER'

After gaining notice for calling Manish Malhotra a 'local designer,' Khloe Kardashian posted again and expressed her gratitude towards him. Take a look at how he reacts

Khloe Kardashian recently joined her sister Kim Kardashian to attend the lavish wedding of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant in Mumbai. Khloe donned Indian attire created by famous fashion designer Manish Malhotra, but caused a stir when she called him a 'local designer.' She has expressed gratitude to Manish for the 'amazing, intricate, detailed, and awe-inspiring' outfits he designed for her and Kim.

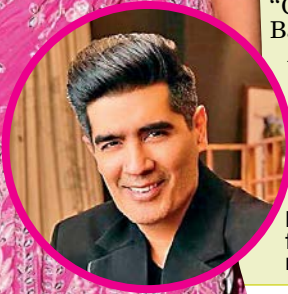
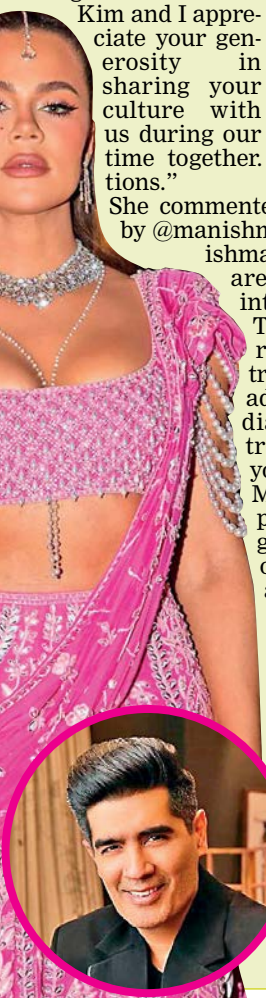
On Tuesday, she went on Instagram to share a collection of photos from the Ambani wedding. She wore a vibrant pink Manish Malhotra lehenga adorned with embellishments, paired with a matching blouse. Khloe expressed her gratitude to India in her caption. "This was the realisation of a long-held dream! Kim and I appreciate your generosity in sharing your culture with us during our time together. Enchanting recollections."

KHLOE DONNED INDIAN ATTIRE CREATED BY FAMOUS FASHION DESIGNER MANISH MALHOTRA, BUT CAUSED A STIR WHEN SHE CALLED HIM A 'LOCAL DESIGNER.' SHE HAS EXPRESSED GRATITUDE TO MANISH FOR THE 'AMAZING, INTRICATE, DETAILED, AND AWE-INSPIRING' OUTFITS HE DESIGNED FOR HER AND KIM.

She commented, "The outfits made by @manishmalhotra05 and @manishmalhotraworld for them are extremely detailed, intricate, and stunning! Thank you. @lorraine schwartz, you truly have a knack for adorning a girl with diamonds! We were treated like royalty... you are amazing. Manish replied to her post, expressing his gratitude for the opportunity to create and personalise the outfits and the joy of creating memories with everyone. A spectator remarked, "Goddess of India in Barbie form."

Another person commented, "Khloe, these could be your greatest outfits yet!"

Manish thanked Khloe for getting the opportunity to style her



FIT AS A FIDDLE

David Beckham shows off his six-pack abs while Victoria joins him for exciting jet ski activities during a yacht party in Sardinia to celebrate Harper's 13th birthday



Harper Beckham is celebrating her birthday in Sardinia, with the festivities attracting a lot of attention! The daughter of David and Victoria Beckham has reached her teenage years and the family celebrated by taking advantage of the sunny weather and trying various watersports activities. The ex-football player proudly showed off his muscular body while getting on a jet ski. His girlfriend Victoria hopped on behind him, exchanging her dumbbells for a life jacket as they set off.

At the age of 49, David surprised many by flaunting his toned abs without wearing a shirt. Victoria, always standing by her husband (wearing a life jacket, black swim skirt, and baseball cap for safety), gripped tightly for the exhilarating journey. However, not all of her time was spent relaxing as the fashion diva. Even during her vacation, she managed to fit in a workout on the yacht's sundeck to show her commitment to staying fit.



Natalie Portman hugging Rihanna

SOUL SISTERS FOR LIFE

Natalie Portman reveals how Rihanna helped her through a rough divorce and said that it was exactly what she needed

Natalie Portman is a massive fan of Rihanna! The actor who won an Academy Award spoke about the moment he met the pop singer on the latest episode of The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon, where she referred to him as "one of the most attractive in Hollywood." Natalie shared how important that compliment was to her during her difficult divorce.

Natalie expressed on the show, saying, "It was a fantastic experience for me. I believe every woman going through a divorce deserves to hear Rihanna tell her she's amazing. It was precisely what I required."

wellness

SILENCE PLEASE! HYPNOTHERAPY IS IN PROGRESS

Hypnotherapy is gaining traction and making headways into tackling everything from psychosomatic disorders, asthma, menopause hot flashes, to gastrointestinal disorders

VAANYA SHUKLA
In an era where technology reigns supreme, an age-old practice is making a surprising comeback. Hypnotherapy, which has its roots in ancient Vedic practices, is now being embraced by modern medicine to help successfully tackle everything from psychosomatic disorders, asthma, hot flashes during menopause, and gastrointestinal disorders, to childbirth, cancer, fibromyalgia, burns, and post-operative pain. This adjuvant therapeutic approach, induces a state of profound relaxation and heightened focus, enabling patients to tap into their inner

strengths and subconscious more effectively. This technique can be seamlessly integrated with other treatment modalities, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy to enhance its overall effectiveness.
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES
Ishita (name changed) undergoing IVF treatment experienced initial failure and significant anxiety during the painful embryo transplant procedure, alone in Ahmedabad after travelling from Canada. Hypnotherapy helped manage her fears, leading to a successful conception on the second attempt. She remained "calm throughout her pregnancy, allowing her to return to Canada in her second trimester." On July 4, she delivered a healthy baby. The case study became a successful attempt at pain and anxiety management for Dr Baljeet Kaur, Senior Therapist with Samatvam. He says, "Hypnosis is not a replacement but an adjuvant for management of specific disorders along with the primary treatment or therapy. It enables faster healing and makes other therapies and treatment more effective."
For over four years, Pratik (24), endured frequent episodes of coughing, often tinged with blood — a troubling symptom that defied straightforward diagnosis. He was referred to Dr Bhupendra Palan, Founder and Director of Samatvam, M.D. and a D.Clin.Hypno. from Academic



Dr BHUPENDRA PALAN



Bulletin of Mental Health, USA. Dr Palan's initial hypnotherapeutic approaches reduced his anxiety but did not stop the hemoptysis. Later, through explorative hypnotic dreaming, an emotional trauma was identified as the root cause. Hypnotic age regression helped restructure this trauma. Pratik was advised to skip an upcoming exam and underwent six hypnotherapy sessions. Using self-hypnosis during a three-year follow-up, he remained symptom-free and achieved significant academic progress, now viewing exams as challenges rather than threats. Hypnosis has



MANY MISCONCEPTIONS

However, hypnotherapy struggles to break into mainstream healthcare and remains on the periphery of conventional medical practice. Patients' responses to hypnotherapy as a treatment

“HYPNOSIS IS NOT A REPLACEMENT BUT AN ADJUVANT FOR MANAGEMENT OF SPECIFIC DISORDERS ALONG WITH THE PRIMARY TREATMENT OR THERAPY.”

— Dr BALJEET KAUR, Senior Therapist, Samatvam



“THERE'S CURRENTLY NO STANDARDISED TRAINING IN HYPNOTHERAPY. PRACTICES IN DELHI WILL DIFFER FROM THOSE IN CHENNAI.”

— Dr NN RAJU, Head of the Indian Psychiatric Society



option can be diverse, shaped by their beliefs, prior experiences, and understanding of the practice. Dr Kaur says "Scepticism arises from misconceptions perpetuated by media and entertainment portrayals of hypnosis, often associating it with loss of control or manipulation. Such misunderstandings can lead to apprehension about the therapy." Dr Palan identifies the significant hurdles the practice faces due to a lack of legislative framework since a health department resolution in 1990. This gap allows non-medical practitioners to make exaggerated claims, undermining credibility in the scientific community. "Despite limited opposition, enthusiastic proponents perpetuate unrealistic claims, hindering legitimate growth," says Dr Palan. To address these challenges, the Academy of Hypnosis India was founded in 2023, uniting qualified medical and clinical psychologists in hypnotherapy. Dr NN Raju, Head of the Indian Psychiatric Society says, "There's currently no standardised training in hypnotherapy; practices in Delhi will differ greatly from those in

Chennai. This lack of uniformity poses a significant challenge to its acceptance in the mainstream. It is essential to establish global standards to ensure consistent practices." Dr Raju elaborates that there is a critical need for oversight and certification in hypnotherapy to distinguish between practitioners who understand specific medical conditions and those who do not. This includes differentiating between benign and severe conditions like headaches. Standardised training and certification are crucial for advancing hypnotherapy as a credible medical discipline. Hypnotherapy may not foresee a lot of potential according to Raju, however, holds a very bright future in India's medical landscape, says Dr Palan.

As a qualified yoga teacher, he observes significant parallels between hypnosis and meditation techniques such as Yoga Nidra and aspects of Astana yoga. Secondly, studies indicate a higher prevalence of individuals with heightened hypnotic ability in India, approximately 70%, compared to around 20% in Western countries. This natural predisposition towards hypnotic states suggests that hypnotherapy holds considerable potential for widespread acceptance and effectiveness within India's cultural and psychological landscape compared to the West.



BACK WITH A SPIN

Gordon Ramsay takes a bike ride with his 5-year-old son Oscar for the first time since a frightening accident

Part-time biker and full-time chef, Gordon Ramsay is back and how! On Sunday, the MasterChef star, 57, shared videos on Instagram of him riding a bike while joined by his 5-year-old son Oscar. His recovery on the bike comes nearly one year after mutilating himself in a cycling mishap in June. "So nice to be back on the bike thank you," Ramsay wrote in the caption. He tagged the indoor cycling company Zwift for his practice beforehand during "recovery." In the first video, Ramsay filmed himself riding alongside a riverbank. He then panned the camera across the road as he asked, "Where is he?" Oscar then appeared, cycling up next to him on a blue bike wearing a helmet.

IN A HEARTFELT AND SHOCKING VIDEO RECENTLY, RAMSAY REVEALED A SIGNIFICANT INJURY HE SUSTAINED WHILE CYCLING IN CONNECTICUT. DESPITE THE ALARMING APPEARANCE OF THE INJURY, RAMSAY STRESSED THE CRITICAL ROLE HIS HELMET PLAYED IN PREVENTING MORE SEVERE HARM

met. "There he is!" exclaimed Ramsay. "You are doing so well by the way," he said to Oscar. The restaurateur then went through a safeness inventory with his son as he asked him, "Helmet's on, gears are intact, yes?" Oscar responded, "Yes!" Ramsay then asked, "Eyes on the road, yes?" Oscar called back, "Yes!" "Good boy ... off he goes," Ramsay



said, turning the camera on himself. "So nice to be back on the bike," he said as Oscar droned past him. As his five-year-old kept cycling

along, Ramsay joked and implied his eldest daughter, Megan, 26, who's a police officer. Ramsay disclosed he bruised himself biking in Connecticut in a post on Instagram on June 15. He said, "I'm in pain. It's been a brutal week. And I'm sort of getting through it. But I cannot tell you the importance of wearing a helmet," he said back then.

Power up your hamstrings!

Nordic Curls strengthen hamstrings and knees through eccentric and concentric muscle motions

SWATI SHARMA
DECCAN CHRONICLE

Celebrities and athletes, including Kriti Sanon, Sussanne Khan, and Disha Patani, are catching the internet by storm by posting videos of themselves performing the Reverse Nordic Curls at the gym. Nordic exercises are great for strengthening the hamstrings and stabilising the hips, pelvis, and spine. The Nordic hamstring curl, in particular, is a popular and very effective exercise.

Zaineb Ali, a qualified level-1 lead Pilates instructor and the founder of Pilates & Beyond, discusses the advantages of introducing Nordic curls into your workout programme. "Nordic hamstring curls are exceptional for building muscle strength and improving flexibility," adds the instructor. "They target the posterior chain, crucial for overall stability and injury prevention." Nordic curls are performed by anchoring the feet and lowering the body forward from the knees, resulting in severe hamstring contraction. "This exercise not only strengthens the hamstrings, but it also improves athletic performance by supporting proper hip and pelvic alignment," says Zaineb.



SPEED & AGILITY

Nordic curls are frequently used in athletic training to increase speed and agility while lowering the chance of hamstring injury. As more fitness enthusiasts discover the benefits of Nordic exercises, the trend continues to spread. Whether



THE NORDIC HAMSTRING CURL, ALSO KNOWN AS THE LEG CURL OR RUSSIAN HAMSTRING CURL, IS A STRENGTH EXERCISE THAT PRIMARILY TARGETS THE HAMSTRING MUSCLES.

BENEFITS

- Nordic curls improve hamstring strength, especially the biceps femoris, semitendinosus, and semimembranosus. Strengthening these muscles improves knee stability and reduces hamstring problems.
- They imitate the hamstrings' natural function, building strength across their whole range of motion.
- Core activation: Maintaining balance during exercise strengthens and stabilises the core.
- No gear required: Nordic curls can be done at home or in the gym with little equipment and a stable foot surface.

"THIS EXERCISE NOT ONLY STRENGTHENS THE HAMSTRINGS, BUT IT ALSO IMPROVES ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE BY SUPPORTING PROPER HIP AND PELVIC ALIGNMENT."

— ZAINEB ALI, a qualified level-1 lead Pilates instructor and the founder of Pilates & Beyond

Kriti Sanon exercising atop a machine as she nails the Nordic Curls

you're an athlete or just beginning out on your fitness path, Nordic curls can help you build a stronger and more robust body. Zaineb discusses the advantages of adopting Nordic curls into your exercise programme. "Nordic hamstring curls are exceptional for building muscle strength and improving flexibility," adds the instructor. "They target the posterior chain, crucial for overall stability and injury prevention." During Nordic curls, anchoring the feet and lowering the body forward from the knees causes the hamstrings to contract intensely. This exercise not only strengthens the hamstrings, but it also improves athletic performance by supporting proper hip and pelvic alignment.



Your day today

By Dr C.V.B. Subrahmanyam

Aries: Communications are simplified. Connections of all kinds are furthered. Your biggest ideas should be conveyed with great ease.

Taurus: You may set your hands free and spend money in the way you want. You will be able to impress others. You can use this quality in your professional life.

Gemini: You may remain confused or unsure about many matters. Your decisions may be affected by it. The best would be to avoid making any major decisions.

Cancer: It's the time for introspection. New developments in career matters will wind you up. Don't begin any new venture or expand your activities.

Leo: Give others your support and acknowledgement. Your charm has a positive effect on others. You may organise an event. Someone is aware of your needs and feelings.

Virgo: Support those you think are capable. Learn about yourself and your partner. You can move forward with your plans and project. Just be sure that you think before you speak.

You share your b'day with

Actress Bhumi Pednekar is known for portraying headstrong women. She made her film debut as an overweight bride in the romantic comedy Dum Laga Ke Haisha. She also does commercially successful films.



Libra: You are likely to spend your time in sports to maintain your physical stamina. Associate today with experienced people and learn from what they have to say.

Scorpio: Children will spend more time on sports and other outdoor activities. You may have misgivings about befriending strangers.

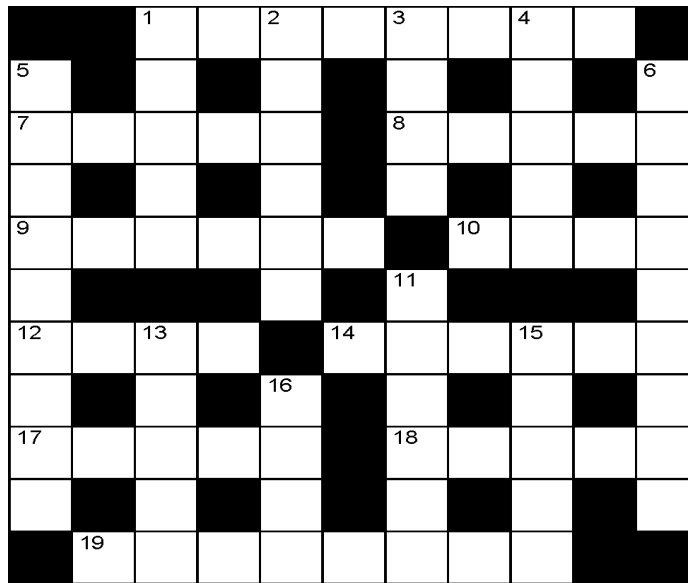
Sagittarius: You enjoy good health, but problems could arise if you don't take time off to relax. Someone you don't much care for is becoming a thorn in your side.

Capricorn: Your mental energy is high which is a big plus. Minor quarrelling between children will arouse uneasiness in the family. You will find it difficult to deal with their complaints.

Aquarius: Romantic couples planning to meet their would-be in-laws better choose some other day. Children affected by minor illnesses will be forced to stay away from games.

Pisces: Extra classes for finishing the portions at the institutions will be exhausting. If you're travelling by train, you must have a final check of your reservation.

QUICK CROSSWORD



Across

- 1. Go hard (8)
- 7. Outstanding (5)
- 8. Urbane (5)
- 9. Rarely (6)
- 10. Article (4)
- 12. Prevalent (4)
- 14. Lump of gold (6)
- 17. About (5)
- 18. Ooze out (5)
- 19. Feasible (8)

Down

- 1. Seller's patter (5)

- 2. Atoll lake (6)
- 3. Late twilight (4)
- 4. Banquet (5)
- 5. Build (9)
- 6. Allowed (9)
- 11. First-rate (6)
- 13. Do without (5)
- 15. Mesh (5)
- 16. Methods (4)

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

Across: 1. Generous, 6. Itch, 7. Chores, 9. Agent, 11. Eider, 12. Issue, 13. Brain, 16. Tether, 18. Limb, 19. Yearbook.

Down: 1. Guitarist, 2. Niche, 3. Once, 4. Smokier, 5. Hue, 8. Springbok, 10. Naughty, 14. Amigo, 15. Area, 17. Ebb.

bridge

PHILLIP ALDER

HEADS HE LOSES, TAILS YOU WIN

Jonathan Swift, an English satirist and author best known for "Gulliver's Travels," allegedly said, "There were many times my pants were so thin I could sit on a dime and tell if it was heads or tails."

Someone much later reviewed a car's suspension by making the same comment about running over a coin in the road.

At the bridge table, it is great if you can leave an opponent in a heads-you-win-tails-he-fails position. How can South do that in this deal? He is in four hearts, and the defenders begin with three rounds of spades.

I agree with North's one-trump rebid, ignoring his spade suit. True, one no-trump might be passed out when two spades would be better, South hav-

ing four spades and a relatively weak hand. But 4-3-3-3 distribution cries out for no-trump. Here, South would have done better to raise to three no-trump, a contract with nine top tricks, but four hearts was "normal."

When West led the spade ace, East encouraged enthusiastically with his 10. West cashed the spade king and played a third spade. South ruffed and had the initial thought to take both minor-suit finesses. As long as one worked, he would have been home. But then he spotted a third possibility.

Declarer drew trumps ending on the board and called for the last spade. When East covered with his queen, declarer did not ruff; instead, he calmly discarded a club.

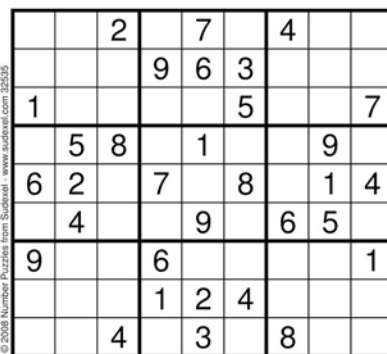
East was endplayed,

North			
♠ 7 6 4 3			
♥ Q J 5			
♦ K J 3			
♣ A Q 4			
West		East	
♠ A K 8		♠ Q 10 9 2	
♥ 9 7 4		♥ 8	
♦ 10 8 5 2		♦ Q 9 7 6	
♣ J 8 3		♣ K 10 9 6	
South			
♠ J 5			
♥ A K 10 6 3 2			
♦ A 4			
♣ 7 5 2			
Dealer: North			
Vulnerable: Both			
South	West	North	East
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	1 NT	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
Opening lead: ♠ A			

forced to lead one of the minors and concede a 10th trick to South. It was a pretty loser-on-loser play.

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SU•DO•KU



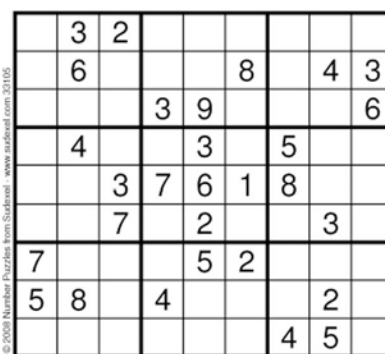
WHAT TO DO

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only one correct solution.

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

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

SU•DO•KU 2



Did you think the SU•DO•KU

on the left was easy? Try this. Check the solution tomorrow. Tips available at www.sudoku-xls.com DC-AGE SU DO KU FORUM: Discuss the SU DO KU puzzles printed and contribute mind teasers of your own at www.sudoxel.com/forum

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

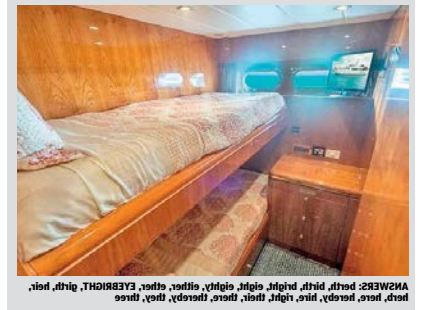
8	5	3	2	4	7	6	1	9
1	9	4	6	3	5	8	2	7
6	2	7	1	8	9	3	5	4
7	1	5	3	9	8	4	6	2
3	4	6	5	7	2	9	8	1
2	8	9	4	1	6	7	3	5
5	3	2	9	6	4	1	7	8
9	6	8	7	2	1	5	4	3
4	7	1	8	5	3	2	9	6

Word Mine



TODAY'S RATINGS: 16 AVERAGE; 18 GOOD; 20 OUTSTANDING

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each word must contain the letter at the top of the pyramid. There should be at least one nine letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed.



scrabble brand | G2 R1 A5 M5 S1

T	A	L	S	R	A	A	RACK 1	
R	E	S	A	M	T	J		RACK 2
I	E	O	C	R	V	D		
T	O	Z	E	A	L	N		RACK 4

PAR SCORE 135-145
by JUDD
FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2 to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Merriam-Webster) and OSW Official Scrabble words (Chambers). JUDD'S Solution on Monday

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

D	A	R	N	I	N	G	RACK 1 = 68
D	O	M	I	N	O	RACK 2 = 15	
R	E	A	L	I	S	T	RACK 3 = 71
L	A	M	E	N	T	S	RACK 4 = 59
PAR SCORE 140-150							JUDD'S TOTAL = 213

coffee-break

CALVIN AND HOBBS | Bill Watterson



THE WIZARD OF ID | Parker and Hartsd



ARCHIE | Bill Henry Scarpelli & craig boldman



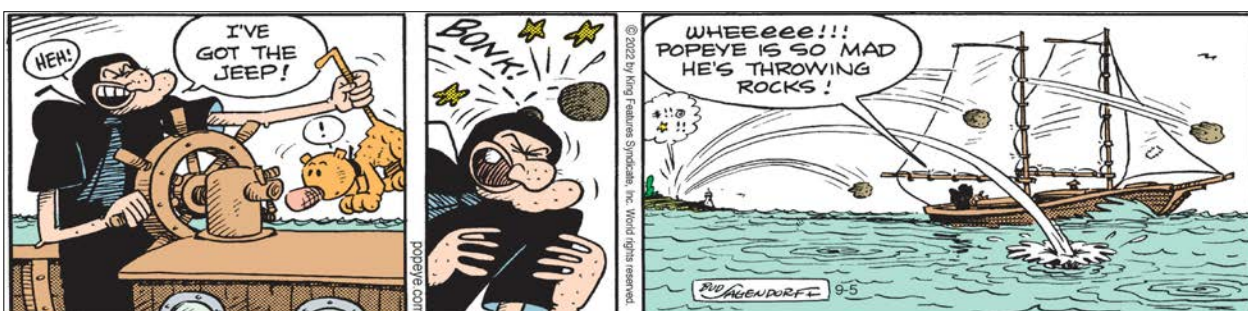
BLONDIE | Dean Young and John Marshall



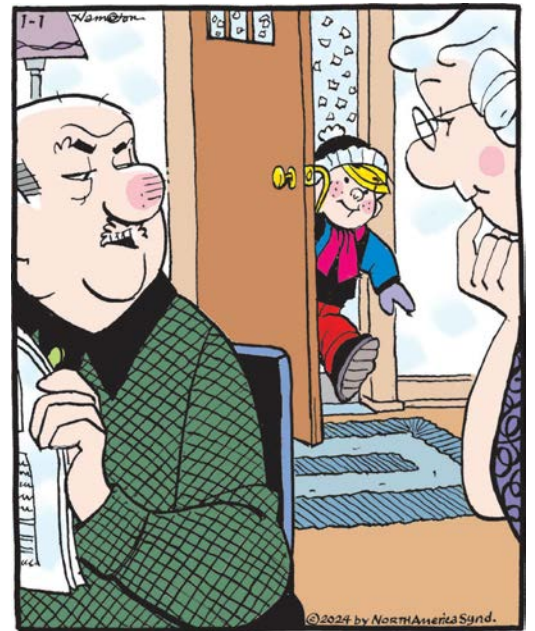
ANDY CAPP | Reg Smythe



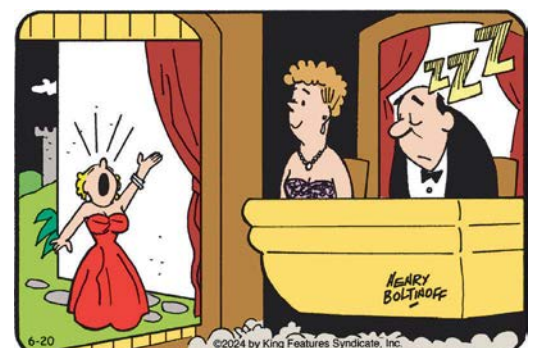
POPEYE | Bud Sagendorf



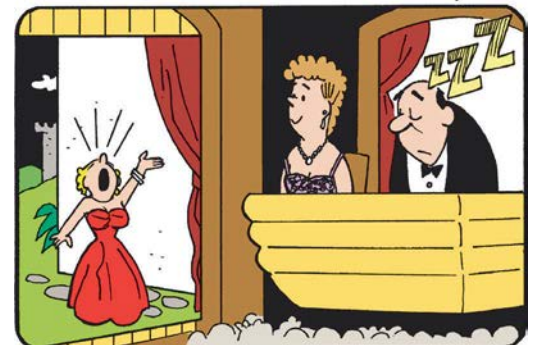
Dennis the Menace



hocus focus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Balcony is different. 2. Hand is moved. 3. Curtain is missing. 4. Woman's hair is longer. 5. Back of chair is missing. 6. Shoulder straps are added to dress.

jumble

PTNUI
NHOMT
LAGIEO
VSCNAA

As we can see, the Canyon Diablo Meteorite left a crater 3,900 feet in diameter and 560 feet deep. And to think, it was 50,000 years ago! How could that little meteorite create such a big hole?

THE METEORITE THAT CREATED THE HUGE CRATER EAST OF FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA MADE A...

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Yesterday's Jumbles: DROOP THANK EYELID CASINO
Answer: Someone had to be in charge of making weapon tips, so he was chosen to — SPEARHEAD IT

