



# sunday pioneer

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**Women's safety gov't's top priority; we made strict laws: PM**

**Banking sector must CONTINUE to innovate: FM**



**Dr Alagu Varshini: PERSEVERANCE in Action**



**QUOTE OF THE DAY**  
The pioneer

**The Centre is delaying the 33% Women's Reservation Bill's execution despite its passage in Parliament in 2023. This delay is politically affecting women across the country, as seen in the recent elections in Maharashtra, Delhi and Haryana, where many women lost out on legislative positions due to the lack of reservation. If the Census is speeded up, more women could secure seats in the upcoming elections in states like Bihar and Tamil Nadu**



**- Kalvakuntla Kavitha, BRS MLC**

**DON'T MISS...**

**Heart transplant performed in NIMS**

In a significant medical achievement, doctors at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) have successfully performed a heart transplant on a 19-year-old patient suffering from severe cardiac disease. The surgery was carried out free of cost under the Arogyasri scheme, and the patient is now recovering. Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha congratulated the team of doctors for their expertise and thanked the donor's family for their generosity. The transplant ...

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**Three die as car plunges into canal**

In a heart-wrenching incident, three members of a family lost their lives when their car plunged into the SRSP canal at Teegarajupalli village, Warangal district, on Saturday. The victims included 30-year-old Praveen, his five-year-old daughter Chaitrasai, and 2-year-old son Sai Varadhan. Praveen, a LIC Development Officer from Hanamkonda, was travelling with his wife, Krishnaveni, and their two children to their native village, Mecharajupalli in the Mahabubabad district. After ...

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**Delhi govt allocates Rs 5,100 cr for MSY**

The BJP government in Delhi approved the Mahila Samridhi Yojana on Saturday to provide a monthly assistance of Rs 2,500 each to women from poor families in the city and allocated Rs 5,100 crore for the scheme. Addressing a party programme on International Women's Day at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here, BJP president J P Nadda said the Delhi Cabinet has approved an allocation of Rs 5,100 crore for implementing the Mahila Samridhi Yojana and congratulated Chief Minister Rekha Gupta for it...

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**GTRI: Withdraw from all talks with US**

India should withdraw from all negotiations with the US and prepare to engage with the Trump administration in the same way as countries like China and Canada are doing, economic think tank GTRI said on Saturday. The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Founder, Ajay Srivastava said the US is exerting heavy pressure on India to accept trade demands that largely favour American interests. US President Donald Trump and his officials have criticized India mostly by using incorrect data, he said. "Trump is insulting India publicly using wrong data. No balanced outcome is possible in such circumstances. India should withdraw from all negotiations and prepare to deal with them like other countries are doing." Srivastava said...

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## Chandra eclipse gone, good days back, says CM Revanth

**Asserts 33% of women would become MLAs during next elections**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that 'Chandra Grahan' (Lunar Eclipse) has gone into the State and good days have come. The CM said that former CM KCR did not give minister posts in his first term. However, the Congress made Surekha and Seethakka Ministers. The CM said that 33 per cent of women candidates would become MLAs in the next elections. The Congress would give tickets to talented women attending here and make them MLAs, the CM said.

He said that with the inspiration of Rani Rudrama Devi and Chakali Iamma, the women's community displayed their competence on Women's Day on Saturday.

The CM said that the women's groups showed their self-respect in the state capital. "Our women's groups are witnessing a bright future by getting rid of dark days," the CM said.

The CM said the state will develop economically only when women's self-help groups are strengthened. The state's economy will reach one trillion dollars only when one crore women are made millionaires. Entrust the manage-



CM Revanth Reddy addressing the Indira Mahila Shakti public meeting at Parade Grounds on Saturday

**A matter of honour for TG: CM**

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasised that naming Telangana's first women's university after Veeranari Chakali Iamma

is a matter of honour for the state.

Addressing students at the university, he called upon them to strive for excellence, stating that the institution should compete with international universities and produce women leaders who can turn Rajiv Gandhi's dreams into reality.

The Chief Minister asked officials to ensure that all construction work at the university is completed within two-and-a-half years and assured that funds will not be a constraint.

**Continued on Page 2**

ment of government schools to women's groups, the CM said.

Chief Minister Revanth attended the 'Indira Mahila Shakti' program at the Secunderabad Parade Grounds on Saturday.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy released "Indira Mahila Shakti Mission-2025 policy" at the mammoth meeting with women's self-help groups.

The CM said that he is handing over solar power generation plants to women to turn them into entrepreneurs. We have also prepared an action plan to make women compete with Adani and Ambani, he said.

The CM said that he made women groups owners of TSRTC buses. The government helped self-help groups to become entrepreneurs by renting out electric buses to the TGRTC. Women will become owners of 1,000 electric buses in the coming days, he said.

Rajiv Gandhi is credited with introducing women's quota in local bodies. Sonia Gandhi provided reservation for women in legislative Assemblies, he said. The CM said the government is moving forward to attain the goal of women's empowerment. **Continued on Page 2**



**TG TO CENTRE**

## Approve Kazipet Division, new railway lines

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Telangana has requested the Centre to approve the long-pending demand for the Kazipet Railway Division and sanction new railway lines in the state.

Roads, Buildings and Cinematography Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Ministers Konda Surekha and Seethakka, and Congress MPs Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy and Dr Kadiyam Kavya met Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw at the RGI Airport on Saturday.

After the meeting, Venkat told the media that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had asked the delegation to raise the issue of railway projects with the Centre. He said they had urged the Minister to not only approve new railway lines but also ensure that these are fully funded by the Railways.

The delegation also requested the

Centre to speed up work on the railway coach manufacturing unit in Kazipet. Highlighting the strategic importance of the Kazipet Railway Division, Venkat said that Warangal, Telangana's second-largest city, would benefit from the project.

He pointed out that the Centre had recently established the South Coast Railway Zone with headquarters in Visakhapatnam, leaving only three zones under the South Central Railway, that is, Secunderabad, Hyderabad and Nanded.

The delegation told the Union Minister the need for creating the Kazipet Division to improve railway operations, maintenance and freight transport. He added that Kazipet, with its high passenger traffic and freight movement, generates more revenue than Guntur and Hyderabad divisions, making it a viable choice for an independent division.



## Sridhar, Vaishnav lay foundation stone for industrial projects

**bPNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Information Technology Minister D. Sridhar Babu and the Union Minister for Railways, I&B and Electronics & IT, Ashwini Vaishnav, laid the foundation stone for four major industrial projects at Divitipalli in Mahbubnagar on Friday. The investment in these four projects is Rs 3,225 crore.

The projects are Amara Raja GigaFactory-1, Altmin Pvt. Ltd, Lohum Materials Pvt Ltd, and Scell Energy Pvt Ltd.

Amara Raja Advanced Cell Technologies Pvt Ltd plans to invest Rs 9,852 crore in the next 10 years in its production facility spread over 262 acres creating 4,500 direct jobs. Two units are already under construction, and the third unit, costing Rs 1,900 crore, has now been launched.

Altmin Pvt Ltd is setting up a Rs 800 crore Lithium Ferro Phosphate (LFP) battery plant on 20 acres creating 300 jobs.

Lohum Materials Pvt Ltd is

investing Rs 502 crores in a waste processing facility on 20 acres. It is designed to handle 1.25 million tonnes of waste annually and employs 120 people.

Scell Energy Pvt Ltd is building a Rs 23 crore plant on six acres to manufacture steel cans and caps for lithium-ion cells. This project will create 150 jobs.

Sridhar reaffirmed Telangana's commitment to supporting investors and thanked the companies for their confidence in Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's leadership. He requested the Union Government to support Telangana's industrial growth, particularly in semiconductor manufacturing.

The Telangana Government has introduced policies like the Telangana Electric Vehicle & Energy Storage Policy and the Telangana Clean & Green Energy Policy to boost industrial expansion.

He also thanked farmers who contributed land for the Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) in Divitipalli.

## BRS demands timeline for implementing promises

**bPNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Senior BRS MLA Harish Rao lashed out at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and the Congress Government, accusing them of failing the women of Telangana despite grand promises.

Addressing a press conference, he ridiculed the government's claim of making women millionaires, stating that in reality, all they received was betrayal and financial problems. Harish demanded that the Congress Government should announce clear dates for fulfilling their promises at Saturday's Indira Mahila Shakti event at the

Secunderabad Parade Grounds. "If the Congress respects women, let them announce when they will deliver their promises. Otherwise, Revanth should apologise to TG women for deceiving them," he declared.

Harish pointed out that the Congress had promised Rs 1 lakh crore interest-free loans for women over five years at Rs. 20,000 crore annually, but even pending loans worth Rs 5,000 crore remain unpaid. "If they can't

clear existing dues, how will they provide new loans amounting to Rs 1 lakh crore?" he asked.

Accusing the Congress of using Women's Day celebrations as a distraction, he said, "Revanth should first explain what his government has done for women in the last 18 months before celebrating."

Harish demanded to know when the Rs 37,500 due to each woman under the Mahalakshmi Scheme would be paid. "Revanth's words may cross fortresses, but his

actions don't even cross the doorstep," he mocked. Harish slammed the Congress for stopping KCR's welfare programmes for women and for listing key schemes that were discontinued under the Indira Rajyam government.

KCR kit discontinued, KCR nutrition kit halted, Bathukamma sarees stopped, Arogya Lakshmi scheme shut down, Arogya Mahila neglected, pension hikes frozen and price hikes have worsened women's struggles. The crime rate against women has increased and job notifications are getting delayed, crushing the dreams of young women.

## Today is testing day for TG Cong To finalise candidates for MLA quota MLC polls

**KOLISHETTY VENKATESHWARLU**  
venkat.k.warlu@gmail.com  
■ HYDERABAD

Cricket lovers have been waiting for the Champions Trophy final match between India and New Zealand on Sunday in Dubai. However, Congress leaders have been waiting for the list of MLA quota MLC tickets.

The Champions Trophy and the selection of candidates for MLA quota MLC tickets are taking place on Sunday. The Champions Trophy match will be held in Dubai. The selection of Congress candidates is taking place over phone as AICC general secretary KC Venugopal is not available in Delhi.

So Sunday is a testing day for the Telangana Congress as it has to finalise candidates for MLA quota MLC elections. The filing of nominations is ending on March 10, that is, on Monday and so the party has to finalise candidates on Sunday. **Continued on Page 2**

## Vem, Azhar, Addanki and Motha may get seats

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Delhi corridors predicted four names for MLA quota MLC seats. The names are Mohd. Azharuddin (Minority), Vem Narendra Reddy (Reddy), Addanki Dayakar (Dalit), Motha Rohith Mudiraj (OBC).

In case, if this prediction becomes true then one can say that the Congress followed caste equations. Here, the surprise name is Mohd. Azharuddin. No one expected Mohd. Azharuddin's name as the party had already given him an MLC ticket for a minority institution named Amer Alikhan in the Governor's quota.

## Trump says India agreed to cut tariffs way down

**PNS ■ NEW YORK**

US President Donald Trump said India has agreed to cut its tariffs "way down" as he reiterated his claim that the country charges America massive tariffs that make it difficult to sell products there.

"Our country, from an economic standpoint and financial standpoint and a trade standpoint, has been absolutely ripped off by almost every country in the world," Trump said in remarks from the Oval Office on Friday.

"Canada, Mexico and then you just go right down the line. India charges us massive tariffs, massive, you can't even sell anything into India. It's almost, it's almost restrictive. It is restrictive. We do very little business inside," he said.

"They've agreed, by the way, they want **Continued on Page 2**



## 'Sand to be sold through agricultural markets'

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu directed officials to ensure the availability of sand for the public by making it available in agricultural markets across the state.

He emphasised that similar arrangements should be made in all agricultural markets just as sand has been made available near the Outer Ring Road.

Chairing the Revenue Resource Mobilisation Subcommittee meeting at the Praja Bhavan on Saturday, Bhatti underscored the importance of sand and the mining sector in revenue generation. He asked officials to speed

up agreements with Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs) to streamline sand distribution.

Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy, Sridhar Babu and Jupally Krishna Rao who attended the meeting, stressed the need to plug revenue leakages and meet government-set financial targets. They urged officials to ensure that revenue projections for fiscal 2025-26 are both realistic and achievable.

The meeting also focused on environmental concerns, particularly the relocation of pollution-causing industries beyond the Outer Ring Road. Officials were directed to speed up **Continued on Page 2**

**OBTUSE ANGLE**



## Robotic tech being used to speed up rescue ops at SLBC tunnel

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy announced that robotic technology is being used to speed up rescue operations at the SLBC tunnel near Domalapenta in Nagarkurnool district, where eight workers are trapped.

Describing the incident as a national disaster, he emphasised that the state government is making use of the best available global technology to navigate the final stretch of the 14-km-long tunnel and overcome critical challenges.

Accompanied by Achampet MLA Chikkudu Vamsi Krishna, Uttam visited the site on Saturday and conduct-

ed a review with senior officials from national agencies, including State Disaster Management Secretary Arvind Kumar and Army Commandant Parikshit Mehra, who are overseeing the rescue operations.

The review was attended by Collector Badavath Santosh, SP Vaibhav Gaikwad



Raghunath, Military Engineer Vikas Singh, NDRF Commandant Prasanna Kumar, SDRF Commandant Prabhakar and senior officials from SCCL, Railways, NGRI and HYDRRA.

Speaking to the media, Uttam said that India has never witnessed a tunnel accident of this magnitude. He said that rescue teams had advanced up to 13.95 km inside the tunnel, but the final 50 meters is highly unstable due to oxygen depletion, excessive water seepage, and metal debris from the collapsed Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM).

He said that cadaver dogs from Kerala had detected a strong odour at a specific location, indicating the possible presence of three individuals.

# Revanth's Delhi Trips: Walking KCR's Path to Isolation?

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's frequent trips to Delhi have sparked comparisons to the final stretch of Ex CM KCR's tenure. The striking resemblance has not gone unnoticed, with journalists and political circles murmuring about how the CM appears more accessible to the national leaders and media than to his own state. His engagements now seem exclusively reserved for Delhi, raising eyebrows and fueling speculation about his priorities. A senior journalist, clearly unimpressed, remarked, "We all saw what happened to the last Chief Minister who chose to take the Delhi route." The reference to KCR's fall after his repeated attempts to become national leader is hard to miss. If Revanth Reddy continues down the same path - prioritizing Delhi over Telangana - many believe he might end up facing a similar fate sooner rather than later. Political history in the state has shown that Chief Ministers who lose touch with their backyard often pay the price, and murmurs suggest that Revanth is already treading dangerously close to that territory.

## Kishan Reddy's Plea: 'Don't Ask About CM's Criticism'

Telangana BJP president and Union Minister for Coal and Mines Kishan Reddy found himself in an awkward spot on Saturday when he practically begged reporters not to question him about Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's criticism of the BJP. In a rare moment of appeal, Kishan Reddy requested the media to avoid posing queries on the CM's remarks, particularly those concerning delimitation. "There is no truth in Revanth Reddy's criticism, so I should not have to answer such questions," he insisted, sidestepping the issue altogether. Instead, he took a swipe at both Telangana CM Revanth Reddy and Tamil Nadu CM Stalin, alleging that neither leader was working for the welfare of the people and was instead stirring up baseless controversies. "I am requesting my media friends with love - not to ask me about the CM's criticism. Congress has nothing to teach us about Telangana's interests," he said, making it clear that he wasn't in the mood for tough questions. While Kishan Reddy may have hoped to shut down the debate, his plea only fueled curiosity, leaving many wondering why BJP's state chief was so reluctant to counter the CM's remarks head-on.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has taken serious note of Narasaraopet MLA Chadalavada Aravind Babu's disruptive antics at the State Excise Commissioner's office. The MLA landed himself in controversy after a video surfaced showing him aggressively pressuring Excise Commissioner Nishant Kumar to remove ten contract employees and replace them with his own picks. The drama unfolded when Aravind Babu stormed into the commissioner's office, demanding immediate appointment orders within an hour. Without waiting for a response, he left, only to return two hours later and find the commissioner absent. What followed was nothing short of a spectacle - furious over being made to wait, the MLA staged a sit-in, even bringing pillows and lying on the floor, refusing to budge for nearly three hours. Despite attempts from senior TDP leaders, including state president Palla Srinivasa Rao, and top officials to defuse the situation, Aravind Babu remained adamant. He finally left only after assurances that his demand would be reviewed. However, the incident, which quickly went viral on social media, caught the attention of Naidu, who wasted no time in summoning the MLA for an explanation and issuing a reprimand over his behavior. The episode has left TDP leadership red-faced, with many within the party privately questioning the MLA's aggressive tactics and the potential embarrassment it brings at a time when the party is trying to project a disciplined image.

## Bhatti's Meeting, Media Left in the Lurch!

At the all-party MPs' meeting chaired by Bhatti Vikramarka, the media faced an unexpected snub. Journalists who arrived at Praja Bhavan for coverage were denied entry, leaving them stranded outside for hours. Despite their repeated attempts, there was no response from the organisers, forcing them to wait on the road under the scorching sun. As the heat became unbearable, the journalists found refuge in the nearby residence of Seethakka, who, upon learning about their plight, arranged food for them. Interestingly, when Bhatti finally addressed the press, most journalists chose to skip it, making it clear that they weren't amused by the cold shoulder they had received earlier. However, Bhatti seemed unbothered by their absence, adding another layer to the already brewing discontent.

## Women Leaders in Demand, But Not All Play Along

On International Women's Day, women politicians are in high demand, gracing events and making the most of the attention. Some see it as an opportunity, while others quietly step aside. Minister Seethakka, much like during Bathukamma, is once again in the spotlight, attending multiple programs and ensuring visibility. But what remains a mystery is why Minister Konda Surekha is unable to capitalize on such occasions despite her stature. On the other end of the spectrum is BRS MLC Kavitha, who has taken a starkly different approach. Unlike many, she stopped giving Women's Day interviews nearly a decade ago, believing that women's voices shouldn't be restricted to just one day. Women's voice matters every day, and inclusivity in discourse strengthens democracy, is her line of reasoning. Many journalists who reached out for interviews were left disappointed, as she simply wouldn't entertain the idea. However, for the sake of appearances, Kavitha did manage to attend a small celebration at Telangana Bhavan. One thing is clear - when it comes to Women's Day, not every woman leader is playing by the same rulebook.

## BJP's Prediction: 'Congress Will Be Empty in Six Months'

Bharatiya Janata Legislature Party (BJLP) leader Alleti Maheshwar Reddy has been relentless in his attacks on the Congress and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, but his sharp criticism has also sparked speculation about his own political future. While Congress leaders mock him for lacking a proper position even within the BJP state office, Maheshwar Reddy continues to go all out against his former party, raising serious allegations against the Congress government. Interestingly, sources suggest that Maheshwar Reddy regrets his decision to quit Congress and join the BJP. However, a senior Congress leader dismissed any possibility of his return, quipping that Maheshwar Reddy's aggressive stance against the party was nothing more than an attempt to gain attention, hoping for an invitation back into the fold. In a recent chat with journalists, Maheshwar Reddy stirred controversy when he pointed out that the Adilabad district lacks ministerial representation. A journalist playfully suggested that Congress would be happy to offer him a ministerial post if he rejoined the party. Without missing a beat, Maheshwar Reddy shot back, "Congress will be empty in six months. Why would I even think of joining?" While his statement has raised eyebrows, Congress leaders are brushing it off, maintaining that Maheshwar Reddy is only trying to stay relevant. Whether his prediction holds any truth or is just wishful thinking remains to be seen, but his words have certainly added more fuel to the ongoing political chatter.

## Naidu Pulls Up MLA Over Excise Office Drama

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief and

## Jagan Slams Budget, Mocks Pawan's Oppn Status Remark

YSRCP chief and former chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy took a dig at the Andhra Pradesh government's 2025-26 budget, claiming it failed to live up to the grand promises made during the elections. In a two-hour-long media interaction, Jagan dissected the budget allocations, arguing that the numbers on paper do not match the assurances given to the people. However, the real fireworks began when a journalist brought up Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's recent comment about the status of the Leader of the Opposition. Pawan had quipped that if YSRCP wanted opposition status based on its 40% vote share, they should try their luck in Germany, where such provisions exist. The remark, intended as a jibe, sparked a sharp reaction from Jagan, who wasted no time in ridiculing Pawan's political stature. "Corporator ki ekkuva - MLA ki takkuvu. Jeevithamlo okkasari MLA iyadu," Jagan remarked sarcastically, implying that Pawan is politically insignificant—more than a corporator but still falling short of an MLA, given that he has only held the position once. The comment quickly set social media on fire, further fueling the ongoing rivalry between the two leaders. Meanwhile, JSP leaders didn't take the insult lightly and swung into action, filing cases against Jagan for his remarks on Pawan Kalyan. With tensions escalating, it's clear that the war of words between the two political heavyweights is far from over.

(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate, Dr Kolihshetty Venkateshwarulu, C Pradeep Kumar)

# AIMIM attends MPs meeting, BJP skips

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AIMIM MPs attended the meeting of MPs called by the Congress admin as the BJP skipped it. Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu emphasised that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with himself, ministers, and senior officials, has consistently pressed the Centre for approvals and funds for pending projects. Yet the response is inadequate.

Addressing MPs at the Praja Bhavan, Bhatti stated that despite multiple representations at various platforms, including directly to Prime

Minister Modi and Union Cabinet Ministers - several long-pending promises remain unresolved.

These include projects like the Bayyaram Steel Plant, Warangal Railway Coach Factory, Regional Ring Road, Warangal Textile Park, and Navodaya Schools. He reiterated that these issues have been raised repeatedly but have not reached a logical conclusion.

Bhatti stressed the meeting was convened purely in Telangana's interest, beyond political affiliations, and CM Revanth Reddy was determined to ensure the state gets its due share.

He noted that invitations had been sent to MPs belonging to the Congress, AIMIM, BRS and BJP, and while some had cited reasons for their absence, Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy communicated through a letter stating that the intimation was given on short notice.

Bhatti criticised the Centre's failure to clear decade-old pending financial dues, highlighting that both the Union government and the Andhra Pradesh government owe substantial amounts to Telangana. He stressed that only a united front of MPs, cutting across party lines, could put pressure on the Centre.



## Centre did not give funds during BRS rule: Kiran

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress's Bhongir MP, Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, said the Centre did not give funds to the BRS Government due to its bad relations with the Centre.

He said that the Congress Government is facing criticism due to former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's mistakes.

"We are going to New Delhi because of the deeds you have done. Which government had kept contractors' bills pending? Does anyone take loans with 12 per cent interest? But the BRS government took loans at 12 per cent interest," he said.

He said the Congress Government has been waiting for KCR's arrival in the Assembly and that KCR must explain what he did with the loans of Rs 7 lakh crore.

KCR has been criticising the Congress Government based on assumptions. People have full freedom to meet Ministers of the peoples' government, he said. "We are not preventing anyone from meeting ministers like the BRS government," he said.

# Revanth, Stalin speaking utter lies, says Kishan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP President Union Minister of Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy said that not even a single LS seat will be cancelled in Telangana or South India. The number of LS seats will not be reduced even if the population decreases, he added.

"The CMs of Telangana and Tamil Nadu, Revanth Reddy and Stalin, are speaking utter lies. Stalin did 'nothing' for Tamil. Is the BJP forcing anyone to learn Hindi? The BJP wants the education up to the upper primary stage to be in the mother tongue. Stalin's family looted Tamil Nadu. Assembly elections are coming



Telangana BJP president and Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy addressing the media on Saturday at State BJP office

and so Stalin is raking up delimitation and Hindi. Both Stalin and Revanth have done nothing for their states. The BJP has no need to learn from Stalin and Revanth. The politics of Revanth and Stalin is bankruptcy politics," Kishan said.

He said that he had dis-

cussed with the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, about the Regional Ring Road (RRR). A tripartite agreement has to be reached regarding finance, Kishan said. He said that he had appealed to Gadkari to complete the project as soon as possible.

## 'Don't go close to India-Pak border' US issues advisory

PNS ■ NEW YORK

WASHINGTON New York/Washington, Mar 8 (PTI) The US has issued an advisory cautioning against travel to the immediate vicinity of the India-Pakistan border and the Line of Control due to terrorism and the potential for armed conflict.

The US State Department issued the travel advisory on Friday. The advisory states that people should "reconsider travel to Pakistan due to terrorism and the potential for armed conflict."

The travel advisory asks Americans to not travel to Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which include the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), due to terrorism.

It also cautions against travel to the immediate vicinity of the India-Pakistan border and the Line of Control due to terrorism and the potential for armed conflict. Violent extremist groups continue to plot attacks in Pakistan. Terrorist attacks are frequent in Balochistan province and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which include the former FATA.

## Concentrate on South Telangana too, says Sunil Bansal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana BJP in-charge, Sunil Bansal, directed party activists not to stop with the victory of MLC seats in North Telangana and asked them to win the hundreds of ZPTCs and MPTCs in North Telangana.

He also directed BJP leaders to display the party's strength even in South Telangana districts like Nalgonda, Mahbubnagar and

Rangareddy. Sunil had a meeting with senior BJP leaders on Saturday at the state BJP office.

He asked BJP leaders to leave aside differences and work unitedly as per the strategies applied during the Parliament and MLC elections. He said the Congress and the BRS may conspire to stop the BJP as the people are supporting the BJP massively.

Sunil said that BJP leaders should abide by the decision

whatever it may be regarding the one nation one election move. Moreover, BJP leaders have to take the decision taken by the party to the people, he said.

He said that Telangana people are ready to support the BJP, however, leaders are failing to reach the people. He directed the leaders to mingle with people and solve their problems. No one can become a leader if they fail to be with the people, he said.

## Kavitha: Implement Women's Reservation Bill

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MLC Kavitha has demanded the immediate implementation of the Women's Reservation Bill without linking it to the census.

Speaking at the International Women's Day celebrations at Telangana Bhavan, she criticised the Centre for delaying the Bill's execution despite its passage in Parliament in 2023.

She warned that this delay is politically 'harming' women across the country, as seen in the recent elections in Maharashtra, Delhi and Haryana, where many women lost legislative posts due to lack of reservation. She stressed



that if the census is speeded up, more women could secure seats in the upcoming elections in Bihar and Tamil Nadu.

Kavitha also lashed out at the TG Congress Government, reminding them of their poll promise to pay Rs 2,500 per month to women. She declared

that the BRS would relentlessly pursue the Congress Government until this promise is fulfilled.

Accusing the Congress of neglecting women's welfare, she slammed them for failing to increase the wages of Anganwadi and ASHA workers.

## Trump says...

Continued from page 1  
to cut their tariffs way down now because somebody's finally exposing them for what they've done. And the same thing with China, same thing with a lot of other countries, and the EU has been a terrible abuser

of this country," Trump added.

Trump's comments came following Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's visit to the US for trade talks with his counterpart Howard Lutnick. This was the third time this week that Trump has criticised the high tariffs charged by India.

On Thursday, Trump said India is a very high-tariff nation and reiterated that rec-

iprocal tariffs on countries that impose levies on American goods will kick in on April 2.

In his address to the joint session of Congress on Tuesday, the first of his second term in the White House, Trump criticised the high tariffs charged by India and other countries and termed them as "very unfair".

## Sand to be ...

Continued from page 1

the execution of this decision, which had been taken earlier, to control air pollution in Hyderabad.

The Ministers instructed Principal Secretaries and Secretaries of all departments to review the progress in implementing decisions made at Cabinet Sub-Committee meetings every month and submit detailed reports every three months.

Bhatti pointed out that Telangana is implementing large-scale social welfare programmes, making it imperative to explore additional revenue-generating avenues without compromising public welfare.

He directed senior officials to closely monitor and follow up key issues concerning the Chief Minister and Ministers and urged them to take proactive steps to present these matters before the cabinet for swift resolution.

The meeting was attended by Special Chief Secretary Ramakrishna Rao, Mines Principal Secretary Sridhar, Revenue and Excise Principal Secretary SMA Rizvi, Transport Commissioner Surendra Mohan, Registration Commissioner Buddha Prakash Jyoti, Industries Commissioner Vishnuvardhan, Housing MD Gautam, Commercial Taxes Commissioner Haritha, and other senior officials.

## A matter of ...

Continued from page 1

The Chief Minister asserted that a time will come when women will be granted 33% reservation of seats during elections, and he expressed the hope that students from this university will be among those representing women in governance. He stressed that whenever women are given opportunities they prove their dedication and emerge as role models.

Revanth described it as a privilege for students to be part of this university, stating that the government is committed to their empowerment. He reiterated the government's free bus travel scheme for women, calling it a step towards ensuring mobility for female students.

The government, he added, has also encouraged Self-Help Groups (SHGs) by entrusting them with school management responsibilities, reinforcing its commitment to women's financial and social empowerment.

Rejecting the notion that women should be confined to household duties, he declared the government is actively supporting them to become entrepreneurs. He asserted that women from Telangana will compete in business with giant corporate groups like Adani and Ambani, and the state is working on policies to facilitate their rise in business.

He concluded by reminding the students that their responsibility is to excel in academics and bring honour to Telangana and India.

## Today is ...

Continued from page 1

The list of hopefuls is big and it is not that easy for the party to finalise. However, the party has to do justice to caste equations as per its new slogan 'Jithna Abadi Uthna Hak'. Due to non availability of KC Venugopal in Delhi on Sunday, the Telangana Congress leaders including Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, TPCC Chief B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy and AICC in-charge Meenakshi Natarajan's Delhi tour is cancelled, it is learnt.

The Congress did not make any official statement on whether it is going to give one seat each to the CPI and the AIMIM or not. However, the party has to finalise four names if it does not give seats to the CPI and the AIMIM. It is learnt that the Congress party is not giving tickets to neither CPI nor AIMIM.

In fact, the scrutiny of nominations would take place on March 11, and candidates can withdraw until March 13. Polling would be held on March 20 between 9 am and 4 pm, while counting would commence the same day at 5 pm. The election process would conclude by March 24.

The new faces would get tickets if the party followed its rule of not giving tickets to candidates who have contested. If not, the contested candidates would get tickets. However, the party has not yet announced guidelines for the selection of candidates for the MLA quota MLC tickets. So Sunday is going to become a super Sunday for Telangana.

## Chandra eclipse ...

Continued from page 1

He said the government would take the responsibility of construction of rice mills and godowns for women's groups in all mandals.

The government will teach a lesson to fraudsters managing rice mills. The Government will not provide land and soft loans to women's groups. Women's groups should construct godowns and become entrepreneurs, the CM said.

The CM said, "It is my responsibility to make one crore women millionaires and 9 lakh crorepatas. Indira Mahila Shakti will be a role model allow the entire world. Women should move forward with 'Revanth Anna's inspiration, Indiramma's power and NTR's commitment'."

Women should develop and compete with corporate companies and take forward the state on the development path," he said. The CM said that BRS leaders are making a hue and cry on tunnel collapse and withered crops. Opposition leaders are scolding me instead of giving suggestions to rescue people from the crisis. There is no record in history of those who enjoyed satanic pleasures growing up, he said.

The Chief Minister presented a cheque of Rs 22,794 crore 22 lakh (Rs 22,794,22,00,000) to women self-help groups (2,82,552 groups) under the Indira Mahila Shakti programme.

**TODAY**  
**ALMANAC**  
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha  
Tithi: Dashami: Mar 08 08:16 AM to Mar 09 07:45 AM  
Ekadashi: Mar 09 07:45 AM to Mar 10 07:44 AM  
Nakshatram: Punarvasu: Mar 08 11:28 PM to Mar 09 11:55 PM  
Pushya: Mar 09 11:55 PM to Mar 11 12:51 AM  
Rahukalam: 4:51 PM to 6:19 PM  
Yamagandam: 12:26 PM to 1:55 PM  
Varjyam: 07:49 PM to 09:15 PM  
Gulika: 3:24 PM to 4:52 PM  
Amritakalam: 09:28 PM to 11:06 PM  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:02 PM to 12:50 PM  
**HYDERABAD WEATHER**  
Forecast: Sunny  
Temp: 34°C  
Humidity: 53%  
Sunrise: 6:29 AM  
Sunset: 6:25 PM  
Updated: March 8, 2025 5:00 PM

# City Pioneer

sunday pioneer

HYDERABAD | SUNDAY | MARCH 9, 2025

03



## CITY EVENTS

### Run For Nourish

Feed The Hunger (3K, 5K, 10K)

#### Venue

People's Plaza  
9-Mar-25

### Workshop On Photography Basics

#### Venue

People's Plaza  
9-Mar-25

### Read-a-Kitaab Hyd Meetup

#### Venue

Road (2.5 km)  
9-Mar-25

### Live Musical Orchestra

By Rishi Musical Events

#### Venue

Sri Thyagaraja Gana Sabha  
9-Mar-25 (1 pm)

## TG seeks centre's help to provide 100 mobile vet clinics

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana has sought the Centre's help for schemes aimed at ensuring farmers' welfare.

A team led by Special Chief Secretary Sabyasachi Ghosh comprising the Director of Animal Husbandry, the Director of Fisheries and the Managing Director of Vijaya Dairy, met the Union Minister for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Dairy Development and Panchayat Raj, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, in Hyderabad on Saturday.

During the meeting, they apprised Rajiv of the department's programmes. Sabyasachi made a special request to the Union Minister to sanction 100 mobile veterinary clinics to the state. Highlighting the significance of the move, he emphasised that these clinics would provide veterinary services to farmers in remote areas ensuring better healthcare for their livestock.

Rajiv acknowledged the state's



Special Chief Secretary Sabyasachi Ghosh presenting bouquet to Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh in Delhi

efforts and suggested adopting the latest technologies to enhance the productivity of fish ponds. He also stressed the importance of bringing the workforce in the dairy and fisheries sectors into the organised sector to ensure their social and economic security. Appreciating Telangana's achievements, he hailed the state for securing two national awards in the sector.

The meeting underscored the state's commitment to improving animal husbandry and fisheries while seeking Central help to expand its schemes for farmers.

## NIMS doctors perform heart transplant successfully

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant medical achievement, doctors at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) have successfully performed a heart transplant on a 19-year-old patient suffering from severe cardiac disease. The surgery was carried out free of cost under the Aarogyasri scheme, and the patient is now recovering. Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha congratulated the team of doctors for their expertise and thanked the donor's family for their generosity.

The transplant was made possible after a 24-year-old accident victim, who was declared brain dead at a corporate hospital in Hyderabad, had his organs donated by his family. The donor's blood group matched that of the recipient, Pujari Anil Kumar from Katedan, Hyderabad, who had registered for a heart transplant under Jeevanandam at NIMS. Following the organ retrieval, the heart was swiftly transported to NIMS, where Dr. Amaresh Babu and his team of surgeons, nurses, and paramedical staff performed the transplant successfully.

Briefing Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha, NIMS Director Dr. Beerappa stated that the patient is recovering well post-surgery. He also highlighted the hospital's achievements in organ transplantation over the past year. In 2024 and 2025, NIMS has conducted 87 transplants, including 62 kidney, 5 liver, 3 heart, and 1 lung transplant. Notably, NIMS remains the only government hospital in India to have performed a simultaneous heart and lung transplant last year. Commending the doctors and hospital staff, Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha emphasised the need for continued post-operative care and medical support for transplant recipients. He assured that the government is committed to



expanding organ transplant services at NIMS by providing the necessary infrastructure and resources. He also announced that a state-of-the-art organ transplantation centre at Gandhi Hospital would be launched soon.

Recognising the selfless act of the donor's family, the Minister expressed deep appreciation for their decision to donate organs despite their immense grief. He urged people to come forward in cases of brain death and contribute to saving lives through organ donation.

He also called for greater awareness campaigns on the importance of organ donation and directed Jeevanandam in-charge Dr. Bhushan Raju to take up large-scale initiatives in this regard.

The Minister also issued a strict warning to private hospitals, stating that any malpractice in organ transplantation would face severe legal action. He further revealed that the government is introducing new regulations to curb illegal organ trade and transplantation, ensuring strict penalties for violations.

## Farmer's heart transported in Metro to transplant into businessman

A cadaver heart was successfully transported from Kamineni Hospital, LB Nagar, to Apollo Hospitals, Jubilee Hills, via a Green Corridor on Saturday night, ensuring a timely transplant for a critically ill patient. In a first-of-its-kind move, the heart was transported using the Hyderabad Metro Rail's Green Channel, cutting down crucial transit time. The donor, a 49-year-old farmer, suffered an intracranial bleed after suddenly collapsing at his home on March 3. His family made the noble

decision to donate his heart, giving a second chance at life to a 44-year-old businessman, who has been battling dilated cardiomyopathy with severe left ventricular dysfunction and heart failure. The heart retrieval process began at 8:04 pm from Kamineni Hospital, with the organ reaching Nagole Metro Station by 8:12 pm. The Metro journey to Jubilee Hills took just 23 minutes, with the heart arriving at Apollo Hospitals at 8:40 pm, ensuring life-saving efficiency in the transplant procedure.

## Health Minister inaugurates fertility center at Kondapur

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha inaugurated the Conceiva - Fertility centre in Kondapur, marking another addition to Hyderabad's growing reputation as a global medical hub.

Speaking on the occasion, he highlighted that the city, already known for its pharma, vaccine, and IT sectors, is now establishing itself as a leader in advanced healthcare services.

The Minister stated that Hyderabad is attracting patients from across India and abroad due to its world-class hospitals equipped with cutting-edge medical technology. He noted that the government's focus on medical tourism is further enhancing the city's global standing. He emphasised that alongside

strengthening government hospitals, the state is also encouraging private healthcare institutions that provide high-quality medical services.

Damodar Raja Narasimha announced that in addition to the existing IVF centres in the government sector, new IVF facilities will soon be launched in Warangal, Nizamabad, and Kondapur. He commended the Conceiva - Fertility management for establishing an advanced reproductive healthcare facility that will provide services to couples facing fertility challenges.

The event was attended by PCC Doctors' Cell President Dr. Sudhakar Yadav, Narsapur Congress Party In-Charge Avula Rajireddy, local corporator Ragam Nagender Yadav, and Conceiva-Fertility director Dr. Spurthi Chennamaneni.

## INBORN ERRORS OF IMMUNITY

### Speakers stress importance of early diagnosis, advanced treatments

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 7th International Conference on Inborn Errors of Immunity (ICIEI 2025) began on Saturday at ITC Kohenu, bringing together leading doctors, scientists, and researchers from around the world. The conference focuses on inborn errors of immunity (IEI)—rare genetic conditions that weaken the immune system, making individuals more vulnerable to infections and autoimmune diseases.

This year's theme, "Gene Discovery to Newer Therapies," highlights how genetic research is leading to better, more personalised treatments for immune disorders. The conference was inaugurated by Dr. Christina Z. Chongthu, Health Secretary, who emphasised the importance of early diagnosis and advanced treatments for



Christina Z. Chongthu, Health Secretary along with other members at a conference in Hyderabad on Saturday

these conditions.

Key speakers included Dr. Sudhir Gupta, Dr. Amita Aggarwal, Dr. Sagar Bhattad, Dr. Bheerappa, Dr. Murali Dharan Bhayam, and Dr. Liza Rajasekhar, who shared insights on the latest advancements in treating immune deficiencies. ICIEI 2025 features discussions on genetic control of the immune system, new diagnostic techniques, and cutting-edge treatments like gene editing

and immune system regulation. A key highlight is the Sudhir Gupta Oration by Dr. Luigi Notarangelo (NIH, USA), who discussed T-cell disorders and new research improving patient care.

The event is organised by the Foundation of Primary Immunodeficiency Disorders, USA, the Indian Society of Primary Immunodeficiency, and Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences.

## Minister for AI-driven skill development training for school students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Information Technology Minister D. Sridhar Babu has announced that government school students will receive skill development training with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI). He emphasised the government's commitment to improving the teaching skills of government school teachers in line with evolving technology.

On Saturday, at the State Secretariat, Telangana Film Development Corporation Chairman Dil Raju, along with Konam Foundation representatives led by Sandeep Kumar,



met the Minister.

During the meeting, Minister Sridhar Babu highlighted the state's proactive efforts to use emerging technologies in various sectors. He also announced plans to establish an "AI City" under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, which will include an AI

University following international standards.

The Minister appreciated the foundation's initiative to provide free AI-driven skill development training to government school students in Nalgonda district. He assured that efforts would be made to extend these services to all government schools in the state.

Later, Sridhar Babu also commended Sandeep Kumar for his dedication to social service, noting that despite his successful career abroad, he continues to support his hometown through the foundation's initiatives.

## 'City leads in women investors in crypto'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad leads in supporting women's participation in crypto investments, with the highest ratio of women investors at 45 per cent, according to the latest How India Invests report by CoinSwitch. Women now make up 11 per cent of its overall investor base. While this marks progress, there is still

room for more female engagement in digital assets. Crypto adoption is mainly driven by younger investors, with nearly 75 per cent under 35. However, women across age groups are increasingly showing interest. Hyderabad has the highest share of women investors, followed by Surat at 33 per cent and Botad at 25 per cent. Other cities like Pune

at 24 per cent, Jaipur at 23 per cent, and Kolkata at 22 per cent also show notable female participation. In major metro cities like Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai, women account for 20% of crypto investors. A global survey by BITmarkets Academy and Ipsos found that while 21 per cent of men own cryptocurrencies, only 11% of women do. However, 46

per cent of women expressed interest in digital assets, with 54% preferring professional education before investing. This rising participation highlights a shift toward financial empowerment. As blockchain education grows, more women view crypto as an investment option, emphasizing the need for greater inclusivity and accessibility in finance.

## City Police organise Run for Action-2025 celebrating International Women's Day

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad City Police organised Run for Action-2025 with 5,000 participants at Necklace Road People's Plaza on Friday to celebrate International Women's Day 2025.

Minister for Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, Rural Water Supply, Women and Child Welfare, Danasari Anasuya Seethakka, along with Hyderabad Police Commissioner CV Anand, flagged off the event, launching both the 5K and 2K runs.

Speaking at the event, the Minister expressed her joy in

being part of Run for Action-2025 and praised the Hyderabad City Police for organising an event that boosts women's confidence. She wished everyone a happy Women's Day and urged them to be mentally and physically strong. She emphasised that Women's Day promotes gender equality and recognised the Hyderabad Police's efforts in ensuring women's safety.

She noted that Hyderabad has become a hub for jobs and business, thanks to the police department's role in maintaining security. Addressing concerns about alcohol and



Minister Seethakka and Police Commissioner CV Anand flagging off Run for Action-2025 in city on Friday.

drug abuse, she urged society to stay away from intoxicants and pledged to work towards a drug-free community.

Meanwhile, Police Commissioner CV Anand highlighted that out of 20 DCPs in Hyderabad, eight are women. Additionally, 30 per cent of the city's 18,000 police personnel are women. To mark Women's Day, four women inspectors were appointed as Station House Officers for law and order and traffic police stations. Winners of the 5K and 2K runs received awards from the Police Commissioner.



## Women's Day celebrated Grandly in Telangana Gurukul Schools

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGSWREIS) celebrated International Women's Day with a series of inspiring sessions and cultural programs across its schools and colleges.

TGSWREIS Secretary Dr. Alagu Varshini conducted a Zoom meeting on Saturday, where distinguished speakers from various fields addressed the students, instilling confidence and motivation among them. The event focused on empowering girl students, teaching them how to overcome stress, achieve self-sufficiency, and understand their role and responsibilities in society.

Retired IAS officer Chaya Rachan, addressing the students, emphasised the importance of staying happy and maintaining a positive outlook. She advised students to always wear a smile and not dwell on what they might have lost. She highlighted that a cheerful demeanor not only keeps one's spirits high but also influences others positively. She encouraged the students to work hard towards self-sufficiency and avoid dependency on others.

Comparing Gurukul schools to government schools, she pointed out that the former provide significantly better facilities and resources. She urged students to utilise their time wisely, set clear goals, and plan their academic journey efficiently. She also stressed the importance of maintaining good health, suggesting that students start kitchen gardens at home to grow fresh vegetables and fruits, which would contribute to their overall well-being.

UPSC Chairman Dr. Surendra Spoke about the challenges she faced in preventing the establishment of an e-cigarette company in undivided Andhra Pradesh. She explained how she coordinated between policymakers and officials to halt the company's operations, thus preventing potential health hazards for many. She remarked that good decisions often come with difficulties but have long-term benefits for public welfare. She also expressed her pride in having played a key role in launching nationwide initiatives such as "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" and "Ayushman Bharat," emphasizing that great ideas emerge when one thinks about the well-being of the nation.

Dr. Srisha, MD (Medicine) at SVIMS Tirupati, shared her experiences of cracking the medical entrance exam without expensive coaching. She recalled her time studying at a Gurukul college and how, in those days, students relied solely on textbooks. She urged students to make full use of the digital resources, libraries, and study materials now available to them and advised them to remain disciplined and respect their teachers and parents.

TGSWREIS Secretary Dr. Alagu Varshini, addressing the students, stated that there are no external enemies in life; instead, individuals

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT DISTRICT COLLECTOR, JANGAON FORM - VII - DECLARATION (See Sub - rule (1) of rule -25 and Section -19(1) of the Act-30/2013)									
Re. No. B/22/2022 Date: 01.2025									
Dist. Coll. File No. G2/848/2023 Date: 27.01.2025									
Gazette No. JNL/AIS/2025 Date: 26-01-2025									
Where as it appears to the Government of Telangana / District Collector, Jangaon that a total land of an extent of Ac. 16.62 % gts land is required in the limits of Mutharam village of Palakurthy Mandal in Jangaon District for public purpose, namely acquisition of Excavation of 3R of TL Distributory of Nashik Main Canal under JCR DLP for providing water to Agriculture lands under the Government of Telangana, Collector, Jangaon District, as per L.A. Act-30/2013.									
Therefore the "DECLARATION" is hereby made that a piece of Land measuring more or less Ac. 16.62 % gts under acquisition for the above said project in the limits of Mutharam Village of Palakurthy Mandal in Jangaon District whose detailed description is as following under acquisition.									
SCHEDULE									
3R-7L-D of Nashik Main Canal									
Village: Mutharam; Mandal: Palakurthy; District: Jangaon									
Sl. No.	Sr. No.	Area of land (Ac. Gts)	Name of the Employer	Name of the Person named as per Section 19(1)	Area of land (Ac. Gts)	Sl. No.	Sr. No.	Area of land (Ac. Gts)	Name of the Employer
1	206	Patla	0.22	Bhuru Rama		1	206	0.22	Mutha Rama
2	206	Patla	0.0725	Bulay Sattamma w/o Dasu		2	206	0.0725	Bulay Sattamma w/o Dasu
3	206	Patla	0.115	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga		3	206	0.115	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga
4	206	Patla	0.085	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga		4	206	0.085	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga
5	206	Patla	0.32	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga		5	206	0.32	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga
6	206	Patla	0.23	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga		6	206	0.23	Kunaseethamma w/o Ganga
7	206	Patla	0.115	Bulay Venkanna S/o Parthulu		7	206	0.115	Bulay Venkanna S/o Parthulu
8	206	Patla	0.59	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		8	206	0.59	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
9	206	Patla	0.59	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		9	206	0.59	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
10	206	Patla	0.55	Bulay Venkanna S/o Parthulu		10	206	0.55	Bulay Venkanna S/o Parthulu
11	206	Patla	0.115	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		11	206	0.115	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
12	206	Patla	0.03	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		12	206	0.03	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
13	206	Patla	0.0525	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		13	206	0.0525	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
14	228	Patla	1.055	Kudavali Balaji w/o Rajan Rajan		14	228	1.055	Kudavali Balaji w/o Rajan Rajan
15	221	Patla	0.0675	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		15	221	0.0675	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
16	221	Patla	0.175	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		16	221	0.175	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
17	221	Patla	0.15	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		17	221	0.15	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
18	221	Patla	0.045	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		18	221	0.045	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
19	221	Patla	0.0025	Sri Sankararam Srinivasulu		19	221	0.0025	Sri Sankararam Srinivasulu
20	221	Patla	0.02	Sri Sankararam Srinivasulu		20	221	0.02	Sri Sankararam Srinivasulu
21	221	Patla	0.015	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		21	221	0.015	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
22	222	Patla	0.0625	Sri Sankararam Srinivasulu		22	222	0.0625	Sri Sankararam Srinivasulu
23	222	Patla	0.0275	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		23	222	0.0275	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
24	222	Patla	0.065	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		24	222	0.065	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
25	222	Patla	0.105	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		25	222	0.105	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
26	222	Patla	0.03	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		26	222	0.03	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
27	222	Patla	0.14	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		27	222	0.14	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
28	234	Patla	0.06	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya		28	234	0.06	Bulay Sattamma S/o Panya
29	223	Patla	0.085	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		29	223	0.085	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
30	223	Patla	0.085	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		30	223	0.085	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
31	223	Patla	0.085	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		31	223	0.085	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
32	223	Patla	0.065	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		32	223	0.065	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
33	223	Patla	0.045	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		33	223	0.045	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
34	224	Patla	0.13	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		34	224	0.13	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
35	224	Patla	0.18	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		35	224	0.18	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
36	225	Patla	0.14	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		36	225	0.14	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
37	225	Patla	0.075	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		37	225	0.075	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
38	225	Patla	0.12	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma		38	225	0.12	Manikayyamma S/o Manikayyamma
39	234	Patla	0.035	Gyana Venkanna S/o Somanna		39	234	0.035	Gyana Venkanna S/o Somanna
40	234	Patla	0.17	Gyana Venkanna S/o Somanna		40	234	0.17	Gyana Venkanna S/o Somanna
41	234	Patla	0.1725	Gyana Venkanna S/o Somanna		41	234	0.1725	Gyana Venkanna S/o Somanna



ACROSS THE STATES

Women's safety govt's top priority; we made strict laws: PM



All-women crew operates train in Jharkhand

All-women crew operated the Ranchi-Tori Passenger train in Jharkhand on the occasion of International Women's Day on Saturday, an official said.



TN CM announces hostels for working women

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin presented 100 pink autos to women beneficiaries on behalf of the state social welfare and women empowerment department at a function held at the Nehru Indoor stadium here on the occasion of International Women's Day.



Bajrang Dal storms college over Iftar party

Bajrang Dal workers on Saturday stormed the Rishikul Ayurvedic College here in protest against some Muslim students organising an Iftar party on the campus and inviting outsiders to it.

PNS ■ NAVSARI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his government has given topmost priority to women's safety and framed stricter laws and rules to prevent crimes against them.



International Women's Day, Modi said that India is walking on the path of women-led development for rapid progress of the country.

them, we have made stricter rules and laws," the PM said. "My government changed the law to introduce capital punishment for heinous crimes like rape," he said.

MAHILA SAMRIDHI YOJANA

Delhi govt allocates Rs 5,100 crore for scheme

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP government in Delhi approved the Mahila Samridhi Yojana on Saturday to provide a monthly assistance of Rs 2,500 each to women from poor families in the city and allocated Rs 5,100 crore for the scheme.

Addressing a party programme on International Women's Day at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium here, BJP president J P Nadda said the Delhi Cabinet has approved an allocation of Rs 5,100 crore for implementing the Mahila Samridhi Yojana and congratulated Chief Minister Rekha Gupta for it.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the programme, the chief minister said a committee headed by her has been formed to oversee the implementation of the scheme, with ministers Ashish Sood, Parvash Verma and Kapil Mishra being the other members of the panel.

The work to register the applicants under the scheme will start immediately through a portal and after intensive deliberations on the terms and conditions of the beneficiaries, she added.

Planned deadlocks not good for democratic values: LS Speaker

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Saturday said that consensus and disagreement are the strengths of democracy, and planned deadlocks in assemblies and Parliament are not good for democratic values.

Birla was addressing public representatives at the inaugural event of the 'Constitution Club of Rajasthan' here. The event was boycotted by Congress leaders, who said that the inauguration of the club had been done by the former Congress government and that the re-inauguration was a wrong tradition.

"Personal allegations and counter-allegations, as well as deliberately created deadlocks, are against the basic spirit of democracy," he said.

Dalits fight an uneven battle to reach out to God

PNS ■ KOLKATA / KATWA (PURBA BARDHAMAN)

Threatened, ostracised and pushed to the edge, a group of about 130 Dalit families in West Bengal's Purba Bardhaman district are pinning their final hopes on police and district administration to end a caste-based discriminatory tradition of three centuries and receive their Constitutionally-guaranteed right to worship their God.



The families at Daspara area of Gidhgram village, all having 'Das' surnames and belonging to the traditional community of cobblers and weavers, have allegedly been forced to stay away from the steps of Gidheswar Shiv temple, the only place of worship in the locality, by the shrine committee and other villagers on grounds that they belong to a "low caste", victims alleged.

February 26 and an on-paper truce agreement between the two opposing communities have failed to break ice. Indeed, the matter has escalated grassroots tensions, prompting the police and administration to allegedly "play safe" for now.

At their wits' end, victims at the receiving end of this discrimination now plan to take "the fight to

the end" and even seek legal recourse if the state administration fails to resolve the crisis.

The discriminatory practice almost unheard in modern Bengal and violative of Article 25 of the Constitution which guarantees equal freedom of citizens to worship as a fundamental right has reportedly been in vogue ever since the temple was founded some 300 years ago, locals claimed.

Recent interventions from police and administration in the presence of two MLAs to facilitate the entry of Das families to pray at the temple during Shivratri on

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT DISTRICT COLLECTOR, JANGAON FORM - VII :: DECLARATION

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana / District Collector, Jangaon that a total land of Ac. 10.1912 gts land is required in the limits of Segaram village of Zaffarabad Mandal in Jangaon District for public purpose, namely acquisition of Excavation of 1L-3L of 4L Distributory of Nashik Main Canal under JCR CLUP for providing water to Agriculture lands under the Government of Telangana, Collector, Jangaon District, as per LA, Act.30/2013.

SCHEDULE 1L-3L-4LD of Nashik Main Canal

Table with columns: Sl. No., S. No., Extent, Name of the Enjoyer, and Remarks. Lists various land parcels and their owners in the Segaram Mandal.

This declaration is made after hearing of objections of persons interested in 15 of the L.A. Act No.30/2013 after verification of objections this declaration is issued. The number of families likely to be resettled due to Land Acquisition is NIL.

now operational. "The newly-implemented Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which wiped out the colonial law, further strengthened provisions related to women's safety. A separate chapter has been added in it to address crimes against women and children in new criminal laws," he said.

making it easier for the police to take immediate action. Under the provision of zero FIR, any woman can file an FIR at any police station if she faces atrocities, the prime minister said.

a gang-rape case in Surat within 15 days of the incident and the culprits were sentenced to life imprisonment within a few weeks. Modi said blessings of women were his greatest strength and protective shield. "I am the wealthiest person in the world. My statement will raise hackles of some listeners. But I will reiterate that I am the wealthiest person in the world -- not in terms of money, but because of the blessings from crores of mothers, sisters and daughters. These blessings are my greatest strength, capital, and protective shield," Modi said.

Large table containing land acquisition details for Waramgal District, including Form-VI, SCHEDULE, and various land parcels with their owners and extents.



# The Power of HER Plates

Celebrating the women in food, shaping flavours, traditions, and the future of cooking with passion, says **TEAM AGENDA**

## CHEF MANSI'S CULINARY JOURNEY



Hailing from Lucknow, the cultural heart of Awadh, Mansi Kapoor grew up surrounded by a rich culinary heritage where diverse communities contributed unique flavours and traditions. Coming from the UP Khatri community, traditionally strict vegetarians who exclude even onions and garlic, she was raised with a deep respect for food. However, the influence of close friends and a shared love for cooking led her family to embrace a more diverse range of culinary experiences, broadening their appreciation for flavours beyond their own traditions. Her passion for food is deeply rooted in her family's love for hospitality. She learned to cook alongside the women in her household, who instilled in her the belief that cooking is not just about following recipes but about pouring one's heart into every dish. Whether preparing a simple dal or an elaborate zafrani biryani, she believes that good food requires patience, care and attention to detail. As a home chef, Mansi remains committed to personally preparing every dish she serves, following

traditional recipes without compromise. She strongly believes in the philosophy of "sahaj pake so meetha hoye", meaning slow-cooked food is the most flavourful, embracing a methodical and mindful approach to cooking. By using fresh, seasonal and local ingredients, she ensures that every meal she prepares is not just nourishing but also a sensory delight. Her culinary talents have been widely recognised at food festivals and her Awadhi tables, hosted at her home, have received high praise from renowned connoisseurs. Mansi's dedication to preserving and celebrating authentic flavours makes her a true ambassador of Awadhi cuisine.

### ZAFRANI PHIRNI

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 litre full-cream milk
- 60g basmati rice
- 150g granulated sugar
- A pinch of saffron
- ½ tsp cardamom powder
- 1 tsp kewra water (optional)
- 10 almonds, blanched and finely chopped
- 10 pistachios, sliced
- Rose petals for garnish (optional)

#### METHOD:

- Wash and soak the rice for about 30 minutes. Drain and grind it into a semi-coarse paste.
- Soak the saffron in 2 to 3 tsp of warm water.
- Heat the milk in a saucepan or karahi, then add the cardamom powder, sliced almonds and saffron.
- Bring the milk to a boil, then

lower the flame. Gradually add the rice paste while stirring continuously to prevent lumps.

- Cook until the rice is fully cooked and the mixture thickens.
- Add sugar and stir until it dissolves completely.
- Mix in the kewra water for a fragrant touch.
- Pour the phirni into pre-soaked earthenware bowls (sakoras) or

- glass serving dishes.
  - Garnish with sliced pistachios and rose petals.
  - Refrigerate for at least an hour before serving chilled.
- A slow-cooked delicacy infused with saffron and cardamom,

Mansi's Zafrani Phirni is a perfect celebration of traditional Awadhi flavours, offering a rich, creamy and aromatic treat.



## CHEF NISA YIMTHONG'S CULINARY JOURNEY

Chef Nisa Yimthong boasts an impressive professional history that spans continents and has left an indelible mark on esteemed establishments worldwide. Her odyssey began as a junior sous chef at Bangkok's revered Blue Elephant Thai Restaurant, where she honed her craft. She ascended through prestigious roles, including Chef de Partie at the Dusit Thani Hotel and Junior Sous Chef at the Bolan Thai Restaurant in Bangkok.

Chef Nisa's journey took her to international opportunities, where she showcased her culinary prowess at esteemed establishments such as the Sukhothai Hotel in Bangkok and the Leela Palace in Chennai. Her expertise truly blossomed during her first stint at Shangri-La Eros New Delhi, where she wowed diners with her exceptional skills in the realm of Thai cuisine at Tamra. This journey led to her assuming the esteemed role of Chef de Cuisine Thai at Intercontinental Century City Chengdu in China, solidifying her reputation as a true maestro of gastronomy.

Adding depth to her culinary mastery is Chef Nisa's educational foundation; she holds a bachelor's degree in hotel management from Suan Dusit Rajabhat University in Thailand. Her expertise extends beyond traditional culinary offerings, encompassing the intricate art of fruit and vegetable carving, creative food presentation, and innovative menu development. Her unwavering commitment to cleanliness and hygiene underlies her steadfast pursuit of culinary excellence.

### Colorful Swirl Mathri

- 200 gms Maida
- 75 ml Refine oil
- 2gm Ajwain
- 2gm Red food colour
- 2gm Green food colour
- 2 gm Baking soda
- 2 gm Salt



#### METHOD:

- In a bowl mix the flour, salt, carrom seeds and salt and mix it properly
- Add the oil to the flour mix and incorporate it nicely and a little warm water and knead it to a tight and smooth dough without ant granules
- Divide the dough into 3 equal portions and add the red and green food coloring each to two portions and knead it properly so that the colour gets incorporated in each dough.
- To give equal colour roll out separately all 3 doughs into thin sheets and place it on top of each other according to the colours you want in your swirl and roll it out like cigar.
- Roll carefully into a cigar shaped roll brushing a little water at the end so that it sticks properly.
- Finally cut the roll into thin slices
- Meanwhile heat the refine oil for frying in a wok, fry the dough slices 5-6 together in a medium sized wok for 5-6 minutes in medium low flame till they are cooked properly.



## RANGO KE GUBAARE : A PALETTE OF TRADITION

### BY TEAM AGENDA

Recipes by Chef Ashu Chugh, Executive Chef, Jaypee Greens Golf Resort, Greater Noida  
Servings: 4

#### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup rava, 1 ½ tsp whole wheat flour, 1 tsp gram flour
- Salt, pepper, red chilli powder, fennel powder, baking soda
- 1 tsp oil, water as needed, oil for frying
- 50g fried makhana, 100g moong sprouts, 100g boiled potatoes
- 20 mini bhalle (optional), chopped onions, tomatoes, green chillies, green apple
- 200g yoghurt, 4 tsp blueberry compote, 4 tsp green & tamarind chutneys
- Black salt, cumin powder, chaat masala, red chilli powder
- 8-10 papdi, sev, 4 tsp pomegranate arils, coriander

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- Make Dough: Mix flours, spices, oil and water into a firm dough. Rest 30 mins.
  - Fry Kachori: Roll into discs, fry until crisp and golden.
  - Assemble: Break the top, fill with sprouts, potatoes, bhalle, onions, apple.
  - Top & Serve: Add yoghurt, chutneys, spices, crushed papdi, sev, pomegranate and coriander. Serve immediately.
- A crunchy, tangy Holi special delight!



## A CLASSIC HOLI TREAT BURSTING WITH FLAVOUR

### BY TEAM AGENDA



Recipes by Chef Amardeep Singh Bhatia, Executive Chef, Jaypee Siddharth

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg refined flour, 1 kg khoya
- 50g each cashew nuts, pista, almonds
- 5g green cardamom, 20g fennel seeds
- 100g coconut powder, ghee as required
- Sugar syrup as required

#### METHOD

- Mix flour, ghee, and water to form dough. Knead and rest for 10-15 minutes.
- Cook khoya, sugar, dry fruits, coconut, and cardamom until thick.
- Roll out small dough balls into thin circles.
- Fill with the khoya mixture, fold, and seal edges.
- Fry in ghee until golden brown.
- Drain excess oil and serve warm or at room temperature.

## EMBRACING THE SPIRIT OF HOLI SWEETNESS

### BY TEAM AGENDA

Holi is a festival of colours, but it's also a festival of flavours. It's the time when kitchens fill with the aroma of saffron, cardamom and slow-cooked khoya, as families come together to prepare festive treats. The first bite of a perfectly crisp Rango ke Gubaare, breaking into a rich, nutty filling or the cool, spiced embrace of Thandai Rasmalai, soaked in saffron-infused milk, these are the tastes that make Holi special. Each sweet carries a story of tradition, celebration and the simple joy of sharing, making Holi as much about food as it is about colours.



By Chef Vaibhav Bhargava - Consultant Chef, Food Stylist and Entrepreneur

### Chenna Rasmalai Thandai

- A delightful fusion of saffron-infused chenna, served in chilled thandai.
- Preparation Time: 20 minutes
- Cooking Time: 2 hours
- Total Time: 2 hours 20 minutes
- Course: Dessert
- Cuisine: Indian
- Servings: 4

#### Thandai Recipe

- #### INGREDIENTS:
- Milk - 250ml
  - Water - 1500ml
  - Sugar - 375g
  - Fennel seeds (saunf) - 7g

- Cardamom powder - 3g
- Almonds - 15g
- Pistachios - 15g
- Skinned watermelon seeds - 15g
- Poppy seeds - 7g
- Rose water - 3g
- Whole peppercorns - 3g
- Dried or fresh rose petals - 50g

#### METHOD:

- Soak the almonds, pistachios, and watermelon seeds for 3-4 hours, then drain and grind them into a fine paste.
- Lightly roast the cardamom, fennel seeds, and peppercorns, then grind them into a fine powder.
- In a pan, bring the milk to a boil. Add saffron and sugar, then let it cool to room temperature before refrigerating.
- Once chilled, mix in the ground nuts

- and spice powder.
- Add rose petals and rose water for a fragrant finish. Your Thandai is now ready.
- Rasmalai Recipe

#### INGREDIENTS:

- Milk - 1000ml
- Refined flour - 5g
- Granulated sugar - 500g
- White vinegar (for curdling milk) - 60ml
- Water - 1500ml

#### METHOD:

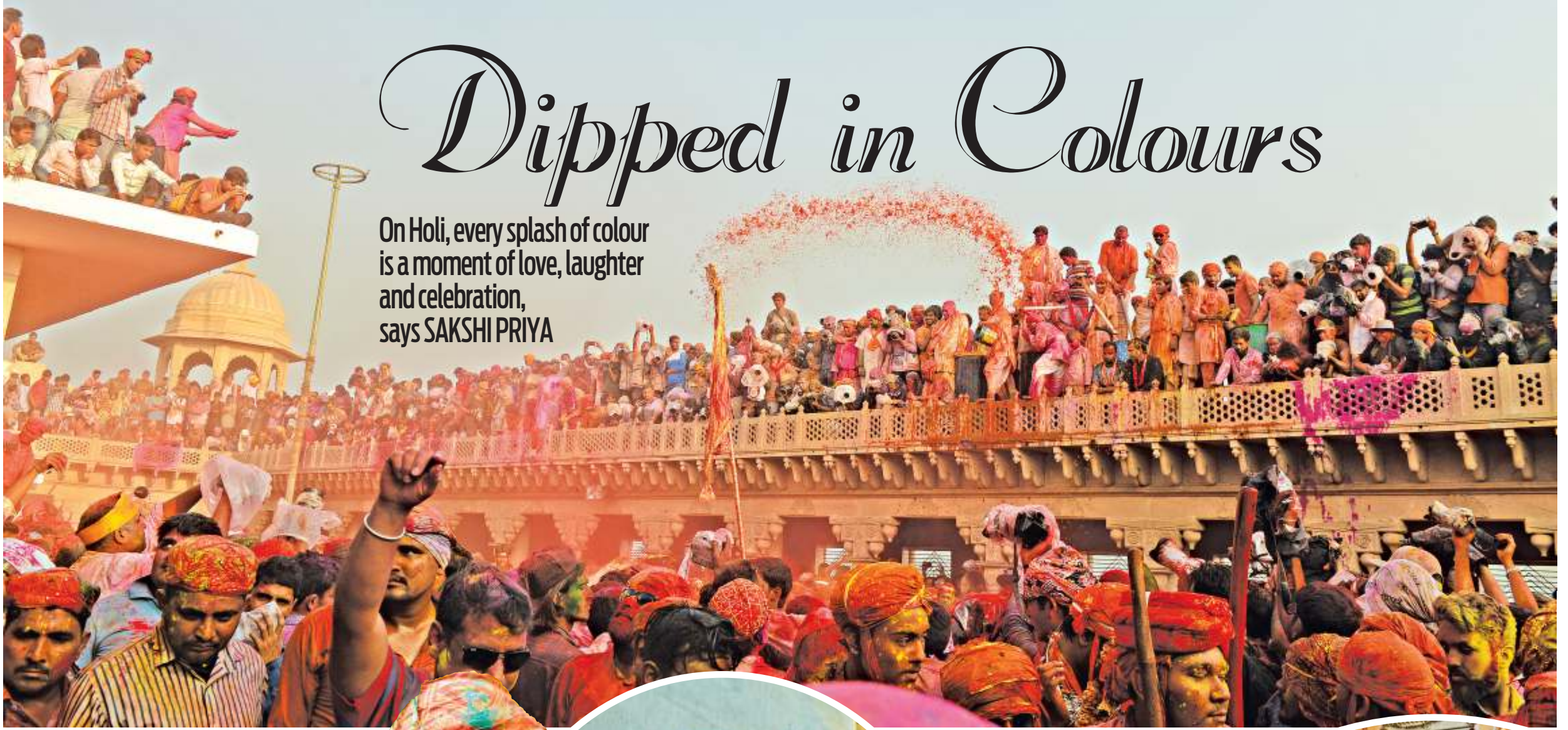
- Dilute the vinegar with 2-3 cups of water.
- Bring the milk to a boil and slowly add the diluted vinegar. Stir until the milk curdles and forms soft chenna.
- Add 2-3 cups of water and ice cubes to

cool it down, then strain to remove any vinegar traces.

- Drain excess water by placing the chenna in a muslin cloth and hanging it for 2-3 hours.
- Knead the chenna until smooth, then mix with refined flour to form a soft dough.
- Shape the dough into small dumplings.
- Prepare a sugar syrup by boiling 2 cups of sugar with 5 cups of water.
- Add the dumplings to the boiling syrup and cook for 5-10 minutes. Your Rasmalai is ready.
- Assembly - Thandai Rasmalai
- Squeeze the excess syrup from the Rasmalai.
- Submerge them in the chilled Thandai.
- Garnish with nuts and serve elegantly.

# Dipped in Colours

On Holi, every splash of colour is a moment of love, laughter and celebration, says SAKSHI PRIYA



**R**ang barse bheege chunar wali, rang barse..." a song that instantly reminds everyone of Holi, bringing back memories of laughter, colours and streets filled with celebration.

This timeless Bollywood song has become the soundtrack of the festival, capturing its playfulness and joy. Whether it is Amitabh Bachchan's deep baritone or Ranbir Kapoor's youthful energy, cinema has long celebrated.

As Holi approaches, the streets fill with music, laughter and a riot of colours begins. Holi as a time of revelry. People come together, smearing each other with colours, dancing and setting aside their worries for a day. "Bura na maano, Holi hai!" becomes the anthem, inviting everyone to join in the fun.

Beyond the festivities, Holi holds deep cultural and religious significance. It symbolises the victory of good over evil, with the *Holika Dahan* on the eve of Holi marking this victory. The festival also signifies the arrival of spring, a time of renewal and joy. While Holi is celebrated across India in different ways, the traditions of *Braj*, especially in Mathura, Vrindavan, Barsana and Nandgaon, are among the most vibrant and unique.



THE SIGHT OF THOUSANDS OF PETALS RAINING DOWN IN THE TEMPLE PREMISES IS BREATHTAKING, A SERENE CONTRAST TO THE MORE BOISTEROUS CELEBRATIONS



## Lathmar Holi

Holi in Barsana and Nandgaon, two villages in Uttar Pradesh, is unlike anywhere else. Here, the festival takes on a unique and playful form known as Lathmar Holi, where women chase men with sticks while the men protect themselves with shields. It is a spectacle that draws thousands of visitors each year, blending tradition with festivity in a way that is both energetic and deeply rooted in local culture.

Curious about what it feels like to experience Lathmar Holi firsthand, I spoke to Aneesh Sharma, a traveller who recently visited Barsana during the festival. "The moment we entered the village, it felt like stepping into a different world," he recalled. "Women stood ready with sticks in hand, their faces filled with excitement. The men from Nandgaon, laughing and teasing, willingly walked into this playful battle. It wasn't aggression, it was pure joy."

He described the sounds of dhols filling the air as colours flew in every direction. "At one point, I just stood there watching. The energy was surreal. One of the men near me held up his shield, pretending to be terrified of the women approaching him, and everyone burst into laughter. It's a Holi unlike anything I had ever seen before."

A week before the main Holi celebrations, men from Nandgaon visit Barsana. As they enter the village, they are welcomed with colours, teasing and, most famously, sticks. The women of Barsana, dressed in traditional attire, await them with lathis (sticks) in hand, ready to chase them away in a playful mock battle. The men, armed with shields, try to dodge the blows, but many willingly surrender, laughing and embracing the spirit of the festival.

The next day, the women of Barsana visit Nandgaon, continuing the celebration on the men's home ground. The entire event is accompanied by traditional folk songs and the beating of dhols, with chants of "Shri Radhe!" and "Jai Kanha!" filling the air.

While it may seem intense to an outsider, Lathmar Holi is all in good fun, a symbolic exchange rather than a true battle. It represents the spirited playfulness that defines Holi in this region, where joy, music and community come together in a festival unlike any other.

## HOLI IN VRINDAVAN

A short distance from Barsana and Nandgaon, Vrindavan is home to one of the most visually stunning Holi celebrations. Here, Holi is an expression of devotion.

At the Banke Bihari Temple, the celebrations begin days in advance, with priests and devotees showering each other with gulal and flower petals. Unlike the lively Lathmar Holi, the atmosphere here is more devotional. The temple doors open and the deity of Krishna is brought closer to the devotees, as if participating in the celebrations. Pilgrims sing bhajans, dance in joy and immerse themselves in a Holi that is deeply spiritual.

I also spoke to Ananya Patel, who experienced Holi in Vrindavan for the first time. "It was about colours, it felt like

a blessing," she said. "The temple was packed, but there was this beautiful sense of harmony. When the petals started falling from above, it was almost surreal. Everyone around me had their hands raised, singing, completely lost in the moment. It was Holi, but in the purest, most peaceful form." As locals and visitors immerse themselves in a tradition that has been carried forward for generations. One of the most mesmerising aspects of Vrindavan's Holi is the Phoolon Ki Holi, the Holi of flowers, where instead of coloured powders; fragrant flower petals fill the air. The sight of thousands of petals raining down in the temple premises is breathtaking, a serene contrast to the more boisterous celebrations outside.

WOMEN STOOD READY WITH STICKS IN HAND, THEIR FACES FILLED WITH EXCITEMENT. THE MEN FROM NANDGAON, LAUGHING AND TEASING, WILLINGLY WALKED INTO THIS PLAYFUL BATTLE. IT WASN'T AGGRESSION, IT WAS PURE JOY



## A FESTIVAL THAT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER

Holi is a festival of colours, it is a festival of unity. Whether it is the playful combat of Lathmar Holi, the devotional celebration in Vrindavan or the modern citywide festivities, Holi breaks down barriers. For one day, differences fade away and people come together in laughter and celebration.

In a world often divided by differences, Holi serves as a reminder

of shared joy and togetherness. The act of applying colour on someone is a playful gesture; it is an acceptance, a moment of unity. Strangers become friends, old grievances are set aside and for those few hours, life is lived in its most carefree and joyous form.

So, as Holi nears, whether you celebrate with lathis in Barsana, bhajans

in Vrindavan or Bollywood beats in your own city let the spirit of the festival take over. Dance freely, laugh without restraint and embrace the colours of Holi with open arms.

*Bura na maano, Holi hai!*

IN BRIEF



BL Agro launches Rs 1,000 cr dairy breeding project

Leading FMCG company BL Agro on Saturday inaugurated a high-tech cattle breeding and dairy centre in Bareilly at an initial investment of Rs 1,000 crore with an aim to transform local agriculture. The state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence for Cow Breeding and Dairy Technology, a part of the subsidiary firm BL Khamdhenu, was inaugurated by Union Food Processing Industries Minister Chirag Paswan, the company said in a statement. The project, "Satat Kamdhenu", with a focus on circular practices in dairy sector was unveiled on the occasion. The "BL Kamdhenu Farms" will initially house 5,000 indigenous cows, eventually doubling to 10,000, as part of the company's Satat Kamdhenu initiative. "The initial investment in the project is around Rs 1,000 crore and the whole project once it is up to full capacity will cost Rs 3,000 crore," BL Agro Managing Director Ashish Khandelwal said.



J&K has debt of Rs 1.25 lakh crore: Govt

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said its total debt stands at over Rs 1.25 lakh crore, including Rs 27,900 crore in general provident fund (GPF) for the Union Territory in the last financial year. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who is also the finance minister of the UT, said in a written reply to Assembly member Sajad Gani Lone that as of March 31, 2024, Jammu and Kashmir's total debt is Rs 1,25,205 crore. "This includes Rs 69,894 crore in loans from the Reserve Bank of India and state development, Rs 27,901 crore in GPF, Rs 14,294 crore in reserves, Rs 5,758 crore in outstanding national small savings fund, Rs 4,032 crore in negotiated loans, Rs 2,616 crore in UDAY power loans, and Rs 710 crore in Government of India advances", he said. Abdullah further said the total outstanding liability in treasuries as of February 27, 2025, under various account heads amounts to Rs 5,429.49 crore.



'On track to achieve 30 pc women representation'

Vedanta on Saturday said it is on track to achieve 30 per cent women representation by 2030. Notably, 28 per cent of its women representation is in decision-making roles, highest among metals and mining companies in the country. Vedanta is bridging the talent gap by adding qualified women into its fold, a statement said. Aligned with Vedanta's sustainability goals, the company has implemented progressive people policies to support its workforce, including rich job content, targeted hiring, mentorship programs, accelerated career-growth opportunities in high-growth businesses. Policies such as 'no questions asked' work-from-home option for women, flexible work hours, year-long sabbatical for childcare and spouse hiring among others, support their growth during different life-stages. Vedanta group firm Hindustan Zinc has launched the Women of Zinc campaign, attracting women to metals sector on International Women's Day 2025.

Banking sector must continue to innovate: FM

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the banking sector must continue to innovate and lead amid changing global landscape, and exuded confidence that the country's largest bank SBI will embrace technology, sustainability and inclusivity as its guiding principles.

Speaking at the launch of Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Foundation Day of State Bank of India (SBI), the minister also said SBI has continuously evolved to meet the changing landscape and retained its position as a market leader despite regulatory tightening.

"The world is changing rapidly, and the banking sector must continue to innovate and also to lead. I am confident that SBI will rise to the occasion embracing technology, sustainability and inclusivity as its guiding principles," Sitharaman said.

She said SBI is reinventing its personal distribution channels to align with evolving customer expectations. "As the largest commercial



"The world is changing rapidly, and the banking sector must continue to innovate and also to lead. I am confident that SBI will rise to the occasion embracing technology, sustainability and inclusivity as its guiding principles," Sitharaman said

bank in the world's most populous nation, catering approximately to about 5.6 per cent of the global population, SBI has become more agile and competitive than ever before," she added.

Sitharaman said SBI, the largest bank in the Indian subcontinent, is now ideally positioned to deliver superior value creation through sustainable growth.

SBI aims to achieve this by enhancing its operational excellence across lending performance, asset quality, profitability and capital generation, thereby driving wealth creation, she said.

"To power these efforts, SBI has bolstered its infrastructure, established a robust monitoring and control framework, and built a talent pool of committed professionals. Additionally, the bank has re-engineered its internal processes to improve risk management and accelerate growth velocity," the minister added.

SBI was constituted by an Act of Parliament on July 1, 1955. Over the last 70 years, the bank's customer base rose to more than 51 crore. Its total business grew to Rs 87 lakh crore, with over 2.37 lakh staffs.

Register on e-Shram Portal for formal recognition

Labour min urges gig, platform workers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ministry of Labour and Employment on Saturday said it has urged gig and platform workers to register on the e-Shram Portal for formal recognition and access to AB-PMJAY benefits.

The gig and platform economy is expanding, offering new jobs in sectors like ridesharing, delivery, logistics, and professional services, a labour minister statement said.

Niti Aayog has projected that the gig economy in India will employ over 1 crore workers in 2024-25, subsequently reaching 2.35 crore by 2029-30, it added.

Recognising the contribution of the gig and platform workers to the nation's economy, Union Budget 2025-26 has announced provisions for registration of online platform workers on the e-Shram portal, issuance of identity cards, and healthcare coverage

under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).

The AB-PMJAY health scheme provides a cover of Rs 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation across over 31,000 public and private empanelled hospitals in India.

For early implementation of these Budget provisions, the Ministry of Labour and Employment will soon launch the scheme.

As a first step, the ministry has requested the platform workers to self-register themselves on the e-Shram portal, so that they may be considered for the benefits under the scheme at the earliest, the statement said.

The platform aggregators are also to disseminate this information among the platform workers engaged with them and facilitate them to register on the e-Shram portal.



'Will prevent Rs 60k cr sops stress from hitting investments'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Pre-election sops like the Ladki Bahin scheme is extracting Rs 60,000 crore from the Maharashtra government and attempts are being made to ensure that it doesn't impact capital investments, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has said.

Assembly elections were held in Maharashtra in November 2024. Days before the announcement of the state budget on Monday, Fadnavis said Maharashtra is trying to channelise the money paid to the beneficiary women into productive purposes by helping them pool the resources for sustainable businesses.

"It is true that when you undertake such expenditure (on welfare schemes), it has a stress on the budget but we are able to manage it. And we are attempting that this does not impact our capital investments," Fadnavis said at a Moneycontrol event on Friday evening.

"We are trying to balance budget without reducing the capital investment," he added. It can be noted that the sops have been widely credited for being among the factors leading to the MVA government's success in retaining power, but

ICA-AP prez calls for more women cooperatives

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

International Cooperative Alliance Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP) President Chandra Pal Singh Yadav on Saturday pitched for establishing more women cooperatives in India to generate employment and provide equal participation opportunities. Speaking at an International Women's Day function in Delhi attended by over 200 women delegates from across the country, Yadav advocated introducing cooperatives as a subject at the school level to educate youth about the sector's growth potential.

"In some professions, women are far ahead than men, which clearly shows the rapid advances made in women empowerment," he said during the event, which focused on this year's theme 'Accelerate Action'.



India, Mauritius to sign several pacts during PM Modi's visit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Mauritius will sign several pacts providing for cooperation in the areas of capacity building, trade and to tackle cross-border financial crimes during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to the country from Tuesday.

Modi is travelling to Mauritius primarily to grace the island nation's national-day celebrations as the chief guest on March 12.

At a media briefing, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said on Saturday that the two sides will sign several agreements in the fields of capacity building, bilateral trade, tackling cross-border financial crimes and promoting small and medium enterprises. The visit will enable both sides to take stock of the bilateral ties and provide orientation to engagement in the coming months and years, he said. Describing Mauritius as a close maritime neighbour,

Misri said India has been privileged to be a preferred development partner for the island nation.

In the last 10 years, the relationship has deepened significantly, he said.

A contingent of Indian defence forces will participate in the national-day celebra-



tions of Mauritius, along with a ship from the Indian Navy. India has close and longstanding relations with Mauritius, an island nation in the Western Indian Ocean. A key reason for the special ties is the fact that Indian-origin people comprise nearly 70 per cent of the island nation's population of 1.2 million (12 lakh). Since 2005, India has been among the largest trading partners of Mauritius.

UP biggest destination for investment in country: Yogi

PNS ■ NOIDA

Uttar Pradesh is the biggest destination for investment in the country and Microsoft's upcoming research and development centre is a testament to this, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Saturday.

The chief minister laid the foundation stone of Microsoft's India Development Center (IDC) here.

Speaking on the occasion, Adityanath said, "I have been told that Microsoft's India Development Center will become the largest centre of research and development outside their headquarters... After Hyderabad, now Uttar Pradesh is going to be the home of Microsoft in the form of a new campus".

India should withdraw from all talks with US: GTRI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India should withdraw from all negotiations with the US and prepare to engage with the Trump administration in the same way as countries like China and Canada are doing, economic think tank GTRI said on Saturday.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Founder, Ajay Srivastava said the US is exerting heavy pressure on India to accept trade demands that largely favour American interests.

US President Donald Trump and his officials have criticized India mostly by using incorrect data, he said. "Trump is insulting India publicly using wrong data. No balanced outcome is possible in such circumstances. India should withdraw from

all negotiations and prepare to deal with them like other countries are doing," Srivastava said.

Against US tariffs, China and Canada have announced retaliatory measures.

On Friday, Trump claimed that India had agreed to cut tariffs on American imports after his administration "exposed" what he called unfair trade practices.

"This is patently incorrect and intended to pressurise India. India's silence is baffling and India needs to counter with facts. Whole world is watching as Trump and his officials belittle India every day," he added.

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick has also said that India needs to open its agriculture market, emphasising that it can not be 'off the table' when the country is negotiat-

ing with its largest trading partner. He has pitched for a macro, large and grand trade agreement with India, and not 'product-by-product' arrangement to promote bilateral trade.

According to a GTRI report, a comprehensive trade deal would open the door to US demands, not just on tariff reductions, but also on government procurement, agricultural subsidies, patent laws, and unrestricted data flows, all of which India has consistently opposed.

"Second, Trump's history of disregarding negotiated trade agreements is evident from his decision to scrap the US-Mexico-Canada FTA, which he himself finalized in 2019, and his imposition of 25 per cent tariffs on Canadian and Mexican imports now," it said.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT DISTRICT COLLECTOR, JANGAON FORM -VII - DECLARATION**  
(See Sub - rule (1) of rule -25 and Section -19(1) of the Act-30/2013)

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana / District Collector, Jangaon that a total land of an extent of Ac.2.34 gts land is required in the limits of Sagaram village of Zafferghadh Mandal in Jangaon District for public purpose, namely acquisition of Excavation of 2L-3L of 4L Distributory of Nashik Main Canal under JCR DLIP for providing water to Agriculture lands under the Government of Telangana, Collector, Jangaon District, as per L.A. Act.30/2013.

Therefore the "DECLARATION" is hereby made that a piece of Land measuring more or less Ac. 2.34 gts under acquisition for the above said project in the limits of Sagaram village of Zafferghadh Mandal in Jangaon District whose detailed description is as following under acquisition.

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Extent	Name of the Employer	Remarks
1	61	0.1220	Ponugoti Jagadeeshwar Rao s/o Desharath Rao	
2	60	0.316	Ponugoti Jagadeeshwar Rao s/o Desharath Rao	
3	60	0.06	Chinnala Bagyanma W/o Venkatesh	Chinnala Bagyanma W/o Venkatesh
4	60	0.066	Road Govt	
5	60	0.256	Shivarami Venkatesh S/o Elabai	Shivarami Venkatesh S/o Elabai (S)
<b>Total 1.266</b>				
6	59	0.0226	Pidugala Raja S/o Gataiah	Prd Raj S/o Gataiah
7	59	0.33	Chinnala Rajanna W/o Narsiah	Chinnala Rajanna W/o Narsiah
<b>Total 0.3526</b>				
<b>Grand Total 2.34</b>				

**Trees / Structures**

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Extent	Name of the Employer	Trees	Structures	Remarks
1	60	0.03	Chinnala Bagyanma W/o Venkatesh	Tree-3	neer-1	
2	59	0.33	Chinnala Rajanna W/o Narsiah	Bore-1,	Pipeline	

This declaration is made after hearing of objections of persons interested in 15 of the L.A. Act No.30/2013 after verification of objections this declaration is issued. The number of families likely to be resettled due to Land Acquisition is NIL.

Mines of Coal, Iron-Stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particulars pertain of the said land, except such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the purpose of which the land is being acquired, or not needed.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Officer & Special Deputy Collector, LA, R&R, UHH-I, Irrigation Project, Jangaon on any working day.

Sd/-  
Special Deputy Collector, LA, R&R, UHH-I, Irrigation Project, Jangaon

Sd/- Addl. Collector Jangaon

Sd/- District Collector Jangaon

DIPR No.756/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA DISTRICT COLLECTOR, HANUMAKONDA REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENT FORM -VI NOTIFICATION**  
(See Sub - rule (1) of rule -19 and section -11(1) of the Act-30/2013)

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana / District Collector, Hanumakonda that a total of (0-08 gts) Land is required in the Village namely Mulkanoor of Bheemadavarappally Mandal, Hanumakonda and Division for Public purpose namely Major IR on Distributory-5 on Gouravelli Right Side Main Canal of Gouravelli Canal Project from 12.425 to 12.82 km under RPT/ LA & RR Act, 2013 (Telangana Amendment) Act., 2016 (Act. No. 21 of 2017).

The said land acquisition for the project is exempted from the Chapter - II and Chapter - III of the LA Act 2013 i.e. Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Food Security as per Section 10(A) of Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement, 2013, (Telangana Amendment) Act -2016 (Act.No. 21 of 2017).

Therefore it is notified that for the above said project in the Villages namely Mulkanoor of Bheemadavarappally Mandal, Hanumakonda District land measuring more or less (Ac-0-08 gts) of standard measurement, whose detail description is as follows is proposed for acquisition.

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Type of Land	Area under Acquisition (Acres)	Name of the PattaDar	Name of the Employer	Ext. as per EPO (gts)	Type of Structure (sq. ft)
<b>Village: Mulkanoor, Mandal: Bheemadavarappally, District: Hanumakonda</b>							
1	167	Dry Govt	0-08	Bhupathi Anjish S/o Rajiah Madgula Aagish S/o Pochiah Madgula Komraiah S/o Chinnala Veeramali Madgula Baikola Komraiah S/o Pochiah Gudikandula Rajarajma W/o Raja Yelliah Gona Venkataramma W/o Rajalah Madgula Rajalah S/o Baliah Madgula Rajalah S/o Narsiah Madgula Babu S/o Komraiah Bollampelli Jayamma W/o Maliah Madgula Prabhakar S/o Yelliah Madgula Alish S/o Erna balaiah Bollampelli Komraiah S/o Gataiah Madgula Bondiah S/o Pochiah Gudikandula Raju S/o Shankaraiiah Madgula Mogli S/o Yelliah Gudikandula S/hekharaiiah S/o Malliah Vamala Komraiah S/o Alish Gona Sadanandam S/o Narsiah Chikurula Srinivas S/o Mondiah	Kura Rajiah S/o Narsiah	0-08	
<b>Total Extent Ac. 0 (06 gts)</b>							

This notification is made under the provisions of the section-11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Act.No. 30/2013), to all whom it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the District Collector, & Land Acquisition Officer & Revenue Divisional Office, Hanumakonda on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana / Collector-Com-Appraisals Government is pleased to authorize Officer Land Acquisition Officer & Revenue Divisional Officer, Hanumakonda and his staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in section -12 of the said Act.

Under Section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e. sale/purchase, etc., or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the Collector.

Objections to the acquisition if any, and claims from all the persons interested in the land within 60 (Sixty days) from the date of publication of this notification as provided under section 15 of the Act before District Collector/Authorized Officer.

Sd/- Land Acquisition Officer & Revenue Divisional Officer Hanumakonda

Sd/- Additional Collector Hanumakonda

Sd/- District Collector Hanumakonda

DIPR No.772/LA/PP-Pub/2024-25





# The Pioneer AGENDA

"If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair"  
— Shirley Chisholm

SHE is a daughter, a mother, a wife, and a leader. From sacrifices at home to commanding spaces once deemed unimaginable, women have done it all. Every woman's life is a symbol of already fought societal norms, unbreakable strength, unshattractive confidence and living grace. SHE is a force, a beacon and change, writes  
**ABHI SINGHAL**

कोई सीता, कोई राधा  
कोई झांसी की रानी।  
हर रूप में नारी ने  
दुनिया है संभाली।।



## WAAH WOMANIYA!

Me being a woman have always heard and read that for HER the sky is the limit, but SHE, in every role and everytime knows that the limit doesn't stop at the sky.

### The Durga Incarnates

Despite being nature's greatest marvel, women have long been denied the respect and autonomy they deserve. Forced to navigate paths imposed by others, many Indian women have dared to challenge these norms, rewriting the rules and forging their destinies. They dare, they challenge societal norms. Here are a few of them who have excelled and made their mark despite all odds in different fields that were a taboo.

#### KIRAN BEDI: THE FIRST WOMAN IPS OFFICER

As India's first female IPS officer, she broke barriers in a male-dominated force, transforming challenges into opportunities. Her journey from towing the Prime Minister's car for illegal parking to reforming Tihar Jail, demonstrates how determination and the right support can overturn deep-seated biases. Raised in an environment where education and independence were encouraged, she never let societal expectations define her aspirations. "Any girl child who is loved by her parents and given the vision and resources to realise her potential is ready to take on the world, as I was," says Kiran Bedi.

But entering a profession dominated by men was not without its challenges. The biases and prejudices were apparent. "The prevailing biases and prejudices inspired me to question them. And prove them wrong. Which I did. It gave me a sense of achievement" she added.

#### NIDHI SALGAME: THE OFF-ROADER MAKING HER PATH

Nidhi Salgame, founder of Wander Beyond Boundaries, exemplifies excellence in a field where skill matters more than gender. An accomplished off-roader and explorer, Nidhi has overcome stereotypes and judgment by letting her actions speak for themselves. Nidhi says, "You just have to prove yourself again and again. I faced judgment, and immense stereotyping. I had to prove myself twice over, just for people to acknowledge my skills. That's not a burden any man would carry, yet it was placed on me. But in the end, actions speak louder than words." She further added that the outdoors does not judge you by gender. The machine doesn't treat you differently. It is a leveller. And that's what makes it so liberating. Her journey has never been about fitting into stereotypes or shattering them, it has been about mastering what she does and doing it exceptionally well.

In off-roading extreme overland expeditions, capability is the measure of success.

#### POOJA SHARMA: AN ACTIVIST WHO DEFIED TRADITIONS

A social activist who turned personal tragedy into a mission of dignity. After witnessing her brother's untimely death, she vowed to honour those forgotten by society. Defying long-held traditions that barred women from performing last rites, Pooja armed herself with knowledge from ancient scriptures and has since bestowed dignity on over 5,000 unclaimed bodies. In a society where women are excluded from cremation grounds, Pooja stood as a lone warrior.

When she attempted to perform the last rites, temple priests blocked her path. "I started reading the Vedas, our scriptures, the Shiv Puran, the Garuda Puran. Nowhere is it written that women cannot perform last rites" said Pooja.

Armed with knowledge, she fought against centuries-old beliefs and proved that religion did not forbid women from giving dignity to the departed. Together, these women embody a spirit that transcends societal constraints. They remind us that while rules may exist, they do not define the power of a woman, the true force of creation, resilience, and change.

#### BIDISHA MUKHERJEE: BREAKING BARRIERS IN GOVERNANCE AND TOURISM

Entering the IAS amid a traditionally male realm, she now leads initiatives at the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board that empower women and promote sustainable tourism. Her work proves that when women lead, they not only participate but they redefine the landscape. Under her leadership, initiatives like women-run hotels, such as Amaltas, have not only created economic independence for women but also reshaped the tourism landscape in Madhya Pradesh.

"The desire to create meaningful change led me from teaching to public administration. While the gender imbalance in governance was a challenge, I saw it as a chance to redefine norms," said Bidisha. Her initiatives have set new benchmarks, proving that when women are given platform, they don't just participate they lead.

— BY DIVYA BHATIA

I grew up in a normal middle-class joint family. From a young age, I have seen my mother, a master's degree holder in Mathematics which was a huge deal in the 1990's, working eighteen hours a day as a homemaker. Her journey, fraught with obstacles and setbacks, revealed the harsh reality of how women's dreams were systematically stifled, even after years of dedication, sacrificed in the name of marriage and domesticity. It was a revelation that struck a deep chord for a silent lament for countless unfulfilled aspirations. In the same family, my sister and I had strict timings for returning home.

Mahila, Aurat, Nari, whatever you call her, she has always been categorised into different bases in life in vast job roles, but those were always restricted to the domain of her home. In India, women have largely been confined within the four walls of their homes, entrusted with the responsibility of managing the household and raising children. Their clothing choices, curfews, lifestyle, and behavior have long been dictated by societal norms and patriarchy. Any deviation from these expectations is seen as defiance and often equated with a decline in moral values.

Time moved forward, western influence came in and scenarios started taking turns, women started stepping out for work and everything changed. Slowly, almost imperceptibly at first, the rigid structures that had defined a woman's existence began to show cracks. The long-held idea of women confined to hearth and home with domestic threads, began to fray. The world outside, once a forbidden territory, beckoned. Doors, previously firmly shut, creaked open, revealing the promise of new horizons for the literate women. This International Women's Day, it's important to remember the countless struggles faced by generations of women. The fight for equality has been long and arduous, marked by societal barriers and entrenched prejudices. Even now, despite significant progress, women continue to move through a world where their contributions are often undervalued. They strive not just for financial independence, but for something far more profound: respect and dignity. The desire to live a life on their own terms, free from the constraints of outdated expectations, fuels their determination. Many women are working tirelessly, balancing professional ambitions with personal responsibilities. They seek a future where their voices are heard, their talents are recog-

nised and their dreams are within reach and not pressure.

Yet, amidst the general narratives of limitation, stories of extraordinary defiance emerge. Women, with an undying spirit, have ventured into segments previously deemed unimaginable, shattering the foundations of societal expectations. They carved paths where none existed, proving that ambition knows no gender. Consider the women who drive auto rickshaws through the chaotic city streets, their hands firm on the wheel, their eyes fixed on a future they are building. Witness the rural women at a construction site, carrying their babies on the back and bricks on their head.

A recent example was witnessed during the Mahakumbh Mela. A video from New Delhi Railway Station went viral, showing a mother in uniform with her child strapped to her front, holding a lathi in one hand while maintaining peace and order at the station.

Each of these roles comes with its own set of hardships and often the lack of respect from those who are not used to seeing women in these roles. Stories of such women are etched in courage and perseverance, are the true celebration of Women's Day. They deserve our respect, support, and endless celebration.

Now you don't have to picture such women, you can also see them behind the wheels of the massive DTC buses, their presence a powerful symbol that defies the notion that such roles are for men.



Kiran Bedi



Pooja Sharma



Bidisha Mukherjee



Nidhi Salgame



Kalpana Chawla



Sarla Thakral



Sania Mirza



Bachendri Pal



Sushmita Sen

### WOMEN WHO SCRIPTED HISTORY

Kalpana Chawla's journey to space was an example to her extraordinary intellect and courage. She became an icon, inspiring countless young women to pursue careers in STEM fields. Her dedication to exploration and scientific advancement left an indelible mark on the world. During the wonders that she did, her life was tragically cut short but her legacy continues to propel humanity's quest for knowledge.

Sarla Thakral, in 1936, became India's first female pilot. At 21, she flew a Gypsy Moth, defying societal norms. Her courage shattered barriers, inspiring generations. Her achievement symbolised female empowerment, proving women's capabilities in traditionally male-dominated fields. Her legacy is one of resilience and pioneering spirit.

Sania Mirza's victory in the 2005 WTA Hyderabad Open doubles title was a watershed moment for Indian tennis. She shattered glass ceilings, proving that Indian women could excel in international sports. Her powerful serves and unwavering spirit inspired a generation of aspiring athletes. Mirza's success not only elevated Indian tennis but also empowered women to pursue their dreams.

Bachendri Pal's ascent of Everest in 1984 etched her name into history. With unflinching determination, she conquered the world's highest peak, inspiring generations of Indian women. Her courage shattered barriers, proving that no summit is too high to reach. Pal's achievement is a testimony to the strength and resilience of women and a beacon of hope.

Sushmita Sen's victory at Miss Universe 1994 transcended beauty pageants. She became a symbol of grace and intelligence, showcasing the modern Indian woman to the world. Her poise and eloquence captivated audiences, shattering stereotypes and empowering young girls to dream big. Sen's triumph was a moment of national pride, highlighting India's evolving identity on the global stage.

# FROM NATURAL WONDERS TO FORGOTTEN LEGENDS

**E**mbark on a journey through the Heart of Arabia, where timeless escapes intertwine with deep cultural heritage, breathtaking landscapes and memorable experiences. For those seeking unforgettable and unexpected getaways, Saudi offers the chance to be among the first to explore its hidden gems. From ancient cities to untouched natural wonders, these sites invite couples to connect deeply with the spirit of Saudi while creating timeless memories. Here are the top five getaways in Saudi that are sure to leave a lasting impression.

**TOP ESCAPE GETAWAYS IN SAUDI**

**Taif Rose Farms:** Where Love Blooms in the City of Roses. Nestled in the cool heights of Taif, the blooming rose farms are the epitome of romance, offering a sensory journey through fields of the world's most fragrant roses. For centuries, Taif has been renowned for its production of rosewater and perfumes, with over 2,000 farms cultivating this delicate flower. Couples can wander hand-in-hand through the rose fields, breathe in the sweet scent of love in bloom, and indulge in luxurious rose-infused products. This destination is a celebration of the land's deep connection to nature and tradition, where the essence of romance is captured in every petal.

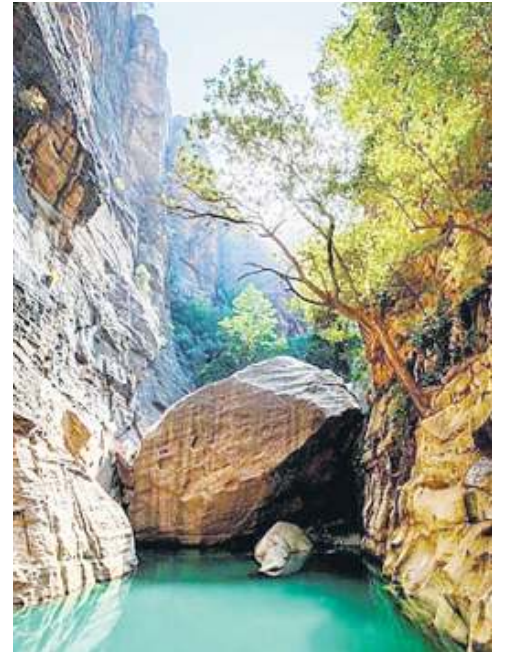
**Wadi Lajab:** A Love Carved in Nature (Jazan). Hidden within the Jazan region lies Wadi Lajab, a natural wonder known as the "Grand Canyon of Saudi." This verdant, narrow canyon invites adventurous couples and families to explore its dramatic cliffs, freshwater streams and lush foliage. As you traverse the winding paths and cool waters, take in the awe-inspiring surroundings. Get the adrenaline flowing by hiking, swimming, or just sitting back and admiring this hidden gem, all while connecting with the cultural history of the Jazan region. Wadi Lajab's untamed beauty and steep paths is

Nature's ultimate endurance test – its raw beauty a demonstration that life can flourish even in the most remote and unexpected places.

**Al Wahbah Crater:** A Sparkling Declaration of Love (Taif). Step into a surreal landscape where passion meets the extraordinary at Al Wahbah Crater, a natural volcanic wonder near Taif. This vast crater, with its gleaming salt flats at the base, is steeped in local legend and offers a captivating setting for romantic moments. Couples can hike to the rim, where the sweeping views of the crater and surrounding desert are breathtaking, especially at sunset. The shimmering crystals that light up the crater's floor create a dazzling spectacle, making it an ideal spot for stargazing enjoying a quiet picnic, or for a phantasmagoric proposal. Al Wahbah Crater embodies the allure of the unexpected, where love finds its spark in the most mystical of places.

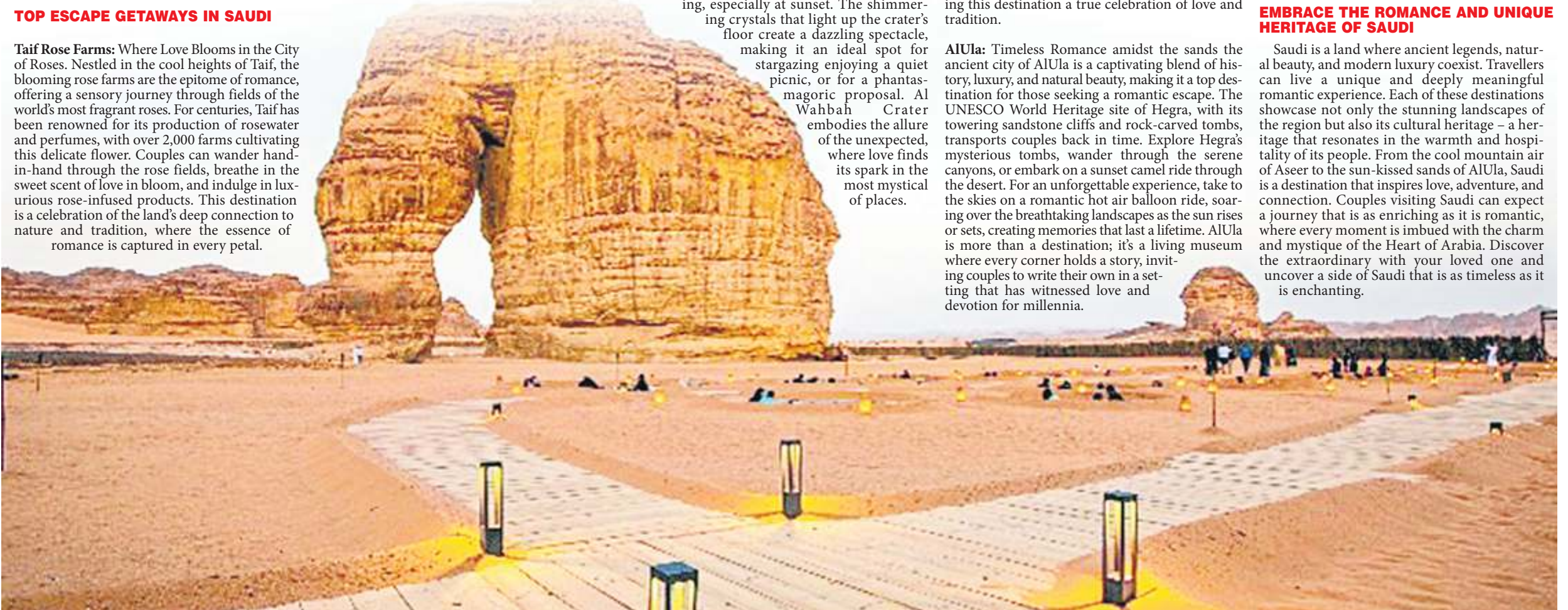
**Fog Walkway:** A Stroll in the Clouds (Aseer) High above the clouds, the Fog Walkway in the Aseer region offers couples an ethereal experience of walking among the mist-shrouded mountains. This elevated pathway in the city of Abha invites visitors to lose themselves in the romantic embrace of nature as they take in panoramic views of the lush green valleys below. The cool, crisp air and the soft, rolling fog create a dreamlike atmosphere, perfect for a quiet stroll or a shared moment of serenity. Complementing the walkway, local markets, folklore performances, and cozy mountain eateries offer an authentic taste of Aseer's cultural heritage, making this destination a true celebration of love and tradition.

**AIUla:** Timeless Romance amidst the sands the ancient city of AIUla is a captivating blend of history, luxury, and natural beauty, making it a top destination for those seeking a romantic escape. The UNESCO World Heritage site of Hegra, with its towering sandstone cliffs and rock-carved tombs, transports couples back in time. Explore Hegra's mysterious tombs, wander through the serene canyons, or embark on a sunset camel ride through the desert. For an unforgettable experience, take to the skies on a romantic hot air balloon ride, soaring over the breathtaking landscapes as the sun rises or sets, creating memories that last a lifetime. AIUla is more than a destination; it's a living museum where every corner holds a story, inviting couples to write their own in a setting that has witnessed love and devotion for millennia.



**EMBRACE THE ROMANCE AND UNIQUE HERITAGE OF SAUDI**

Saudi is a land where ancient legends, natural beauty, and modern luxury coexist. Travellers can live a unique and deeply meaningful romantic experience. Each of these destinations showcase not only the stunning landscapes of the region but also its cultural heritage – a heritage that resonates in the warmth and hospitality of its people. From the cool mountain air of Aseer to the sun-kissed sands of AIUla, Saudi is a destination that inspires love, adventure, and connection. Couples visiting Saudi can expect a journey that is as enriching as it is romantic, where every moment is imbued with the charm and mystique of the Heart of Arabia. Discover the extraordinary with your loved one and uncover a side of Saudi that is as timeless as it is enchanting.



**WHAT'S NEW**

## CELEBRATING WOMEN TODAY, NOW AND FOREVER

Celebrating women shouldn't be confined to a single day or occasion. Every day is an opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the incredible contributions, strength, and resilience of women around us. So here we bring to you a list of gifts to gift the lovely ladies in your life, on every occasion.

**ADJUST, RELAX, AND REJUVENATE**

This Comfort Support Cushion by FRIDO is designed to provide relief and comfort for various needs. It helps alleviate acid reflux and GERD symptoms, while also offering support for the back, neck, and shoulders. Additionally, it provides essential support during pre and post-pregnancy, as well as during recovery from surgery. The cushion's unique design contours to the body's natural curves, and its adjustable feature allows for customized elevation of the head, neck, or legs, promoting improved circulation and discomfort relief.



**TIMELESS ELEGANCE**

A timeless handbag is more than just an accessory—it's a statement. SVJ Bags offer a blend of sophistication and practicality, making them the perfect Women's Day gift. With structured silhouettes, premium craftsmanship, and contemporary designs, SVJ Bags are designed for the modern woman who balances style and functionality effortlessly. Whether she loves classic totes or chic crossbody bags, there's an SVJ piece to match her personality.

**SKINCARE ESSENTIALS FOR A #BOSSBABE GLOW**

Unlock your inner #BossBabe with a specially curated selection of skincare essentials, specially chosen to help you radiate confidence and glow! Kaya Brightening Day Cream is the perfect solution for radiant skin in just 7 days. It protects against UV damage while improving skin texture for a visible glow. Kaya Brightening Night Cream works overnight to rejuvenate, brighten, and refine skin texture. It helps skin recover from daily environmental stressors, revealing a refreshed and radiant look by morning. The brightening cleanser is formulated with gentle exfoliating beads that help remove dead skin cells, revealing a brighter and smoother complexion.



**JEWELLERY THAT SPEAKS YOUR MIND**

With the onset of the festivities, it's time to take the style game a notch higher with jewellery trends that have the runways blazing! 2025 is all experimenting with these new style trends and letting your jewellery take centre stage! This year jewellery isn't simply about accentuating a look or just following but about adapting that trend to express your mood, mark your moments and create a statement that is sure to make heads turn. Be it the bold statement pieces or the versatile and more functional designs for frequent wear, exquisitely crafted pieces from Platinum EVARA by PGI offers something for every mood and occasion.



**FIND CALM IN CHAOS**

In today's fast-paced world, stress and anxiety have become common concerns, affecting overall health and productivity. Recognizing the need for a natural and effective solution, Vedistry, a consumer healthcare brand under Charak Pharma, offers Mentacalm—a clinically proven Ayurvedic stress buster designed to reduce cortisol levels and help individuals manage stress, enhance emotional balance, and improve psychological well-being.



**ELEVATE YOUR SENSES**

A luxurious quartet of botanical-infused body mists, perfect for switching up your scent based on your mood. From floral to fruity, this set offers something for everyone.

- Pomegranate Body Mist** - Sweet & Refreshing
- Black Grape Body Mist** - Juicy & Energizing
- Hibiscus Body Mist** - Fresh & Uplifting
- Lotus Body Mist** - Floral & Calming

Price: Rs. 1,145



**HOROSCOPE**



**ARIES**

You will need lots of love. Those who are related to you will find it difficult to deal with your illusions. You rely much on friends for emotional stability.



**TAURUS**

The desire for power and fame will enable you to excel at work. You are mentally optimistic and expansive about your family. You thrive in thinking out of the box.



**GEMINI**

Success will be the hallmark of your career. You will prove to be independent. Complications in love life may get you into some bewildered situations.



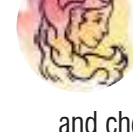
**CANCER**

Tenacity and obsession for perfection will bring you success at work. Think more about prospects for your personal growth. Try to be in control.



**LEO**

You are a person of high esteem. The main menace to your physical situation is your emotions. There may be a trip to a beautiful place which you will enjoy.



**VIRGO**

Harmony seems to be the keyword for you. A sense of joy and cheerfulness will fill you. You tend to act like a person who is curious about everything around them.



**LIBRA**

You need plenty of changes and challenges. Give job change a try if you have been considering it. You will find yourself aloof from your family members.



**SCORPIO**

Lack of communication will cause family disputes. Seek out some time from your work and spend it with your dear ones. You will prove yourself to be honest.



**SAGITTARIUS**

Whatever projects you indulge in will become fruitful. Support from relatives and friends will shower bliss upon you. There may be business-related short trips.



**CAPRICORN**

Work is your source of excitement. Your love for games and challenges will make life pleasant for you. You will experience a new atmosphere and new friends.



**AQUARIUS**

Your power for reasoning will make you see the world in black and white. You will feel much relieved. Students must try to concentrate on their studies.



**PISCES**

Your casual attitude towards love will disappoint your lover. Minor misunderstandings will make your days dull. You may be prompted to take a few days off.



**THE ULTIMATE THROWBACK DRIP IS HERE!**

Get ready to enter your nostalgia era—ONLY just dropped a fire collab with the Peanuts gang, and it's serving major vibes! The ONLY x Peanuts collection is a limited-edition lineup that blends vintage feels with modern streetwear. Inspired by Charles Schulz's legendary comic strip, this collection is all about celebrating friendship, fun, and a little bit of mischief. Whether you're rocking Snoopy's effortless cool or channeling Charlie Brown's underdog energy (but make it a win), these pieces bring the Peanuts universe straight to your closet.



FROM PERSONAL PASSION TO POWERHOUSE ATELIER

# Inside Gauri Khan's creative process & aesthetics

**With a signature aesthetic that fuses timeless elegance with bold innovation, the OG Gauri Khan continues to push creative boundaries, proving that great design isn't just about spaces—it's about storytelling. In an exclusive chat, Gauri Khan takes *The Pioneer* through her extraordinary journey—and as she celebrates 13 years of Gauri Khan Designs, she reflects on how her passion evolved into an award-winning design atelier, her collaboration with Sussanne Khan in Hyderabad and more**

TEJAL SINHA  
tejal.sinha30@gmail.com

**G**auri Khan's journey into interior design was never a calculated career move—it was an organic evolution of her love for history, art and aesthetics. What started as a passion project, redesigning her family's home in Delhi, soon led to the transformation of Mannat, the iconic residence of Shah Rukh Khan. These deeply personal projects became the foundation of Gauri Khan Designs (GKD), which has since grown into one of India's most sought-after design ateliers, known for its distinctive fusion of contemporary elegance and traditional craftsmanship.

For over thirteen years, Gauri has shaped spaces with an intuitive understanding of luxury and a keen eye for detail, redefining the interiors of celebrity homes, boutique hotels, and commercial spaces. Now, as she expands her vision with a dedicated showcase in Hyderabad, in collaboration with fellow designer Sussanne Khan, and prepares to launch an exclusive experience centre in Delhi, she reflects on her design philosophy, inspirations and the journey that has brought her here.

Gauri Khan's foray into design began long before she was recognized as a creative force in the industry. Contrary to popular belief, her love for interiors wasn't first ignited by Mannat—it started in her childhood home. "It actually began when I redesigned my Delhi home—my mother had put me in charge of renovations," she recalls. "I was new to the process but created a blueprint, hired experts and enjoyed sourcing art, accessories

and furniture to bring it to life. That's when I knew I wanted to do more."

Mannat followed and with it came a deeper understanding of the power of design. "Working on these personal projects gave me the confidence to launch Gauri Khan Designs. What began as a passion grew into something much bigger, making this journey both organic and deeply fulfilling."

Over the past thirteen years, Gauri Khan Designs has emerged as a benchmark in the world of luxury interiors. When asked what has been key to this enduring success, Gauri emphasises the importance of evolution. "The key is staying true to my design philosophy while always evolving," she says. "Every project brings new challenges and inspirations, and working with different clients and spaces has kept things exciting."

Collaboration and innovation remain central to her approach. "I'm lucky to have a talented team, explore new materials, dive into R&D, and collaborate with some of the best in the industry—it all keeps me growing."

Gauri Khan Designs recently made its mark in Hyderabad, occupying an entire floor in Sussanne Khan's flagship store. The city's cultural richness and contemporary sensibilities made it an ideal destination for expansion. "Hyderabad is a city that beautifully blends heritage with modernity, which is what my label also does, making it the perfect canvas for design exploration," she explains. The collaboration with Sussanne Khan was a seamless fit, built on years of friendship and mutual respect for each other's aesthetics. "Sussanne and I have known each other for years, and our design sensibilities are very different, yet they complement each other in a way that feels organic. So when she invited me to

collaborate, I was happy to do so." The Hyderabad showcase is more than just a space to display furniture—it is an immersive experience that allows visitors to engage with the artistry behind Gauri Khan Designs.

"This year marks 13 years of Gauri Khan Designs. Our Hyderabad showcase highlights our distinct design language with bespoke art, furniture, home accessories and soft furnishings—blending contemporary style with India's rich craftsmanship. More than a showcase, it's an experience, where every piece tells a story and reimagines luxury interiors." Among the curated selections at the Hyderabad store, Gauri shares some of her personal favourites.

"There is a sleek white dresser with clean lines, topped by a mirror framed with soft, built-in lights. Paired with a chic white chair accented in plush faux fur, it's a perfect blend of elegance and luxury," she describes.

Another standout is a signature mirror that doubles as art. "Its frame is sculpted from rich, golden wood with fluid, uneven edges, as if shaped by nature, blending luxury with organic beauty." For those looking to elevate their living spaces, Gauri highlights timeless bedroom and living room sets. "Upholstered in elegant, neutral hues and framed in beautifully carved brown wood, these pieces exude refinement and sophistication."

As Gauri Khan Designs gears up for the launch of its flagship experience centre in Delhi at the end of April, she shares how this space will redefine the way people engage with interior design. "The Delhi experience centre is being developed as an exclusive space, open to clients by appointment only," she reveals. "Unlike traditional showrooms, this offers a highly personalized journey—visitors can expect tailored interactions, private viewings,

and a thoughtfully curated showcase of our signature pieces, making the experience truly unique." Gauri's signature aesthetic is often described as a refined fusion of elegance and bold innovation. While her style has always been rooted in classic design principles, she acknowledges that it has evolved over time. "My style has always been classic. Over time, I've found a balance between elegance and innovation—I love mixing textures, materials, statement pieces and bold layouts to keep it fresh."

One piece that perfectly embodies this balance is part of the Hyderabad collection. "A signature mirror that doubles as art—its frame sculpted from rich, golden wood with fluid, uneven edges, as if shaped by nature. It blends luxury with organic beauty."

She also enjoys introducing bold accents in her designs. "We have living room and bedroom sets with refined, timeless silhouettes. Upholstered in elegant, neutral hues and framed in beautifully carved brown wood, some accented with bold prints that bring a vibrant, summery charm." Gauri thrives on collaboration and some projects have challenged her to push the boundaries of her creative process. One such project was working with Falguni and Shane Peacock, known for their avant-garde fashion sensibilities. "With clients like Falguni and Shane Peacock—pioneers in their field who have a clear design perspective—it became a dynamic exchange of ideas," she shares. "With three strong creative minds at work, our collaboration resulted in something truly unique, seamlessly blending their style with mine."

One of the most exciting aspects of this collaboration was designing custom wallpapers that complemented the designers' collections. "It made the process both exciting and rewarding," she adds. While Gauri Khan Designs is synonymous with luxury, its impact extends beyond celebrity homes and high-end hotels—it is about shaping the way people experience design in their everyday lives.

"Design is a reflection of lifestyle, and I believe the spaces we create influence the way people experience life," she says. "Whether it's a celebrity home or a boutique hotel, the goal is to make interiors wonderful yet relatable." She also notes a growing shift in how people approach interior design. "I see a growing shift where people now prioritize design in their everyday spaces—be it homes, offices, or even cafes."

With Hyderabad now part of her expanding design universe and Delhi's experience centre set to open soon, Gauri Khan continues to redefine the landscape of luxury interiors—one meticulously crafted space at a time.



## REVOLUTIONISING HIGHER EDUCATION

**T**here has been a tremendous transformation in India's higher education landscape with the integration of advanced technologies. This change is promoting personalised learning experiences and enhancing student engagement, aligning with global educational trends. The adoption of modern technologies including digital tools, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) are reshaping traditional learning methods, creating a new era of personalized learning and student engagement. Technology is not just an enabler but a game-changer in making education truly student-centric and industry-relevant. Personalised learning is an educational model where the content is delivered to every student individually according to his or her requirements, interests, and learning rate. In India, this approach has gained momentum with the support of technology. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasises the integration of technology to facilitate personalised learning paths, aiming to improve educational outcomes across various levels. Institutions across India are adopting AI-driven tools to offer adaptive assessments, real-time feedback, and data-driven learning insights. A 2024 survey by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) revealed that 70% of higher education institutions have adopted hybrid models to enhance accessibility and inclusivity. This flexibility promotes lifelong learning and skill development of the students.

According to a report by NASSCOM, India's EdTech sector surged to an impressive USD10 billion in 2024, powered by innovations in Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML) and Augmented Reality (AR). These technologies are not just enriching classrooms but also democratising access to quality education for learners in remote and far-flung areas. It has been observed that continuous engagement of students is a critical factor in academic success, encompassing behavioural, cognitive and emotional involvement in the learning process. The integration of technology in Indian higher education has been pivotal in promoting this engagement. Digital tools and platforms have enabled interactive and immersive learning experiences, making education more engaging for students. In 2024, Indian universities formed significant global partnerships, enhancing education and research. Institutions collaborated with international universities and tech giants to develop industry-relevant curricula and pioneering research. These advancements elevated India's global academic standing and improved student employability, setting an example for global education systems. Artificial Intelligence has emerged as a transformative force in India's higher education sector. AI-driven platforms analyse vast amounts of data to provide insights into student performance, learning patterns, and areas needing improvement. This data-driven approach enables educators to tailor instructions to individual student needs, thereby enhancing learning outcomes. AI-powered learning management systems (LMS) have been implemented to manage learning environments effectively. These systems utilise AI to provide personalised learning paths, adaptive assessments, and real-time feedback, thereby enhancing the overall



learning experience. In spite of the progressive advancements, there are different challenges of the integration of technology in India's higher education system. One area of grave concern is the digital divide, with disparities in access to reliable internet connectivity and digital devices across different regions. This gap can hinder the equitable implementation of technology-driven personalised learning. In addition to this, there should be proper training for educators to effectively utilise these technologies. Even the NEP 2020 emphasises the importance of teacher training in digital literacy and the effective use of EdTech tools. Further, data privacy and security are also critical considerations, especially with the increased use of AI and data analytics in education. Ensuring the protection of student data and maintaining ethical standards in AI applications are paramount to building trust and

safeguarding the interests of all stakeholders. Despite the challenges, there is a silver lining on the horizon as the future of technology-driven personalised learning in India's higher education appears promising. With continued investments and innovations, the potential to create more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environments is substantial. India's ed-tech market, which was valued at \$7.5 billion in 2024, is projected to reach \$29 billion by 2030, revealed a report titled 'Impact Study of EdTech in India: Driving Innovation and Creating Opportunities.' In terms of economic growth, the sector is expected to contribute 0.4% of India's GDP in 2029, up from 0.1% in 2020. This report was prepared by Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and consultancy firm Grant Thornton. Student success stories highlight the transformative power of technology-enabled learning across institutions. Graduates secure roles in top companies and launch startups, leveraging tech-driven education

to create significant industry impacts. Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and blockchain will further revolutionize higher education. These innovations promise immersive learning experiences, enhanced skill verification, and increased accessibility to quality education. The future of higher education depends on balancing technological advancement with human-centric learning. Institutions must prioritise developing well-rounded professionals who are not only technically proficient but also possess critical

thinking skills and adaptability. This evolution ensures students are prepared for the dynamic demands of the future workplace.

(The author, Piyush Nangru, is the Co-Founder and COO of Sunstone.)



# Dr ALAGU VARSHINI: PERSEVERANCE IN ACTION

**D**r Alagu Varshini VS - a 2012 batch

**IAS officer, shares her journey from a childhood steeped in education to navigating the challenges of civil service. In a freewheeling conversation with *The Pioneer's* Naveena Ghanate, she reflects on her career — from overseeing land acquisitions for Kaleshwaram to managing critical COVID-19 initiatives — highlighting the trials, triumphs and unwavering commitment that have defined her path**



## A CHILDHOOD ROOTED IN EDUCATION

I was born in Pollachi, Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu into a family that deeply valued education. My father, VS Soma Sundaram a physics teacher and my mother, M Selvanayagam, a chemistry teacher. My father's vision was to establish a school where children, regardless of their backgrounds, could receive quality education without the pressure of merely achieving academic success. That dream materialised into the Sivalik Matriculation Higher Secondary School. Today, it stands in its 40th year. I studied in the same school and my house was within the premises. My parents ensured I was treated equally to my brother Dr VS Shri Ramu. I actively participated in sports like volleyball and kho-kho. However, my mother was particular about ensuring I learned household chores too, sending me to my grandmothers' homes where I mastered farming at a very young age.

## UPSC FOR MANAGEMENT QUOTA FEE

My goal was to specialize in oral and maxillofacial surgery and provide free cleft lip and palate surgeries. But limited government seats and my father's refusal to pay management quota fees forced me to rethink my options. My father, once aspired to be a civil servant. We both took a challenge that, if I cleared prelims, he would have to pay money for management quota admission for specialisation in Oral and maxillofacial surgery. After my first failed attempt, I realized the magnitude of the UPSC challenge and dedicated myself to preparation, eventually clearing the exam and joining the Indian Postal Service. I worked as a Deputy Division Manager for Postal Life Insurance, and by God's grace, I was part of the officer training team when the postal banking system was introduced. My exposure to banking and insurance in Bihar gave me valuable insights into the financial sector. When I got into the postal service, my parents were incredibly happy. In my hometown, societal expectations for women were very different. By the time I was preparing for PG, most of my classmates were already married, and some had children. At 25, people around us started questioning my parents about my marriage. Clearing UPSC silenced all those who ridiculed them and a proof I had chosen a path of significance and a validation of their sacrifices.



## AN AVERAGE STUDENT WITH A PASSION FOR SERVICE

While I was mischievous, always pulling my friends out of study time to play, I was also drawn to the idea of service from a young age. Seeing my father's cousin, a gynecologist, drive her own car and command immense respect in our town, I was inspired. I initially thought I'd marry into a joint family and lead a simple, service-oriented life, but my journey took a different path. I couldn't get MBBS seat for my rank, and my dad didn't want to pay for management quota as they are normally in cash or black money. So I opted for BDS at Meenakshi Ammal Dental College in Chennai, where I won state-level best paper awards in prosthodontics and endodontics.

## ONE ATTEMPT BEFORE GETTING MARRIED

As I spent more time in the system, I realized that IAS or Foreign Service would give me a broader scope to implement change. My parents were searching for grooms for marriage, I asked my father if I could attempt the IAS exam once more. He just said, 'We will do our work of finding a groom, and you do yours'. By 29, I entered the IAS which felt like a takeoff in an aircraft, where life is smooth on the runway and then suddenly accelerates to incredible speeds. I was the first girl from my entire village to become an IAS officer. Horse-riding was a mandatory part of our IAS training. Most female officer trainees would stop at the trot, but I wanted to push myself further. One day, while trotting, my horse decided on its own to break into a gallop to catch up with another rider. I had no control over it, but the horse ensured I didn't fall. That experience built my trust, and from then on, I went on to master cantering, galloping, and even jumping. I might be the only IAS officer to have done all levels of equestrian training, including jumps.

## KALESHWARAM CHANGED MY FATE

I was going through a high risk pregnancy, when one of my most challenging assignments was land acquisition for the Kaleshwaram project as Peddapalli collector. This was a massive task - over 8,000 acres across 110 kilometers had to be acquired. Telangana had no separate land acquisition act at the time, so I worked under the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act of 2013 in which the District collector was the authority. I handled the acquisition including Annaram and Meddigadda. When it came to Sundilla, I encountered roadblocks in places like Ramagundam. In one village, Goliwada, people refused to part with 57 acres - land critical to the project. The matter went to court, and a stay order was issued. Only one negotiation went on, we issue notices to the party, we call them for another negotiation and if they don't accept the quoted rate, we deposit the amount in court and go ahead. But then the CM said that the machinery would start working. I was on a call with the Secretary to the CM, who mentioned that the CP would handle the 144 bandobast, etc., and that the acquisition would be carried out immediately. I explained that it was not possible and that we needed at least two weeks. At the time, I was pregnant, and there was a court stay order in my name, which would amount to contempt. If we sent the machinery by force, I would be held accountable and could be sent to jail. This is such an open and shut case and I can't even defend in court as people videograph everything. I said you allow me to go on leave and you keep anybody. Even if CP goes to the acquisition, the Collector is the responsible authority. Then the secretary said, CM is on loud speaker, I stood my ground, asked to give me 2 weeks and it will be done as per law. CM took offence and transferred me.

## SAREE GIFT AND BIG LESSON

I joined Nellore as assistant collector and my mentor Collector Nagulapalli Srikanth. First time I got a gift was a saree and then he told 'Varshini, think if you want to accept it or you want to return it because this is now your initiation for a bribe and it is not going to see any end'. Then I returned that saree and since then I don't accept any gifts from anybody. Personal values and professional ethics matter the most. My first posting was as Sub-Collector in Vikarabad, in newly formed Telangana. The focus at that time was to ensure that policies conceptualized at the State level were efficiently implemented at the grassroots. Because of a shortage of officers, I was promoted in early 2015 and posted as CEO of Zilla Parishad Medak. I was the only IAS officer in that position, and I still remember the call from the Chief Secretary, who told me, 'You have been personally selected by the Chief Minister for his own district, so go and do good work.' Soon I was appointed as the District Collector, a role that I had dreamed of since my early days in service and wanted my father to witness. I was the first collector of the newly formed Peddapalli district, I did Sand Tax policy which got a national award.



## MARRIED A SOFTWARE ENGINEER

I put Andhra Pradesh as my second State preference, while home State was first choice, because I learnt Telugu during my BDS. Just as I received my State cadre allocation, my husband's match came in, and everything fell into place. Looking back, I realize that the partner Karthik Palaniswamy I found at 30 was exactly the kind of person my family would have envisioned for me had I married at 22. A good family, a kind and supportive husband, and just a one-year age difference - everything aligned at the right time. Sometimes, life has its own timing, and I am grateful for how things worked out. We discussed the challenges of a civil servant's life even before marriage, and I made it clear that I would not be moving back to Tamil Nadu after marriage. Either I would serve in my state cadre Telangana which I truly like or in the Government of India. He simply said, 'When problems come, we'll solve them together.' That's how it has been for us since then.

## PROFESSIONAL EXILE AND PERSONAL SUFFERING

2017 was a period of professional exile and personal suffering. In January 2017, my brother's 2-day old daughter passed away. In March, I was in the second month of high risk pregnancy and threatened abortion symptoms. In May, I was transferred unjustly without posting. In June, I lost my father and November, I delivered a pre-term. My brother and mother were grieving. My husband, my baby and I were there. Bureaucrats abandoned me - calls and messages went unanswered, and I was left out in the cold. Only one officer, K Ramakrishna Rao, the Finance Secretary, spoke to me during this tough phase - he would call regularly and ask about health checkups and if I needed a car to go to hospital. After months of waiting, I contemplated quitting IAS and starting my own clinic in my hometown serving people and even my brother is a doctor. But just when I was ready to leave, I was given an opportunity in the health department. I joined as Director of the Indian Institute of Health and Family Welfare.

## HANDLING COVID

Director IHHFW wasn't an IAS post, but gratitude to the then Principal Secretary, who is now the Chief Secretary supported me. When I was appointed, it wasn't even a prominent post, but then Covid happened and it suddenly became very important. Our team - comprising Commissioner of Health, Commissioner of Aarogyasri, and myself - worked tirelessly. We trained 87,000 personnel, set up quarantine and call centres, and handled 27,000 calls daily. I was pregnant at the time but chose not to take leave and in fact was visiting covid areas. The pandemic was a once-in-a-lifetime challenge. Post-pandemic, I realized our work lacked documentation. I got a Fulbright scholarship in 2022 and was part of the Edward Mason Program, Masters in Public Administration, Harvard Kennedy School. When I went to Harvard, my husband took care of my kids. I worked on 13 policy projects for Telangana, including public distribution reforms and climate resilience strategies at Harvard.



## GOING ON CENTRAL DEPUTATION

When I joined as Secretary TSWREIS, I worked 38 days straight, literally spending time only for work without taking breaks - to get an understanding. There were too many issues surrounding food poisoning incidents and others. You know these students come from a very traumatic life as they see domestic violence, abuse, discrimination and poverty. We need to take care of them carefully. It took me some time to understand the system and politics around it. No human in their right mind wants children to suffer. As I prepare for my new role in Delhi, for mandatory Central deputation, I remain committed to public service. My journey has been filled with battles - some won, some lost - but every challenge has shaped me into a stronger officer. Recognition has been elusive, but I believe in karma. The good I do today will eventually make an impact. Telangana will always be close to my heart, and I will serve in whatever capacity I can.

## HUSBAND'S SUPPORT

My husband Karthik has been my pillar of support. He always tells me, 'You're passionate about change; my role is to support you.' He supports in and out. My husband is very good at data crunching and works in Infosys. When I went to Harvard, my husband took 1 year work from home to take care of both the kids here. At the same time, not many women get opportunities like Fulbright scholarship, Harvard - it is once in a lifetime opportunity. When my daughter was born, I was really happy as I could procreate. When pregnancy was difficult and all I wanted was to hold a baby. I have two kids Sarasswathy Karthik and Guhan Arun Karthik. My daughter is in first standard in HPS. Guhan will be going to LKG now. I participate in marathons, I play badminton and I am learning to paint. I sing well but I do it only for my children.



## QUICK BYTES

**Fav Colour** - Purple

**Movies** - *Chak De India* or any movie with historical significance

**Last movie I watched** - *The boy who harnessed the wind*

**Fav song** - I like *Tamil State Anthem* and gives goosebumps

**Fav actor** - Rajinikanth

**Fav book** - *When breath becomes air*

**Strength** - My husband