

Hyderabad sees sharp rise in sale of residential properties falling under 'high-end' segment

Hyderabad: In the last three years, the basic outlook for property acquisitions appears to have undergone a metamorphosis in Hyderabad with the mid-segment residential sales shrinking considerably and the high-end segment residential sales rising sharply. This apart, Hyderabad's manifold growth in the last ten years has resulted in the city emerging as one of the preferred destinations for the premium and luxury housing segment. The latest report 'Hyderabad's Residential Renaissance: Dissecting the city's transforming housing landscape' of CBRE South Asia Pvt. Ltd released this week highlights this transition. According to the report, the sales in the high-end residential segment (Rs. 1 crore to Rs.2 crore and above) in Hyderabad now account for over 50 per cent from 2022 onwards, up from 30 per cent until 2021.

Also, since 2022, launches in the high-end residential segment in the city account for over 55 per cent to 65 per cent share, compared to less than 20 per cent of new launches each year before the pandemic. This growth narrative has been at the cost of the mid-segment i.e., residential properties in the range of Rs.45 lakh to Rs.1 crore, which dropped to less than 25 per cent in H1 2024, down from the 50 per cent share until 2021. Similarly, the share of launches in the mid-segment has dropped to 25 per cent compared to 60 per cent to 70 per cent in the pre-Covid

period. Historically, Hyderabad's residential market has been dominated by the mid-end (Rs. 45 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore) segment in terms of new launches and also the sales. However, in recent years, post-Covid, there has been a noticeable shift towards the high-end (Rs.1 crore to Rs. 2 crore) segment, driven by rising disposable incomes and evolving buyer preferences.

At the same time, the premium (Rs.2 crore to Rs. 4 crore) and luxury (Rs.4 crore and above) segments, previously accounting for less than 5 per cent of overall launches until 2021, have grown to over 20 per cent of the city's total launches in 2023 and the first half of 2024, documents the CBRE report. This growth is attributed largely due to significant developments in the western part of the city, particularly in areas like Kokapet, Narsingi, Tellapur, Manikonda, and Nanakramguda. Developers have been launching more 3 BHK, 4 BHK, and larger units due to the post-Covid demand for spacious living environments and dedicated home offices and recreational areas. This trend is particularly evident in Kokapet (Neopolis) and Nanakramguda in the western part of Hyderabad. Evolution of Premium & Luxury Residential Market: Hyderabad's luxury residential market is experiencing a surge driven by a confluence of factors. Increased interest from both domestic and international investors, including NRIs and HNIs, coupled



with a strengthening US Dollar, has fuelled demand for premium properties. CBRE in its report said the city's growing economic prowess, evidenced by its ranking among the top 65 wealthiest cities globally and the 10th fastest-growing millionaire hotspot, further underpins this trend. Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO – India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, said, “

Hyderabad's residential market has dramatically transformed, establishing itself as one of India's most dynamic and sought-after real estate destinations. This

evolution is marked by a surge in residential property launches and a steady rise in demand, driven by affordable housing options, a high quality of life, and a vibrant influx of professionals.” Gipson Paul, Senior Executive Director and Head – Hyderabad, CBRE India, said, “the pandemic has profoundly reshaped this landscape, emphasising security and access to essential amenities. Consequently, there is a marked preference for branded residences, penthouses, sky villas, and independent floors within meticulously planned townships.”

Losing just one hour of sleep may harm health



New Delhi: Losing just an hour of sleep at night may be harmful to health and lead to problems with memory and focus, according to an expert. The human body requires an optimum sleep duration of 7-8 hours per night. Recovery from losing one hour of sleep can take up to 4 days, says Hyderabad-based Neurologist

But when people do not get adequate

sleep, “it results in various problems, such as poor attention, focus, concentration and memory,” said Dr Sudhir Kumar from Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Hyderabad, in a post on X. “Losing just one hour of sleep could take up to four days of time to recover,” he added. He noted that poor sleep also increases the risk of headaches, anxiety and stress. People deprived of sleep are more likely to make “poor decisions, and

have driving errors, leading to more vehicle crashes”.

In addition, “sleep deprivation is associated with higher risk of diabetes, hypertension, obesity, heart attack, stroke, depression, dementia, erectile dysfunction and infections,” the neurologist said. While ensuring “a regular sleep schedule and sleeping for 7-8 hours every night,” is essential for good health, the doctor stated

that “oversleeping (more than 9 hours) is also unhealthy”. In an earlier post, the expert noted that sleep duration and a consistent sleep schedule can help “lower the risk of insulin resistance, prediabetes, and type 2 diabetes”. Good sleep is also essential for boosting good cholesterol levels. Good sleep can also be key to keeping mental health disorders like schizophrenia, depression and stress at bay.

BA Animation admissions open at BC welfare residential fine arts college

Hyderabad: Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Telangana Backward Classes Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society has announced admissions to BA Animation and VFX programme, which is being offered by the BC Welfare Residential Fine Arts College in Chevella. Students who completed intermediate are eligible to enroll for the admission to BA Animation and VFX programme for the academic year 2024-25, said B Saidulu, secretary Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Telangana Backward

Classes Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society. Eligible and interested students can download the application form from the website <https://mjptbcwreis.telangana.gov.in/>.

Filled-in application form should be sent to the email address mjpanimation45@gmail.com and a hard copy of the emailed application should be sent by register post to MJPTBCWR School Miyapur (G), Model Colony, Chevella, Rangareddy.

Bahujans against Bahujans

Thursday's constitution bench judgment of the Supreme Court which has ratified the sub-classification of reservations for Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities by states has given a judicial sanctity to this principle. The judgment is likely to encourage politics which seeks sub-stratification of political loyalties in the name of sub-stratification of affirmative action benefits. To be sure, there are multiple examples of this kind of politics across states in the past. Whether or not the BJP finally bites the bullet on this question, the court's judgment has also given a firm legal footing to its work in progress to sub-stratify the existing 27% reservation for OBCs via the Justice Rohini Commission. It is supposed to be its proverbial nuclear option against Mandal parties.

Is there anything fundamentally wrong with this logic? From a strictly empirical perspective, perhaps not. There is widespread statistical evidence of intra-group inequalities within the ranks of SC, ST and Other Backward Classes (OBC) groups in India. Because we actually have sub-caste-wise data for the first two groups in the census, the evidence is likely to be more robust for them than the OBCs for whom sub-caste-wise data exists only from private surveys except in the case of Bihar which conducted and published a caste census last year. Lest there is any confusion, almost all data also shows that a large part of the SC-ST-OBC population continues to face material and educational deprivation. There is more than enough anecdotal evidence to show that the first two groups are also victims of caste discrimination not just from the proverbial upper castes but even dominant OBCs. The latter fact is a strong justification to guard against the introduction of a creamy layer in giving reservations to SC-ST groups.

All of these inequalities and acts of discrimination should be anathema to a civilised democratic society. Will the political and legal push for the sub-stratification of affirmative action benefits for these groups solve this problem? There is good reason to argue that they will not. The simple reason is that this is a policy which amounts to nothing but a second-order division of an already shrinking cake of (reserved) government jobs in the Indian economy. Many credible economists believe India would need to generate between seven to ten million jobs every year to solve its employment challenge. How many of them can be expected to come from the public sector? Not even a million a year. None of this is unknown to either politicians or advocates of such policies. What explains the growing popularity of such sub-stratification then? Answering this question requires a digression from judicial or constitutional debates on social inequality. Praxis of affirmative action in democracies has an organic link with wider politics. This intersection can produce outcomes which range from revolutionary to retrograde. The present of this dialectic is also a result of how it has evolved in the past.

The revolt of first-generation social reformers such as B R Ambedkar was nothing short of a revolution in Indian society. Ambedkar's rise and assertion forced the then-hegemonic Congress to concede

political (and eventually economic) representation to Dalits in a compromise (Poona Pact) which was actually seen as a loss for Ambedkar back then. It is difficult to even imagine what India's society and politics would have been without the emancipatory agenda which Ambedkar and our first-generation social reformers brought to the table. This generation's victories notwithstanding, the battle for actual political agency for the socially discriminated is still a work in progress. The biggest advances in this battle came from regional political actors who politically weaponized the struggle for social equality. From a Karpoori Thakur in Bihar to the communists in Bengal, a lot of politics, especially until the 1970s was actually in the nature of class and caste struggle by the socially and economically deprived sections against benefactors of the old political, economic and essentially feudal order in large parts of India. Even though the clarion call prioritized only one of these fault lines at times, the actual struggle on the ground was strongly linked with each other.

Ironical as it sounds, the success of this politics laid the seeds of its destruction too. The cause, as in the case of the nascent post-colonial State's failure to achieve a meaningful economic transformation, was the same. The vanguard of



the movement became more interested in usurping the gains of the project rather than advancing the project itself. What followed was a low-level equilibrium trap in the economy along with an oligopolic hold on politics. In places like Bihar, the culprit was a clique or a person representing the dominant OBC caste group, while in places like Bengal, the Communist Party became more interested in retaining political power than furthering the cause of either the economic or democratic revolution. Even as these struggles were being fought and

tables were being turned, the larger economic canvas started changing after the economic reforms of 1991. What three decades of economic reforms have done to the country is created a very small enclave of prosperity within the formal sector and a large amorphous mass of labour which keeps moving within agriculture as well as informal non-agricultural occupations. It is the market which is exploiting this precariat more today than the caste-ridden feudal order which was the exploiter in chief when the likes of Ambedkar fought their battles.

Rela Hospital Launches Medical Centre in Nellore, to offers Multi-Specialty Consultations

Rela Hospital, a leading multispecialty and quaternary healthcare centre in Chennai, has opened Rela Medical Centre in Nellore to provide expert consultations and other world-class healthcare services for the people of Nellore and neighbouring districts. Prof. C.M.K. Reddy, General and Vascular Surgeon and President, Tamil Nadu Medical Practitioners Association inaugurated the hospital, in the presence of Prof. Mohamed Rela, Chairman and Managing Director, Rela Hospital and leading surgeons and healthcare professionals of the Rela Group.

The Guest of Honour at the event was 8-year-old Gyana Sai from Chittoor District, who overcame a life-threatening liver disease in infancy. Gyana Sai received a life-saving liver transplant at Rela Hospital in 2016, performed by Prof. Mohamed Rela when she was just nine months old. Her parents, initially losing hope, had even appealed to the court for the mercy killing of their baby. However, Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, intervened and referred the case to Prof. Rela. Now, eight years post-transplant, Gyana Sai was present at the medical centre's launch. The event also saw the attendance of three adult patients who had been treated by Prof. Rela.

The new facility, a clinic setup, is located at Gandhi Nagar, Pogathota, Nellore.

It will offer consultations in the specialisations of hepatology, paediatric hepatology, HPB & liver transplants, neuro surgery, neurology, spine and sports medicine, medical gastroenterology, surgical

and quaternary healthcare facility, our mission is to offer the highest standard of healthcare to our patients. Our Chennai hospital, with its 450 beds including 130 critical care beds and 9 advanced opera-



gastroenterology, radiation oncology, interventional radiology, cardiothoracic and vascular surgery, heart & lung transplant, pulmonology, and cardiology. The specialists of these departments from Rela Hospital, Chennai will visit regularly to provide consultations. It is to be noted that Rela Hospital runs similar health centres, modelled on clinics, to provide consultations in bone marrow transplant, liver & heart transplants in Vijayawada and Vizag.

In his address, Prof Mohamed Rela, Chairman and Managing Director, Rela Hospital said, "As a premier multispecialty

tion suites, serves over 50 disciplines and is supported by over 130 esteemed specialists. We aim to extend this exceptional care and expertise to patients beyond Chennai.

Our medical centres are designed to bring top-notch specialists, cutting-edge technology, and quality care to secondary cities. In this context, I am thrilled that our new medical centre is opened in Nellore today. It's also a pleasure to reconnect with valued patients like Gyana Sai, who have graciously joined us for this special occasion."

NISAU Event Kicks Off at Villa Marie College, Offering Transformative Opportunities for Aspiring Students and Professionals



Global Tree, a leading overseas education consultancy, in collaboration with Harper Adams University, conducted The NISAU (Network of Indian Students and Alumni - UK) Event on August 3rd, 2024 at Villa Marie Degree College for Women. The event promised a transformative experience for aspiring students and professionals, with a focus on the most important aspect of student employment. The event featured a panel discussion with esteemed speakers, including Mr. Srikar Alapati - MD Founder of Global Tree, Ms. Sanam Arora - Chairperson NISAU - UK, Mr. Douglas

Thomson - Global Skills Engagement Manager, City of Glasgow College, Mr. Parmjit Chima - Head of Engineering, Harper Adams University, and Mrs. Revathi Devi Mathur - Principal of Villa Marie College. Commenting on the event, Mr. Srikar Alapati, MD Founder of Global Tree, said, "This event is a crucial gateway for individuals looking to unlock their full potential and carve out a successful future. We are thrilled to collaborate with renowned organizations and universities to empower our attendees and help them take the next step in their academic and profes-



sional journeys." The event provided attendees with a unique opportunity to interact with eminent alumni from the UK, learn about career opportunities, and explore the vibrant student life in the United Kingdom. Participants also had the chance to network with top universities, including Imperial College London (ICL), University College London (UCL), Kings College London (KCL), University of Brunel, University of Hertfordshire, University of Wolverhampton, Northumbria London, and Ulster London. Sanam Arora, Chairperson of NISAU-UK, expressed her excitement

about the event, stating, "We are excited to bring together a wealth of resources and expertise to empower our attendees. This event will be a transformative experience, offering invaluable insights and guidance to help individuals build a better future."

The event commenced at 11 AM and featured informative sessions, interactive workshops, and one-on-one guidance from industry experts. Attendees gained valuable insights into visa processes, career prospects, and the vibrant student life in the UK.

Swatantrata Center to Organize Roundtable Discussion on Implementing 24x7 Activities in Hyderabad

Swatantrata Center Welcomes Telangana Government's Decision to Allow Businesses in Hyderabad to Operate Until 1 AM



Swatantrata Center, a prominent think tank and advocacy group, has welcomed the announcement made by Honorable Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy in the Telangana Assembly regarding the state government's decision to allow all restaurants, hotels, and other businesses in Hyderabad city to remain open and operate until 1 AM, except for liquor shops and bars. This decision comes over a year after the Telangana government approved [G.O. Ms. No. 04, LET&F Department, dated 04-04-2023]. The Swatantrata

Center commends the newly formed government for officially announcing this opportunity in the Assembly, providing temporary relief to businesses in Hyderabad. However, Raghavender Askani, co-founder and director of Swatantrata Center, Raghavender Askani Founder of the Youth Parliament Program, emphasizes that this is only a temporary solution and has urged the Telangana government to permit 24x7 operations in Hyderabad city. Last month, Raghavender had written to the Honorable Chief Minis-

ter, Chief Secretary, Mayor, and Commissioner of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Telangana Police, and Labor Department, advocating for the continuation of 24-hour business operations and the implementation of Section 7 (Opening and Closing Hours) of the Telangana Shops And Establishments Act, 1988. Swatantrata Center believes that the implementation of a 24x7 business operations policy in Hyderabad will give the city a competitive advantage, increase business, commerce, and economic activities, and create over 1 lakh jobs directly and indirectly. This will greatly help the state

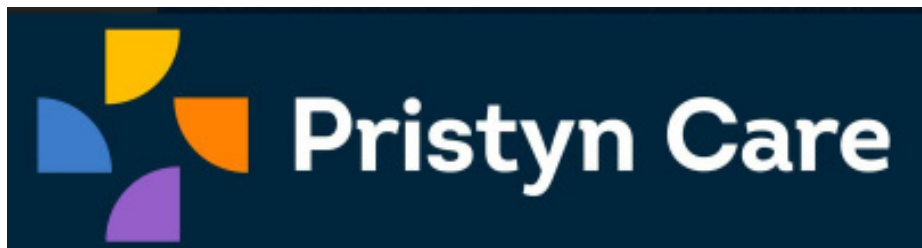
compete on a national and global scale, with an estimated additional growth of about 2% or \$1.50 billion (122.22 billion INR) in Hyderabad city. The organization emphasizes that these actions will not only promote economic growth but also improve the quality of life for Hyderabad's residents. Swatantrata Center will continue to advocate for the restoration of the 24x7 business operations policy in Hyderabad and Telangana, and will also conduct a Roundtable meeting with representatives of civil society organizations, trade and commerce associations, and labor unions to discuss the implementation of 24x7 activities in the city.

Anti corruption crusader, bureaucrat Dr. Swamy interacts with GITAM students

Hyderabad: Principal Secretary to Kerala government, Dr. Raju Narayana Swamy, popularly as an anti corruption crusader, engaged with students of GITAM Deemed to be University, Hyderabad, during interactive sessions focussing on critical contemporary issues in technology and governance. In a session titled 'Cyber Security in the Age of Artificial Intelligence', Dr. Swamy provided guidance to budding cyber security engineers. He emphasized

the importance of understanding legal frameworks by advising students to study the case laws connected with the IT Act of 2000 and tasked them with identifying the critical sections related to cyber security within the Act. Dr. Swamy also discussed key concepts such as the cyber kill chain, integrated security approach, and the implications of artificial and deep neural networks and addressed the unique challenges India faces in the realm of cyber security.

6 in 10 People don't seek medical advice for persistent joint aches and Pain: Study



• 32.18 per cent of respondents reported a family history of bone and joint-related issues
• 67 per cent of people have never heard of a Bone Density Test

A survey conducted by healthcare provider Pristyn Care has unveiled a critical gap in awareness around bone and joint health among the Indian population. National Bone and Joint Day is celebrated in India every year to raise awareness about the importance of healthy bones and joints. The research found that a staggering

60 per cent of people with persistent joint aches and pain neglect seeking professional medical advice. The study further revealed that only 5 in 10 respondents are aware of bone and joint health issues. These findings highlight a significant disconnect between awareness and action when it comes to bone and joint health.

Over one-third of respondents reported a family history of bone and joint-related issues, highlighting the genetic predisposition to these conditions. Additionally, a startling 67% of participants were unfamiliar with bone density tests, a crucial diagnostic tool for early detection of bone diseases like osteoporosis. Dr. Vaibhav Kapoor, Co-founder of Pristyn Care, emphasized, "Today, as we observe National Bone and Joint Day, the findings of our study highlight a pressing issue in Indian healthcare: a significant lack of awareness about bone and joint health. With 45% of the respondents uninformed about these critical health concerns, there is an urgent need to prioritize public education and awareness initiatives. By providing the necessary tools and knowledge, we can empower Indians to take proactive steps towards better bone and joint health, ultimately improving the overall health and

well-being of our nation." Dr. D.K Das, Senior Orthopedic Surgeon and Founder, Cure My Knee commenting on these findings, stated, "The combination of widespread joint pain and a significant family history of bone issues indicates a critical need for enhanced preventive healthcare. The fact that 60% of individuals have not consulted a doctor about their symptoms highlights a disconnect that could result in missed diagnoses and untreated conditions. We must bridge this gap to improve early detection and treatment, reducing the incidence of severe bone and joint diseases." The study emphasises the critical need for comprehensive public education campaigns to promote bone and joint health. By increasing awareness of symptoms, risk factors, and available treatment options, it is hoped that more individuals will prioritize their bone health and seek timely medical care.

Ferty9's #TogetherInIVF campaign successfully creates awareness about infertility amongst citizens across AP & Telangana



Ferty9 Fertility Center is proud to announce the successful completion of its innovative #TogetherInIVF campaign, launched to commemorate World IVF Day 2024. This campaign, which spanned across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, aimed to increase public awareness and acceptance of in vitro fertilization (IVF), breaking down the stigma associated with infertility and empowering couples to make informed decisions about their fertility treatment. Under this campaign, Ferty9 conducted street plays or nukkad natak at 15 different locations across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana during the week of World IVF Day, reaching out to a large audience. These performances helped to demystify infertility and IVF for the general public in a relatable and impactful manner.

Music has been proven to have a significant influence on mental health, reduc-

ing tension and anxiety and instilling a sense of calm and relaxation. As part of the campaign, Ferty9 launched the Music of Hope, a melodious piece designed to connect mindfulness and calmness with the journey of infertility treatment. During the launch, the audience heard the tune in a peaceful atmosphere, allowing them to fully experience its calming effects. By including this relaxing music, Ferty9 aims to give its patients an extra source of comfort and support. The tune was unveiled to over 3000 gynaecologists across AP and Telangana at once.

During the celebratory events at all 9 Ferty9 centers, the chief guests, IVF babies and their families, launched the Ferty9 Tune at the respective centers. Their presence highlighted the joy and success of IVF treatment, serving as a testament to the normalcy and happiness that IVF can bring

to countless families. This heartwarming reunion was a highlight of the #TogetherInIVF campaign, which sought to educate and inform while also celebrating the successes and joys that IVF can bring. "Witnessing the reunion of one of our IVF babies was a poignant reminder of the impact our work has on families. The #TogetherInIVF campaign has been about more than just raising awareness; it's about building a community where couples feel supported and hopeful. We are proud of the strides we have made and look forward to continuing our mission of making IVF accessible and understood" said, Mr. Vinesh Gadhia, Executive Director and CEO, Ferty9 Fertility Center. On the successful conclusion of the campaign, Dr. Jyothi C. Budi, Medical Director of Ferty9 Fertility Center said, "The completion of the #TogetherInIVF campaign marks a sig-

nificant milestone in our ongoing efforts to raise awareness and destigmatize infertility. The overwhelming response to our street plays and the launch of the Ferty9 tune have shown that there is a genuine need for open dialogue and education around IVF. We are committed to providing compassionate care and support to all of our patients while making infertility treatments affordable without compromising on quality. In line with this commitment, we are offering a special 25% discount on IVF procedures"

Class two girl sexually assaulted at school in Uppal

Hyderabad: A class two girl was allegedly sexually assaulted by a class nine student at a private school in Uppal.

The school management said that once the incident came to light, the boy was immediately expelled from the school and parents of the boy and the girl were informed. Though the details of when the incident happened is unclear, the victim informed her parents about it on Thursday, who staged a protest at the school. They demanded the management respond to the issue and take action against the suspect child. Responding to it immediately, the school management rusticated the child involved in the incident by handing him a Transfer Certificate (TC). Mild tension prevailed later in the day as activists and members of political parties and student groups held a protest on the school premises demanding stringent action. The Uppal police reached the spot and took the complaint from the parents and started investigation.



State Bank of India Ladies Club, Hyderabad undertakes various charity activities on regular basis to support under privileged section of the society with focus on Women, girls and senior citizens. Smt. Rashmi Sinha, President, SBI Ladies Club, Hyderabad organized a charity activity at Vivekananda Seva Sangham NGO, Miyapur, Hyderabad. Smt Rashmi Sinha handed over groceries, hosiery items, hygiene care, T-shirts for children, dresses for senior citizens, incinerator and other essential items to Vivekananda Seva Sangham. Medical camp was organized for the senior citizens and provided them with medicines, tonic and health supplements. Smt Rashmi Sinha, President SBI Ladies club, also took up tree plantation activity in the premises of NGO as a part of the sustainability initiative. Speaking on the occasion, Smt Rashmi Sinha said that Ladies club does charity activities with the funds collected from the ladies' club members. She expressed her happiness for

being a part of this charity activity. The NGO supports 38 under privileged orphan girls by providing them good accommodation, nutritious food and as well as get them educated to make them self-sufficient and reliant. They are also rendering services to 47 Sr. Citizens by providing them good accommodation, healthy food, emotional support, nursing support etc. The members of the Club are very enthusiastic and are ever ready to reach out to the deserving organizations who are catering to the needy, downtrodden, destitute and physically challenged. The event witnessed the participation of girl children who had exhibited their talents in singing. On the occasion, distribution of fruits and refreshments was provided by the Club Members to all the inmates. Smt Mili Verma, Vice President, Smt Anitha Sharma, Secretary and other ladies club members were present during the program. (G Ramakrishna) ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER (M, C & CSR)

Airport remains mirage for people of Adilabad

Adilabad: The long pending dream of an airport remains to be a mirage for the people of Adilabad district even as land for the facility is available. People of the district have been demanding successive Union governments to establish an airport as Adilabad town is located around 250 kilometres from Hyderabad and Nagpur of Maharashtra. They are forced to depend on either Hyderabad or Nagpur to fly to different parts of the country or abroad for various needs including education and business.

Incidentally, an aerodrome was established on 369 acres of land on the peripherals of Adilabad town by the then Nizam of Hyderabad in order to fill fuel for fighter aircrafts proceeding to battlefronts in 1930. It went under the control of the Indian Air Force, following Independence in 1947. It was used as a refueling point again for helicopters used for training pilots till the late 1970s. In 2014, the IAF proposed to convert the aerodrome into a full-fledged Air Force Station. It had sought the district administration to identify adequate land for

this purpose. Accordingly, 1,592 acres of land was identified by revenue officials under the limits of Kachakanti, Khanapur, Thantoli and Anukunta villages abutting the existing aerodrome in 2017. Airport Authority of India (AAI) deputy manager Amith Kumar and assistant general manager Neeraj Gupta expressed satisfaction over the conditions in Adilabad district centre for setting up an airport in 2019. They inspected the piece of land meant for an airport and studied feasibility for establishing the facility and made the remarks. However, there was no major step forward in

the process of providing air connectivity to people of the district except for assurances of various political parties at the time of polls. People are forced to spend more time travelling by trains in order to reach religious centres located outside Telangana. Similarly, businessmen of Adilabad town frequently would regularly travel to Nagpur, Hyderabad and Mumbai. Jagadish Agarwal, a trader, said Adilabad MP G Nagesh said he had met union civil aviation minister K Ram Mohan Naidu who responded positively to his plea, rekindling hopes of the people.

CSR wings for India's Olympic dreams

Sarabjot Singh, the second Indian to win a medal at the ongoing Paris Olympics, grew up in Dheen, a village in Ambala district of Haryana. In an expensive sport like shooting, Sarabjot's family could not have imagined his journey without systemic support, especially the financial aspect. Regardless of the sport, associated funding in a developing country is always tough to come by. When education, health and sanitation are more pressing concerns, government allocation for sports is often considered a luxury than a necessity.

But in the present-day world where sporting success is considered one of the most important vehicles of national identity and an indicator of soft power, governments are more eager than ever to undertake the tough balancing act between bankrolling sporting activities and taking care of the nation's prime developmental needs. It has been no different in India and something that has given governments leeway has been the increasing footprint of finances as part of various companies' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) interventions. The likes of Reliance, Tata, JSW, Infosys and many others have joined hands with various government bodies as well as other private not-for-profit organisations like Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ) and GoSports Foundation to develop infrastructure, improve existing facilities, provide access to sports science, and support athletes in areas where focus has been historically low. India's latest shooting sensation Manu Bhaker, Javelin champion Neeraj Chopra, shuttlers P.V. Sindhu, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, Chirag Shetty and Lakshya Sen, boxer Lovlina Borgohain and hurdler Jyothi Yarraji among others have been beneficiaries of such partnerships. This transformation in the funding space has been catalysed by two legislative moves. Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013, mandated CSR projects by every company having net worth of ₹500 crore or more, or turnover of ₹1000 crore or more, or a net profit of ₹5 crore or more. Under Schedule VII of this act, "training to promote rural, nationally recognised sports, Paralympic and Olympic sports" was added as a CSR-eligible activity. Then, in 2016, the scope was widened by including the "creation and maintenance of sports infrastructure, upgradation and renovation of existing sports facilities, and sports science support including setting up of gymnasiums and rehabilitation centres." The Odisha Reliance Foundation Athletics High Performance Centre, JSW's Inspire Institute of Sports and Infosys Foundation's investment in Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) are examples of this.

"The CSR Act (2013) is a big motivator," Prof. Sanjeev Tripathi from the Indian Institute of Management (Indore) told The Hindu. "Now that firms have to spend 2% of their net profits on CSR, they are looking for opportunities to spend. The other factor is the visibility and impact of the investment. Compared to healthcare and education, the investment in sports, especially if they result in medals, is celebrated and has a halo effect on the corporates from the perspective of national glory. Further, the returns on sports investments seem to have a lower gestation period than investment in

other avenues." Sport, being a sunrise sector, had initial investments that were experimental in nature. However, with every Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and Olympics, the positive impact (i.e., medal tally) has encouraged an increase in investment. "What we are witnessing is the bandwagon effect. The success achieved by some corporates has encouraged others to follow," added Prof. Tripathi.

Numbers back this hypothesis. According to a report prepared in April 2023 jointly by PACTA, a firm focusing exclusively on the legal needs of the social sector, and Sports and Society Accelerator, an independent not-for-profit organisation focused on building the sports ecosystem, CSR in sports has grown consistently. These outlays have been roughly through three types of models. First is the Public-Private-Partnership model like the one that the Odisha government has stitched with Reliance Foundation to create a Athletics High Performance Centre. The second is where the corporate houses manage everything, like how the Tata Group has done with the Tata Football Academy and Tata Archery Academy in Jamshedpur. And in the third, firms like OGQ and GoSports act like bridges between corporates and the sporting world. Through fund-raising, these non-profit sports organisations receive grants from corporate and individual donors, and manage the program design and execution.

As a result, there have been improvements for all to see. Training areas are worldclass and impeccably maintained. There are resources for exposure trips, and top coaches, physiotherapists and nutrition experts are being hired. The PPBA, which is nestled amidst the sprawling Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence on the outskirts of Bengaluru and the place where Lakshya — and now Sindhu — train, is a case in point. With help from Infosys Foundation and OGQ, a teenaged Lakshya trained under the legendary Morten Frost, winner of four All England titles, and the Dane was even hired as a consultant coach at PPBA. "We could send Lakshya to Denmark for three months and there he made a mark and started winning. That gave him the confidence," said Vimal Kumar, former National champion and Lakshya's long-time mentor and coach. There has also been a significant change in the narrative involving women sportspersons and differently abled athletes. The collaboration between Infosys Foundation and GoSports to help fund a weightlifting academy is the best illustration of this. Sathish Sivalingam, a gold medallist at the 2014 and 2018 Commonwealth Games, wanted to open the doors to talented girls at his academy in Vellore district (Tamil Nadu). Sathish, who was once helped by a GoSports program, sounded out the idea to Deepthi Bopaiah, CEO of GoSports. "When my team visited the weightlifting academy, it was pretty much just bricks and a basic setup that they had," recalled Bopaiah. "They didn't have a nutritionist, a physio, or anything. Yet, talented girls were attempting to get to the district-level competition."

Approximately 200km west of Vellore, at the Infosys offices in Bengaluru, projects were being shortlisted for meeting the organisation's mission of empowering women. While GoSports had worked with Infosys Foundation on a different project,



But in the present-day world where sporting success is considered one of the most important vehicles of national identity and an indicator of soft power, governments are more eager than ever to undertake the tough balancing act between bankrolling sporting activities and taking care of the nation's prime developmental needs

Satish's new proposal was unique. The trainees included only girls and women. A scenario emerged wherein all three stakeholders — the sponsor, the implementation partner, and the beneficiary, had the same objectives in mind. "In the past, GoSports worked with athletes directly," said Nandan Kamath, Co-Founder and Managing Trustee, GoSports.

"Now, with the partnership, it became a real opportunity to build an athlete-centric, coach-led, academy-driven model that allows us to take a systemic approach to developing sports talent with a long-term view." Thus, in May 2023, the 'Girls for Gold' program was launched to identify and support talented Indian women athletes aged 13 to 19. A grant of ₹30 crore was dedicated to provide a support system for athletes and coaches from five academies — Lakshya Shooting Club, Mary Kom Regional Boxing Foundation, Sathish Sivalingam Weightlifting Foundation, Raman TT High-Performance Centre, and Yadav Pro Badminton Academy. Viren Rasquinha, former India hockey captain, has witnessed both sides, earlier as an athlete and now as Director and CEO of OGQ. "CSR in sports has been a massive boon," he said. "When I was a player, if you got injured or fell sick, you're out of the team. We did not have any idea about the right nutrition, strength and conditioning, and recovery. Everything was via self-learning. All these things have massively improved."

What initially started as support for existing athletes has now expanded into identification of sporting talent at junior levels. "We [OGQ] started supporting Sindhu when she was 13, and Lakshya when he was 11," Rasquinha pointed out. "It's been a 12-year journey with Lakshya

just to reach the Olympics. Today, we support over 400 athletes, and 150 of those are in the age-group of 11 to 19. These are going to be the future Sindhus, Lakshyas and Mary Koms." Half-full, half-empty. However, it is also true that CSR in sports remains a small piece in the overall pie. Cumulative figures from 2014-15 to 2020-21 show that sports still accounts for just 1% of the total spends; health and education are 21% and 31% respectively. Even among the corporates who spend, it is not more than 5% of their overall commitment. In 2020-21, Reliance alone contributed nearly thrice as much as the next best company. CSR in sports is also highly concentrated in just a few states like Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Delhi and Jharkhand, with the top-five states in this list accounting for 37% of the entire amount. Another cautionary note, as Rasquinha pointed out, is the thin line that exists between CSR and marketing. This is perhaps why the Companies Act specifically excluded one-off events like marathons, awards, charitable contributions and advertisements from the CSR ambit. Nevertheless, the private sector has played a noteworthy role in India's ongoing sporting transformation. In the early days of CSR donations, regulatory compliance and tax breaks were the tangible benefits. As time passed, sports offered much more. What started as a philanthropic act has now led to branding, employee engagement, and an overall sense of nation-building. "We are in this for the long term," a Reliance Foundation spokesperson said. "We have been working towards developing India as a multi-sport nation, including leading its Olympic movement. India's sporting journey is at an inflection point, but there is still a long way to go."

Bengaluru's tech industry: A golden goose or a workhorse?

Kiran (name changed), who worked as a coder in Bengaluru with a leading e-commerce firm, used to find the work hours gruelling and exhausting. Pushed to the brink during the pandemic, when six to seven hours of meetings were followed by coding through the evening into the night, they quit overnight. Kiran later found a job with a gig platform in Spain, which gave them the flexibility to work any four days a week. As someone who was forced to make themselves available at the beck and call of the previous employer, Kiran was positively surprised this time. The IT, ITes and BPO sectors have been lauded as Bengaluru's golden goose, propelling Karnataka's economy for years now. But the recent proposal to increase the working hours of IT employees in the State to 14 hours a day has sent ripples across the 20 lakh-strong labour force in the sector, many of whom are already overworked and burned out. As they prepare for a massive protest on August 3 at Freedom Park against increasing the working hours, though the proposal has been put on the back burner for now, the techies say the proposal is only the tip of an iceberg of exploitative practices within the industry. The growth story

According to a Deloitte report ('Karnataka: Powering India's Growth'), which pegged the State's nominal Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) at ₹22.41 trillion in FY23, Karnataka boasts of the highest per capita GSDP, significantly higher than the national per capita GDP. The most important contributor to this undoubtedly has been the IT/ITes-BPO sector. As of 2022, around 1,500 IT firms have set up shop in Karnataka and exported software worth ₹6,30,000 crore, about 40% of India's total exports. In return, the companies enjoy reduced stamp duty, tax breaks, subsidised land, infrastructure support, exemption from several labour laws, and more. While the ready availability of a skilled workforce played a major role in turning the State into the industry's favourite destination, the charm of the sector was irresistible for the professionals, too. Thanks to the IT boom in the 1990s, many middle-class families saw an expansion in their income, made foreign trips for the first time and enjoyed a certain social status that came with the label of 'a software professional.' Cut to 2024, and the industry seems to have lost its sheen among many. Sitting at the Karnataka State IT/ITes Employees Union (KITU) office in Madiwala, Sooraj Nidiyanga, secretary at KITU, points to the restaurants that line the busy road outside the office.

"Many of these were started by former IT employees," he says. "It's hard to find someone who has retired from a technical role in IT; either they have to move to a managerial role after doing an MBA. Else they are burned out, forced to leave or terminated." Things seemed to be shaking up within the tech community, once infamous for its apathetic attitude towards the larger society. Not ready to be the frog in the hot water, they say. Ever since the news

of increasing the work hours broke, groups of workers have been regularly holding gate meetings and street campaigns, some of them in front of offices of industry giants like Qualcomm, Capgemini, Oracle and Accenture. A mass email campaign started by KITU fetched more than 2,000 responses overnight.

As per the new proposal, "an employee working in IT/ITes/BPO sector may be required or allowed to work for more than 12 hours in a day and not exceeding 125 hours in three continuous months."

The proposal comes at a time when a large number of employees are already overworked without being provided any overtime benefits. According to a recent study by the Onsurity and Knowledge Chamber of Commerce and Industry, over 50% of Indian techies work for more than nine hours daily, clocking an average of 52.5 hours weekly, resulting in mental and physical health issues. "Even after we reach home, the company expects us to take their calls, respond to emails and login if required," says Nidiyanga. India, particularly Bengaluru, is a global IT powerhouse, but at a time when countries such as Australia, Kenya, and several European nations have been legislatively moving in the direction of favouring the employee's 'right to disconnect', we seem to be in reverse gear, he feels. The number games after the resistance became stiff, Labour Minister Santosh Lad told media persons that the government did not moot the proposal, but by the industry, which has been pressurising the government. While Nasscom denied making any such suggestions, sources indicated a Taiwanese electronics company, an American MNC and a couple of prominent industrialists from the city pushing for it. If the proposal is passed, IT companies stand to gain enormously. "It all boils down to the number of hours IT companies can bill a client," says Soujanya Sridharan, researcher and senior manager at Aapti Institute. "These are service-oriented companies, which rely on cheap labour and extensive billing hours to make their huge profit margins. They earn in forex, and their KPIs are indexed to how many hours they bill, how many projects the employee works on and so on."

Trade union leader V.J.K. Nair believes that companies, by extending the working hours of employees, are trying to replace the existing three-shift system with a two-shift system. "Many of them have clients in the US and the UK, countries in two different time zones. They want workers in a single shift to cater to both the US and Europe," he notes. According to him, companies that expand their presence from China to India are also trying to introduce a version of the infamous 'dormitory labour regime' practised in the neighbouring country, allowing managers to exert excess control over workers. Absence of data While industry leaders often cite numbers in terms of the sector's contribution to GDP, jobs created, profits made and so on, the absence of data on the financial gains of the workforce has been conspicuous. For ex-



ample, there is no data available on the amount companies have spent on overtime benefits. "In March, via additional Labour Commissioner, we gave a petition to the Labour Minister requesting data on the money companies have spent as overtime payment. In the last meeting, we were told that although the Labour Commissioner sent letters regarding the same to all companies, nobody responded to it," says Nidiyanga. A mountain of problems The mobilisation of IT employees after the proposal to increase working hours has been significant. According to Nidiyanga, techies are now organising themselves and then reaching out to the union, unlike earlier when the union used to approach the workers. For many, the move to make them work longer has been a tipping point in the backdrop of the myriad problems that have persisted in the industry. At most companies, the entry salaries have remained stagnant at around ₹3.5 lakh per annum for the last two decades despite rising inflation. Employees are hired and fired at will, and mass layoffs are normalised, though the sector enjoys a rosy image outside. "The impression that IT employees earn loads of money is wrong. At the entry-level, salaries have been not even stagnant but deteriorating if you adjust them for inflation. The risk of being terminated in the name of 'cost optimisation' increases as one climbs up positions and starts earning more," Nair says. According to the All India IT & ITes Employees' Union (AIITEU), around 20,000 techies lost their jobs in 2023. Meanwhile, close to a lakh people were hired in lower positions, says Nidiyanga.

With no grievance redressal mechanism in place, the only option for workers is to file cases at the labour office or courts, which could then crawl on for years. The union has been fighting cases on behalf of employees terminated for reasons including pregnancy and ailing kids.

In BPO sector Meanwhile, in the BPO sector, more often than not, employees who work for around 12 hours are not even paid the minimum wage. Salary denial, holding back certificates, contracts that include bond clauses... the list of issues goes on. "The most severely exploited is the

much larger workforce in BPOs and KPOs. There is no regulation, and the wage level is around ₹106 per hour," Nair points out. The continuing exemption from the Industrial Employment Standing Orders (IESO) Act allows the companies near impunity against such excesses. In March, thousands of employees took out a rally protesting the renewal of exemption from the IESO Act despite the companies not adhering to a single condition that was mandated to provide the exemption. When the exemption was renewed in 2019 and 2024, the union approached the high court. Both cases are still pending. Counterproductive move While companies seem to be eyeing increased profits with longer working hours, experts feel it could backfire in the long term. "It will impact people's physical and emotional health, their social life and relationships. It will lead to increased levels of stress, burn-out, chronic stress that later on will result in anxiety, emotional numbness, reduced ability to focus, mood swings, inability to make good decisions and so on," says Mahua Bisht, CEO of 1to1help, an Employee Assistance Program service provider. 1to1's data shows that in the APAC region burnout is the highest in India. Chain effect Noting that today IT controls entire systems from healthcare to banking to communications to aviation across the world, Nair argues that problems affecting the workforce would eventually turn into larger social problems. Manasa (name changed), who works with a leading IT company in the city, points to the recent incident of Microsoft outage. "One outage brought the entire aviation industry to a standstill. This shows the all-pervasive nature of IT today. There are important government projects people like me work on. A large number of people stand to benefit from these projects. But, how effectively these projects would take off is also a function of how efficiently employees like us can work. Overburdening us is not the way to get the most work out of us." There are allegations that IT companies, buoyed by their clout at various political levels, neither respond to communications from the labour department nor come for tripartite discussions. "Companies and industry bodies should be ready to talk.

Recasting care models for mental illness and homelessness

Socio-normative representations of homeless persons living with a mental illness (HPMI) have ubiquitously ascribed them to the role of refuge seekers. This has resulted in rescue missions that are singularly focused on transferring them, volitionally or coercively, to mental hospitals, shelter homes, beggars' homes and even prisons. The primary assumption that HPIMs must be displaced from the streets because of the many risks that it poses, while valid, is also contestable. As a mental health professional and bureaucrat, respectively, our perspective was similarly limiting over two decades ago, when we prioritised shelter and treatment over agency, choice and place-making. Social order, while it is of relevance and valuable in many contexts, can sometimes constrain the imagination and restrict responses that fall within the safer, more dominant narratives, albeit well-intentioned. That there is a social world not necessarily aligned to the mores of the day and that culture, freedoms and notions of safety can be experienced in non-typical ways take some getting used to.

Challenging notions, efforts at integration Engagement with lived experience experts can often support this journey and challenge notions of what care and responsiveness constitute. Often, homeless persons form affiliations with local support circles that include fellow homeless persons, local eateries and pets, that offer them a self-curated sense of belongingness. Equally, and perhaps more significantly among the multitude of truths, is the narrative of oppression, scarcity, abuse, exposure to inclement weather conditions, and an exacerbation of symptoms associated with psychoses. Consequently, we would be loath to locate the problem in sacred and rigid binaries. It requires more than the paltry effort that is accorded now, to complicate the narrative and texture the phenomenon with the complexity that it deserves.

Noteworthy among a few efforts in India that have supported several HPMI re-entrer communities is the collaboration between the National Health Mission, the Tamil Nadu Department of Health, the Institute of Mental Health, The Banyan, the Azim Premji Foundation and local civil society organisations. This has resulted in access to emergency care and recovery centres (ECRCs) within district hospitals. This integration serves two purposes. First it ruptures the hegemonic domination of large asylum-styled treatment spaces that perpetuate the stereotypical identity of a diseased mind. More importantly, it services an increased number of people with greater immediacy, ensuring last-mile proximal care and crises responses across scattered geographies. Overcrowding, limited human service professionals, the use of restraint, and poor personal attention have impacted care ecologies globally, just as they have in India. A transformation that allows for design and social architecture adaptations in this context locates care in smaller units, are reasonably staffed, and mandate personal attention and better medical care to address comorbidities commonly found among those exposed to

enduring adversities. While recent policy shifts represent progress, they also demand deeper engagement and longer term commitment. We must also critically examine when and why rights are stripped away, examine the attitude and practice of society and care professionals and develop leadership and governance systems that are adaptive, dynamic, reflective and address intricate dilemmas and contested issues.

In this context, especially among those who opt to sleep rough despite there being an availability of care options, the symbolism of appearance — matted hair or shaven heads — deserves careful consideration. As Obeyesekere notes, a shaven head can signify renunciation, when seen in contexts, from Vrindavan's widows to residents of mental hospitals, and must not be immediately conflated with mental illness. Our approach, therefore, must be to be in continuous engagement, drawing frameworks for admission that respect individual agency. While the gains of intervention can be significant and the hardships of street life are real, coercive care often yields poor outcomes. Problems with institutional spaces

Meanwhile, about 37% of people living in State psychiatric facilities and other care homes experience long-term needs, with a median duration of stay of six years. Most of them have histories of homelessness and have been typically brought into the system as a result of police and judicial intervention. In 2017 the Supreme Court of India, in response to a public interest litigation, mandated that State governments undertake rehabilitative measures. In this context, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, had filed guidelines for rehabilitation homes. Unfortunately, the imagination of community re-entry pathways for those living long term in psychiatric facilities remains cloistered: in semi-institutional or trans-institutional options that transfer their custodial existence from one place to another. Further, these considerations are limited in their conceptualisation of who is "cured" and therefore "ready for discharge", imposing deterministic expectations of eligibility to live in the community. Besides perpetuating continued distancing from social resources and participation on equal terms, these institutional spaces risk defaulting to similar experiences of a lowered quality of life and violations of rights violations. Globally and in India, large-scale housing initiatives such as Housing First and Tarasha offer comprehensive social and clinical care and demonstrate the feasibility of such groundbreaking options for those with a range of disabilities and clinical needs. Similarly, over 700 people have accessed housing support and social care through the 'Home Again' collaborative across nine States in India, piloted first in 2018 as a research trial with support from Grand Challenges, Canada, and scaled up in partnership with the Rural India Supporting Trust. This has also been adopted by the Government of Tamil Nadu and other stakeholders nationally. For those transitioning



from hospitals, with mild to moderate disabilities, hostel-like co-living facilities that symbolise enhanced social capital and security, rather than rehabilitation homes, may be considered.

Reframe support measures Social protection and support measures for homeless people with mental illness require a radical shift and a reframing from paternalistic interventions to liberatory-focused strategies. A monthly priority disability allowance or out of work allowance of ₹1,500, while modest, could serve as a critical lifeline for those pushed to the margins of social hierarchy. By addressing the bureaucratic hurdles of securing Aadhar and facilitating banking access for HPIM, we pave the way for financial inclusion and economic empowerment. These documentation and financial scaffolds, however, must be complemented by more imaginative and holistic approaches. In parallel, structural issues such as discrimination and violence, segregation and deprivation, need to be emphatically addressed. Towards this end, social care and post-discharge support must be strengthened and integrated within the District Mental Health Programme. As a result of initiatives led by state and non-state actors, service engagement among 800 mental health service users who exited the ECRCs over a three-year period is at 75% post discharge, which is higher than the global experience. Advancing economic justice demands confronting systemic barriers, elevating insights from marginalised groups, and creating transformative models that accelerate inclusion. Workforce

participation, when thoughtfully facilitated, becomes a powerful tool for reappropriating economic space. Traditional employment models and vocational training initiatives are often not only disconnected from contemporary economic realities but they fail to account for individual agency, strengths and aspirations. Instead, they default to narrow notions of productivity and consistency. In this background, social cooperatives, where groups of individuals drive the exchange of their labour, offer a promising avenue for meaningful engagement, which fosters a sense of community and purpose. Our efforts must extend to cultivating social capital and implementing affirmative action policies that spur substantive socio-economic, cultural and political inclusion of HPIM. Tamil Nadu will be the first State that will soon release a policy that will integrate many of these pragmatic and studied approaches. It is our hope that this multifaceted approach will challenge the reductionist view of HPIM as mere recipients of charity to be extricated from their circumstances. Instead, it advocates for a framework that honours their agency, respects their choices, and supports their right to claim a place in society on their own terms. Vandana Gopikumar is with The Banyan, The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health and Aaladamara and has worked with homeless persons living with a mental illness (HPMI) for three decades. Supriya Sahu is Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, Health and Family Welfare. With contributions from Lakshmi Narasimhan, Director, The Banyan

CBI court sentences former Commercial Porter of SCR to jail

Hyderabad: The Special Judge for Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) cases, Hyderabad has sentenced M Praveen, the then Commercial Porter posted at the South Central Railway (SCR) Hyderabad division to undergo two years rigorous imprisonment with fine in a bribery case.

The CBI had registered a case against Praveen in June 2014, for demanding and accepting an amount of Rs. 40,000 from

the complainant, for closing an alleged complaint pending with the CBI against the complainant. He claimed to exercise his personal influence with CBI officials for the purpose.

A chargesheet was filed by CBI in the case in December the same year. The special court which took up the trial, Praveen guilty of the offence and sentenced him accordingly.