

## KCR's Kisan Sarkar places Telangana's agriculture boom highest among top 10 States

Hyderabad: Driven by a comprehensive approach to the needs of the farmers' community, key reforms and initiatives tried out in Telangana over the last decade have collectively propelled the State to the forefront of agricultural growth in India. The State achieved the highest annual growth rate in food grain production among the top 10 States, with a remarkable 16.42 per cent growth rate from 2018-19 to 2023-24.

The exceptional growth is acknowledged even by the Union government, with an analysis of data from the Union Ministry of Agriculture from 2018-19 to 2023-24 dispelling the negative narrative that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and his Ministers have repeatedly been trying to push against the previous BRS government. The data is available on the website [agriwelfare.gov.in](http://agriwelfare.gov.in), from the statistics link where 'Agricultural Statistics At a Glance' reports are published. The success has been attributed primarily to factors such as the positive impact created by State-sponsored programmes like the Rythu Bandhu scheme, which provided direct income support to farmers, and the Rythu Bima programme, offering financial security through insurance and also to infrastruc-

ture development achieved with the construction of Rythu Vedikas, which served as hubs for agricultural support and seed distribution.

The boom was attributed equally to the increased distribution of tractors and farm machinery that added substantially to farm mechanisation and enhanced use of fertilisers, free power to the agricultural sector and timely procurement of paddy and harvest of other crops to the last grain at a guaranteed minimum support price. Substantial debt relief extended with the crop loan waiver and special focus given to irrigation sector under the leadership of former chief minister K Chandrashekhar Rao, with the construction of major irrigation projects including the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme, also played crucial roles in transforming the State into a granary. Projects like Mission Kakatiya too ensured sufficient water for irrigation, unlike the present situation where farmers are forced to protest on the streets for water and loan waivers. The states of Punjab and Haryana, despite being traditional agricultural powerhouses, have shown the lowest average growth rates, indicating possible stagnation or



challenges in enhancing productivity during this period while West Bengal ranked at the bottom with a growth rate of just 0.14 percent, highlighting significant disparities.

Led by Telangana, the south region registered the highest average growth rate of 9.80 per cent, showcasing the region's overall strong performance. The Western Region with States like Maharashtra con-

tributed to a solid growth rate of 7.11 per cent.

The Central region registered a moderate growth rate of 4.53 per cent, largely due to Madhya Pradesh's performance. The Eastern and Northern Regions were found to be lagging behind with growth rates of 2.64 per cent and 1.09 per cent respectively.

## S Infra Heights Pvt. Ltd. Opens Head Office in Hyd



S Infra Heights Pvt. Ltd., founded by Dr. Sravanthi Ellasiri, the Youth Icon of Telangana 2021, has officially opened its head office at Sun City, Hyderabad, marking a new era in Telangana's real estate landscape. Dr. Sravanthi Ellasiri, the Founder and CEO of S Infra Heights, has transitioned from a successful Dental career to become a prominent entrepreneur. Prior to this, she had made her mark in Telangana as the pioneer of the complete

business developing consultancy, BOXWISH, where she successfully established the brand and surpassed sales targets. "With expertise in both offline and online marketing strategies, I am thrilled to embark on this new venture in the real estate sector," said Dr. Sravanthi Ellasiri. "S Infra is committed to offering wide range of projects including Plots, Flats, Villas, Farms, and Commercial Properties, at a single hub.

## Monsoon showers cool down Hyderabad; day temperatures plunge to seasonal lows

Hyderabad: The city experienced an unexpected chill as monsoon showers caused a significant drop in temperatures, bringing a sudden shift in the weather that had residents reaching for their blankets and jackets.

The drastic change occurred over the weekend, with temperatures plunging sharply, marking a notable departure from the warm days of late August. The maximum temperatures, which was around 30-31 degrees Celsius in late August, declined to approximately 24 degrees Celsius by September 1, while the minimum temperatures remained close at 22.3 degrees Celsius.

This narrow gap between the high and low temperatures is unusual for this time of year, especially considering the typical maximum temperature in early September is 30.5 degrees Celsius, with a normal minimum of around 22.5 degrees

Celsius. The cold spell continued into Monday, with early morning showers contributing to a sustained chill throughout the day.



According to Telangana State Development Planning Society data, the highest maximum temperature recorded in the city in the 24 hours leading up to 8:30 am on Monday was just 25.9 degrees Celsius at Bahadurpura, showing a notable decline in day temperatures.

Forecasters expect the cooler trend to persist in the coming days, with temperatures remaining lower than usual due to ongoing monsoon showers.

# In Sri Lanka's hill country, expectations low ahead of presidential polls

"There is little to look forward to in Sri Lanka," says Kathir\*, who will board a plane to Dubai later this month for an electrical maintenance job, leaving behind his parents, wife and two children. "There's no other option," says the 35-year-old, who paid 4,00,000 LKR (roughly ₹1,11,500) to an agent to get on a list of workers seeking employment abroad. Weeks after his planned departure, Sri Lanka will go to the polls to elect a new President. Citizens will have a say for the first time since the painful economic crash in 2022, when they took to the streets amid acute shortages and long power cuts. The mass uprising booted out former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who fled the country and resigned. "How does it matter who comes to power, when our situation remains the same?" Kathir asks dejectedly. Even with two jobs, as an electrician and autorickshaw driver, he struggles to support his family in the central Kandy district, which is teeming with tourists. The government is targeting more visitors, so the dollars they bring can refill its coffers that ran dry two years ago. Further, it is hoping to boost its foreign exchange earnings from exports and remittances of workers — \$ 5.9 billion in 2023 — who have flown out. Nearly 75,000 workers have left the country in the first quarter of 2024, after some 6 lakh people left during the preceding two years, a stark increase in departures, data published by the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment showed. President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who replaced Mr. Gotabaya, is seeking a mandate to take forward his government's economic recovery programme. He unfailingly reminds the electorate that fuel queues have vanished, there is no shortage of gas, and the country is on the path to recovery with the nearly \$3 billion International Monetary Fund package he obtained. He claims credit for restoring stability. Meanwhile, tens of thousands like Kathir are leaving the country to escape precarity. Enduring deprivation Families like his, living in the towns of Sri Lanka's hill country, may still be relatively better off, compared to those working and residing on the tea estates, according to Ponniah Logeswary, of the Kandy-based Human Development Organization, a non-profit working in plantations and rural areas. "Their plight is dire," she says.

Kandy is one of three districts in Sri Lanka's scenic Central Province that is home to a sizeable population of Malayaha (hill country) Tamils, apart from Sinhalese and Muslims. The Malayaha Tamils, whose ancestors were brought by the British from India to work in plantations two centuries ago, are among Sri Lanka's poorest. Some 1.5 lakh workers, mostly women, from the million-strong community work on tea and rubber estates across central and southern Sri Lanka. The Wickremesinghe administration promised to increase their daily wage to LKR 1,700 (about ₹475). After fiercely resisting the wage hike initially, some of the companies grudgingly agreed to the revised rate more recently but tied it to targets that estate workers say are nearly impossible to meet. If fair wages remain elusive to workers, their



only savings for the future took a beating when the government decided to restructure its domestic debt by recasting pension funds. "The promise of a higher wage is a joke, because almost no one gets paid the amount," says Ms. Logeswary. While criticising the companies for "exploiting" workers, she also blames politicians from the community for opting for "a handout culture", neglecting the rights of the people. While Sri Lankan voters will directly elect their president on September 21, political parties in parliament are pledging support to their preferred candidate based on past alignment and future alliance prospects in the parliamentary elections expected soon. After battling for citizenship until 2003, members of the Malayaha Tamil community — a 1948 legislation rendered them stateless — have been demanding decent housing and land rights for decades.

Watch | Why are Malayaha Tamils marching across Sri Lanka? "About 68% of people still live in colonial-era line rooms and don't own even a little piece of land. Instead of resolving the persisting discrimination, our politicians want to throw crumbs and cultivate people's loyalties," Ms. Logeswary fumes. Decades of neglect made the community more vulnerable than most others in Sri Lanka during the island nation's worst economic downturn since Independence. The Malayaha Tamils living on the estates feel its many impacts, such as job losses, falling incomes and malnutrition, more acutely. The jolt by the crisis and its enduring aftermath are also severely impacting children's education in the estates, according to Kanchanadevi Kirubakar, a member of the Ceylon Teachers' Union. Parents are increasingly unable to afford school transportation, stationery, or electricity owing to the high cost. Families are forced to skip meals. "If Covid delivered a blow to schooling in the remote, estate areas where online classes

are impossible, the crisis has only worsened their situation," she says. Addressing an election rally at a ground in nearby Digana town last weekend, Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa, who is also running for President, underscored the need to improve digital aids and technology in education and governance. "You may ask how we can afford all this. We will cut all unnecessary state expenses, punish the thieves and weed out corruption," he says loudly as supporters cheered. While Mr. Premadasa's speech focussed mostly on national issues, voters, especially in the hill country, tend to base their judgment on their immediate needs, observes D. Mathiyugarajah, senior political activist and Kandy district organiser of Mr. Premadasa's Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB or United People's Force), offers his views. "In my experience, voters in the hill country do not always vote for ideology. They vote based on issues that need urgent attention. In that sense, they vote for a promise made by an emissary of a national politician," he

notes. Sri Lanka's local and provincial bodies are currently defunct — elections have been indefinitely postponed — bringing residents' hyper-local, infrastructure-related concerns to the fore. Pointing to the rickety path near her estate home near Kandy, R. Mangayarkarasi says: "I wish someone lays a proper road along this stretch so we can bring a vehicle in case of a medical emergency." A retired tea estate worker, Ms. Mangayarkarasi now manages her home and takes care of her toddler grandchild. In her view, an accessible road to her home is as important as better job security for her son, who works in a garage, and daughter-in-law, who works long hours in a garment factory. Sri Lanka is headed for a national election. While some voters are looking for provincial solutions, even as they navigate the national economic crisis, few voice optimism about any candidate delivering on their demands. There are 38 presidential aspirants contesting this election but many voters in the hill country say they are not spoilt for choice.

## Telangana HC issues stay on Kakatiya University Ph.D admission process

Hyderabad: Justice T. Vinod Kumar of the Telangana High Court issued a stay on the Ph.D. admissions process at Kakatiya University on Wednesday. The court's intervention came in response to a petition challenging the university's decision to extend the merit list from 2022 for the current year's admissions. The petition, filed by Challa Amarender Reddy, an aspiring Ph.D. candidate, contested the university's August 16 proceeding which utilized the previous year's merit list for the current admissions cycle. Petitioner said

that, this practice unfairly disadvantages new applicants and may preclude them from pursuing their doctoral studies at the university. Justice Vinod also questioned, if you want to fill the seats with old merit list what will happen to those who have recently completed Post Graduation. Akhi Ennamshetti, representing the petitioner argued that a fresh notification is required to be issued enabling all the eligible candidates to participate in the examination process. He emphasized that a fresh notification would ensure a fair and transparent selection process.

# Haryana, J&K Assembly Polls a Litmus Test for farmers: SKM

Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), Sept 2 : Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella of Indian farmers, has exhorted the farmers to unitedly vote against the BJP in the forthcoming assembly elections and said that Haryana, J&K Assembly Polls are a Litmus Test for farmers to defend livelihoods to win the struggle against corporatisation of Agriculture. SKM has added that Poll Drubbing to BJP is Essential to Eventually Ensure MSP@C2+50% and Comprehensive Loan Waiver, Appropriate Memorial for 736 farmer martyrs at Delhi Border.

In a statement issued by the media cell of SKM, which has been shared to our representative by SKM leader and All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) Vice-President Com Inderjeet Singh, it was informed that Kisan Mazdoor Panchayat will be held at Hisar, Haryana on 7th Sept, 2024. The farmers of Haryana and Jammu Kashmir will rally the people at large to Expose, Oppose and Punish BJP in the Assembly elections that will eventually ensure implementation of MSP@C2+50% with guaranteed procurement and comprehensive loan waiver across India with a priority to the small and middle farmers and agricultural workers.

The release claimed that the massive setback suffered by BJP across India in the just concluded 18th Lok Sabha elections- NDA lost in 159 rural constituencies- was mainly due to the anger among farmers, workers, youth and marginalised sections including Minorities, Dalits and Adivasis against the pro-corporate policies imposed by the Modi Government. Another drubbing to BJP in these Assembly elections will amount to a litmus test for farmers to make certain their victory in the struggle across India against the corporatisation of agriculture and in defence of their livelihoods.

The SKM alleged that the Haryana Chief Minister had attempted to misguide the farmers by falsely claiming MSP for 24 crops consciously hiding the fact that the procurement rate is not based on C2+50% but the current rate of A2+FL+50%. The C2+50% rate of paddy, one of the major crops of Haryana is Rs.3012/qntl while the current rate is Rs. 2300/qntl means less by Rs.712/qntl. Paddy farmers alone in Haryana had a loss of Rs.3851.90 crore in the year 2023-24. Similarly, though the workers movement were consistently in struggle demanding minimum wage of Rs.26000/ month, rolling back of four pro corporate labour codes and regularisation of their jobs in schemes including Anganwadi, Asha and Mid-Day meals, the BJP led State Government in Haryana and the Modi Government that rules Jammu Kashmir through the Lieutenant Governor had brutally ignored these huge mass sections. SKM stated that by joining the 385 days long historic farmers struggle, 736 farmer martyrs made supreme sacrifice to save agriculture and forced the Union Government to repeal the 3 anti-national Farm Acts. The BJP led State Government of Haryana has insulted those martyrs and did not build an appropriate Martyrs Memorial at Singhu/Tikri borders so far. SKM has appealed to the people of Haryana to



uphold its great tradition of respecting martyrs and give befitting reply by massively rejecting the pro-corporate BJP. Samyukta Kisan Morcha further added that the farmers and workers movements will allow no stone unturned to ensure a huge setback to the anti-farmer, anti-worker BJP led NDA. The Haryana State Coordination Committees of both the Samyukta Kisan Morcha and the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions have resolved to convene Farm-

ers and Workers Panchayat on 7th September 2024 at Hisar. Concrete action plan of massive campaigns at ground level will be discussed and announced in this convention. The all-India leaders will also join the convention. In Jammu and Kashmir also the farmers' organisations and Trade Unions will ensure massive door to door campaigns in villages and towns to expose the pro-corporate policies that create large scale unemployment, price rise and in-

equality, privatise education and health sectors, deny minimum support price, minimum wage and comprehensive loan waiver to the farmers and workers apart from restoration of the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir. Bhiwani district farmers under the banner of AIKS have already staged a one-day Dharna on August 28 at Bahal Tehsil demanding insurance claim for cotton damage 2023, crop loss for 2024 and for early installation of pending tubewell connections.

## In Han Solo style: Surviving the underworld in a galaxy far, far away

Outlaws is one of the most awaited games of the year – an open world interpretation of the iconic Star Wars franchise that promises new terrains, a non-Jedi/Force centric protagonist, and the opportunity for players to engage with the various factions in the galaxy. There is a lot to like here as you navigate the uneasy peace across planets, build your reputation, develop relationships, and balance the Pykes, Crimson Dawn, Hutts, and the Ashigas. The open world is both dynamic and vibrant as you explore all what it can offer a thief like Kay. The open world that Outlaws offers is breathtaking and both visuals and background score that accompany it are top notch. This is flagship game development, one that rivals the cinematic experience that the Star Wars films offer. However, in terms of gameplay, Out-

laws is unlike anything that EA and Respawn offer with the Jedi franchise. This is a live and dynamic world that doesn't need to be saved or rescued, rather one you must understand and benefit from. Kay is a thief and a fixer and the jobs she receives are often to steal, smuggle, infiltrate, or enforce. Stealth, imagination, and surviving the odd alarm is her expertise and along with her pet Nix she must emerge unscathed from the jams she lands up in. Nix is not just plain adorable but is also the heart and soul of the experience as it pick-pockets, sabotages, and triggers detonations on unsuspecting guards. Massive has done a great job with the RPG skill tree and abilities here as some of the unique abilities are not just unlocked but also implemented in novel ways. In early parts

of the game you will find abilities like "fast talk," "keep talking," and "I know someone" quite useful in earning both credits and connections. The game also offers a reputation-based system and a decision-making system that determines your relationships with the various factions and also how welcome you are in their territories. While your decisions don't change the way the story progresses, they do unlock new missions and opportunities for Kay. Outlaws' combat is its weakest offering as its stealth mechanics are too similar to Assassins Creed and the gun-based combat is forgettable. While the unique interactions that Nix offers spice things up a bit, Kay doesn't have the same charisma and stroke of luck that Han Solo carries despite the leather jacket and the retro hairdo.

# Youth for Anti-Corruption Honors Honest Government Officials in Telangana

Former CBI JD Lakshminarayana Calls for Political and Election Reforms to Curb Corruption



The Youth for Anti-Corruption, a renowned NGO working towards a corruption-free society in the Telugu states for the past fourteen years, recently organized an event to honor honest government officials who have worked diligently and with integrity. The program, held at Haritha Plaza in Begumpet, Hyderabad, was chaired by Youth for Anti-Corruption Organization Founder Rajendra Palnati and attended by several eminent guests, including former CBI JD Lakshminarayana, former IAS Akunuri Murali, renowned music director RP Patnaik, Chanchalguda Jail Superintendent Shivakumar Goud, and former MLA Bakkani Narsimhulu.

During the event, former CBI JD Lakshminarayana emphasized the need for political and election reforms to eradicate corruption, stating, "If politics improves, society improves. Election reform and political reforms should be brought. Only then can corruption be eradicated." He also stressed the importance of cultivating honesty from an early age, saying, "Honesty should be cultivated in school, home and temple." Akunuri Murali, a former IAS officer, highlighted the importance of transparency and accountability in the government, urging citizens to question corruption and hold authorities accountable. "Governments should make every information available to the public," he said.

Music director RP Patnaik commended the Youth for Anti-Corruption organization's efforts, stating that it is difficult to find genuinely honest people in government departments, and the

organization's recognition of such individuals is highly commendable. Chanchalguda Jail Superintendent Shivakumar Goud appreciated the organization's thoughtful and innovative programs, saying, "To make a good society, we need good people. Good people should have recognition, and the Youth for Anti-Corruption organization is giving that recognition." During the event, the Youth for Anti-Corruption organization honored 16 honest government officials from various departments, including the Telangana Agriculture University Vice Chancellor, R&B Chief, retired Joint Collector, Superintendent General Hospital, and others. 10 officers names and designation:

V. Praveen Rao- Ex vice chancellor, Telangana Agriculture University, Dr. Ramakisha - Govt Medical College Principal. M. Madhav Reddy - Retired GM at Bank of Baroda, A. Nagendra -Retired Joint Collector, B. Karuna - AO Agriculture, Amresh Kumar -Retired ADA, Jaswanth Kumar - Retired R & B chief engineer, Y. SrinivasRao - Retired Deputy Director, Ashok - ADE Hyderabad and GVS Prasad-Retired Secition Officer at Consumer Forum." Youth for Anti-Corruption organization is always ahead for a good change in the society," said Rajendra Palnati, the Founder of YAC. "

We have collected the details of the officers who have worked ethically and honestly from the last three to four months across the state of Telangana and honored them with the name of Atmiya Satkaram." The event was attended by a diverse group of participants, including

Dhannapaneni Ashok kumar, Dr. Sravanti, Secretary Jayaram, and others, who all contributed to the success of the program.

## Education New Zealand's Sustainable Tomorrow Campaign: Virtual Poster Design Competition!

As part of Education New Zealand's ongoing "Sustainable Tomorrow" campaign, which highlights Aotearoa New Zealand's leading contributions to education and sustainability, Education New Zealand is thrilled to announce the "Sustainable Tomorrow: Virtual Poster Design Competition."

This campaign provides valuable opportunities for individuals to engage in shaping a more sustainable future.

Education New Zealand invites high school students (Classes IX-XII) to take part in this digital poster design competition and make a positive impact on the world.

This competition offers an excellent opportunity for students to enhance their creativity and deepen their understanding of sustainability. The theme for this year's competition is "Innovating for a Sustainable Future."

# \*Employ Social & Behaviour Change Communication strategies for eradicating Malnutrition: Shri Jishnu Dev Varma\*

\*Outreach programme on 'Nutritious Diet for All' inaugurated by Governor of Telangana\*



The Hon'ble Governor of Telangana, Shri Jishnu Dev Varma inaugurated the five-day Integrated Communication & Outreach Programme 'Nutritious Diet for All' organised by the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) in the city today to commemorate the 'Poshan Maah' (National Nutrition Month Celebrations). The five day event at Telangana Mahila Viswavidyalayam will see the participation of scientists and experts from National institutions like National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) and Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR), apart from the Women and child welfare department of the state government of Telangana. Smt. Shruti Patil, Addl. Director General, PIB & CBC walked Hon'ble Governor through the Photo Exhibition highlighting various aspects of nutrition like the latest Dietary Guidelines for Indians, the importance of macro and micro nutrients, methods of reading food labels etc. The Central Bureau of Communication has meticulously curated the content displayed by roping in NIN and FSSAI. A total of 40 panels on the theme 'Nutritious Diet for All' have been put up displayed during the five-day programme. The Governor appreciated the fact that the information was displayed in Telugu which would enable better dissemination. The event also features stalls by ICMR National Institute of Nutrition, Women Development and Child Welfare Dept. of the state government, Publications Division, Govt. of India, Nutri Hub, Indian Institute of Millet Research and Dept. of Food & Nutrition of the University.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said, "India is a diverse country, we have different types of cultures, different types of languages and to reach out to the people with educative information on various aspects of nutrition is a challenge". He said that the Poshan Abhiyaan aims to address these challenges through innovative strategies to change social behaviour towards nutrition. Hon'ble Governor, who witnessed certain folk art forms like Burrakatha and Palle Suddulu, in which messages regarding good nutrition had been incorporated, commended the effort and suggested that it could be replicated elsewhere in the country too. He observed that when messages regarding combating

anaemia, eating vitamin rich food are conveyed through art forms, it is well received by target audience comprising of adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.

Calling upon the society to join hands with Government to achieve 'Viksit Bharat', he said it involves not just economic progress but also the well-being of both the mind and body. The Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi scheme endeavours to revamp anganwadi centers into holistic hubs that provide both nutrition and education, he said. This approach recognizes the essen-



tial link between nurturing the body and mind for a brighter future." Smt. Shruti Patil, Addl. Director General, PIB & CBC in her inaugural address said Hon'ble Prime Minister in his recent Mann Ki Baat edition underlined the importance of nutrition especially for our children, the future citizens of our country. The PM has given a clarion call to contribute towards making society and nation a healthy and strong one. This Photo exhibition is a small step in this direction. Dr. G. Bhanuprakash Reddy, Scientist G & Head, Biochemistry Division, ICMR National Institute of Nutrition, Smt.

Dr. M. Vijjulatha, Vice - Chancellor (I/c), Telangana Mahila Viswavidyalayam, Officials from Women Development and Child Welfare Department, Govt. of Telangana and others also graced the inaugural ceremony. The POSHAN Abhiyaan (PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 8th March, 2018 in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan. The focus of Abhiyaan is to lay emphasis on nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years age.

## HDFC Bank and JLR India Sign MoU for Auto Financing

HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, and JLR India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for auto financing. The Bank will now be JLR's preferred vehicle financier. This will bring a host of benefits for consumers such as special financing schemes, exclusive offers/ events, and priority services / engagements. By leveraging the combined strengths of both brands, the aim is to provide customers with seamless financing options and a modern luxury car buying experience. The MoU which encompasses offerings for the entire range of JLR models, was signed by Mr. Rajan Amba - Managing Director JLR India and Mr. Arvind Vohra - Group Head, Retail Assets HDFC Bank. Present on the occasion were other senior executives from HDFC Bank including Mr. Akhilesh Kumar Roy - Business Head, Auto Loans & Inventory Finance HDFC Bank.

The services will be available across all JLR exclusive showrooms and dealerships. Speaking on the development, Mr. Arvind Vohra, Group Head - Retail Assets, HDFC Bank said, "We are excited about this partnership with an iconic and aspirational automotive brand like JLR. The Bank will leverage its robust execution capabilities to offer a seamless



customer experience." Mr Rajan Amba, Managing Director, JLR India said, "Our dealer partners are integral to our business, and we are pleased to be able to develop solutions to help them in ease of doing business." "Together, we aim to further grow the market and offer our portfolio to an increasing set of clients. To that effect, we are excited to partner with HDFC

Bank for this financing program, which will further strengthen the access of our dealer partners to increased working capital. By integrating HDFC Bank's expertise and extensive reach, we aim to offer our clients a tailored range of financial choices that cater to their individual needs." Mr. Akhilesh Kumar Roy, Business Head, Auto Loans & Inventory Finance HDFC Bank, said, "

# What is PMLA's bail concession for women?

The Supreme Court on Tuesday (August 27, 2024) granted bail to Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha in graft and money laundering cases registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) respectively in connection with the alleged Delhi excise policy scam. A Bench comprising Justices B.R. Gavai and K.V. Viswanathan also castigated the Delhi High Court's decision to deny the application of a rare leeway that the bail provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, (PMLA) provide women when it rejected Kavitha's bail plea back in April. On July 1, the Delhi High Court dismissed the bail plea of the BRS leader noting that she was "well-educated" and thus could not be considered "vulnerable" so as to fall within the ambit of the exception. Similarly, a trial court order in April by Judge Kaveri Baweja reasoned that the specific PMLA provision could not apply to a woman who is clearly "well-educated" and "well-placed in society."

What is the exception?

Section 45 of the PMLA imposes stringent "twin conditions" for obtaining bail in money laundering cases. First, the accused has to prove that he or she is prima facie innocent of the offence and second, the accused should be able to convince the judge that he or she is not likely to commit any offence while out on bail. These rigorous requirements make the provision draconian, virtually rendering it impossible for anyone to obtain bail until the completion of the trial. However, there is a crucial exception to this bail standard. The proviso to clause (1) of Section 45 allows courts the discretion to exempt persons below 16 years of age, women, the sick or the infirm from these dual conditions for bail. It is similar to the exemptions provided for women and minors under other criminal law statutes — such as under Section 437 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC).

What did the top Court say?

At the outset, a Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and K.V. Viswanathan elucidated that the concession provided to women under the PMLA owes its origin to Article 15(3) of the Constitution, which mandates that the state make special provisions for women and children, identifying them as vulnerable groups. In the impugned order, the High Court reasoned that K. Kavitha is a "well-educated and accomplished woman" with significant accomplishments in politics and social work. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma further noted that she had served as both a Member of Parliament and a Member of the Legislative Council. As a result, the judge underscored, that the BRS leader could not be equated to a "vulnerable woman who may have been misused to commit an offence" — the category of women that the PMLA exception applies to. Reliance was also placed on the Supreme Court's judgment in Saumya Chaurasia v. Directorate of Enforcement (2023) to buttress the argument that nowadays educated and well-placed women could also veer into illegal activities while

pursuing commercial ventures. However, Justice B.R. Gavai observed in the order that the High Court had in fact "misapplied" the Saumya Chaurasia judgment. He pointed out that the ruling had actually urged judges to "be more sensitive and sympathetic" toward the category of vulnerable persons covered by the first proviso to Section 45 of the PMLA. While there was no mandate for courts to grant bail in every case involving individuals within this category, the Bench underscored that the 2023 verdict had cautioned judges to use their discretion judiciously and prudently while considering such cases involving the deprivation of personal liberty. "Further, this Court in the case of Saumya Chaurasia does not say that merely because a woman is highly educated or sophisticated or a Member of Parliament or a Member of Legislative Assembly, she is not entitled to the benefit of the proviso to Section 45(1) of the PMLA," Justice Gavai clarified. Supreme Court grants bail to K. Kavitha in excise policy cases

What are the judicial precedents?

In June last year, the Delhi High Court granted bail to 49-year-old Preeti Chandra, wife of Unitech promoter Sanjay Chandra, in a money laundering case being investigated by the ED. During the proceedings, the central agency argued that the accused was not a "household" lady but was at the helm of multiple companies and thus did not qualify for the bail concession under the PMLA. Dismissing such a contention, Justice Jasmeet Singh pointed out that neither the PMLA nor the Constitution intended to "classify women" on the basis of their education and social standing. He reasoned that such beneficial provisions which are reflective of the "constitutional spirit" must be given a liberal interpretation. "Thus, to argue what kind of



woman is entitled to fall within the proviso to section 45(1) PMLA by creating an ad-hoc illusory sub-classification of educated women, business women, women belonging to high social strata, within the broader classification of "woman", as sought to be done by the respondent, is

misconceived," the Court asserted. However, certain qualifiers were added — the accused must not be a flight risk, nor should they be capable of influencing witnesses or tampering with evidence to be eligible for bail. This bail order was subsequently affirmed by the Supreme Court in August last year.

## OU to collaborate with ISRO's-NRSC to virtually fence its campus

Hyderabad: Amidst growing challenges of land encroachment, the Osmania University (OU) is planning to embark on a project to protect its land from the land sharks. With a blend of cutting-edge technology and traditional maps, the university administration will shortly geofence its vast campus. The initiative is aimed not just for ascertaining and tackling the unauthorised land use but also safeguarding its lands and properties from the land mafia.

The geofencing refers to a virtual fence or perimeter around a physical location, which could spread across several hundreds of acres, with a satellite view and GPS coordinates.

To take forward the initiative, the university will soon collaborate with the ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) for virtual fencing. The NRSC using one of

the satellites like the Cartosat-3 will be capturing comprehensive high-resolution images of the campus. The satellite images will then be layered over the university's original map. With combined maps, the university can ascertain the unauthorised structures that have come up on the varsity land. Furthermore, as virtual boundaries set around the campus and satellite images are captured periodically, the university administration can easily detect any breaches into its land.

Developed by the ISRO, the Cartosat-3 captures high-resolution images from above 500 km, sources said, adding that even a pencil, pen or a stick on the ground could be easily differentiated via the satellite images. "Since the OU is century old, the Survey of India help may be sought for original survey maps of varsity lands for



the virtual fencing besides to ascertain encroachments," sources said. To begin with, the university administration will be geofencing its campus and later extend the initiative to its constituent and PG centres. For this, a memorandum of understanding will shortly be signed with the NRSC, a senior university official told 'Telangana Today'.

# The whole truth can sometimes be too much, says Simran Mangharam

It is almost impossible to form a deep bond without being authentic. When it comes to romantic relationships, authenticity is a prerequisite. One cannot have a bond endure over time, and remain healthy, without this. Now, some well-meaning partners confuse authenticity with unbridled honesty, and I don't mind putting this bluntly: sometimes, for the sake of the relationship and the other person, one simply has to bend the truth a little. This is usually done to avoid hurting the other person ("Someone at work just said my singing voice is 'unbearable'. Do you think it is?" "Of course not, honey." Don't pause. Don't think. There is no other answer.) But sometimes, it can be prudent to hold something back so as not to overwhelm the other person. A 32-year-old client of mine, let's call him Manav, is a lawyer in Delhi. He is in love with a 33-year-old advertising executive who watched her parents' marriage fall apart and resolved, early on, to never marry. They have been in a relationship for two years. Manav believes he can change her mind. He also says he knows that his only hope of doing so is to avoid mentioning the m-word at all. But it's getting harder and harder not to broach the subject, he says. He believes that their healthy, loving relationship is helping her heal. She still vociferously criticises couples who decide to head down the aisle. He refrains from commenting, at these times. He believes she will eventually see how different their marriage would be to her parents'. And I wish him luck. I have seen this approach work successfully a number of times. Patience, prudence and unconditional love can be a powerful combination. Meanwhile, in Mumbai, 42-year-old design professional Alia and 44-



year-old finance executive Usman have been married for a decade. He has three siblings, also in Mumbai, and yet all caregiving for his parents falls to him and his wife. It upsets Alia terribly that his siblings do not share the emotional, physical and financial burden of this care, but she has decided that she cannot talk to Usman about how she feels. She doesn't want to upset him and make him feel more alone. She did try suggesting, once, that

one of his siblings could help look after his ailing father, when they were finding it particularly difficult to juggle it all. Usman responded by saying that he didn't want his parents to have someone around who had not stepped forward themselves.

She still feels the unfairness of this, but has decided that there is not much more she can do. Over the years, she has worked hard with her counsellor to accept this situation. She is now trying to see it as

an indication of how committed and caring her husband is. I worry that this issue may still rear its head and threaten the peace of their relationship. But I believe Alia and Usman, given how much love and understanding there is between them, would find ways to weather such a storm. How does one decide, then, what kind of issue to speak up about, and which ones to stay silent on? That's a column for another day. Stay tuned for it and, meanwhile, be kind to one another.

## Chennai students cheer as India's first reusable hybrid rocket takes off

Satrajit had come all the way from Dubai for this momentous occasion. It might have lasted just a few seconds or so, but the event was, in this 13-year-old's words, "exhilarating".

He was part of the 'Edutech for Space' programme that worked on Mission Rhumi for more than a year. So were many other space-crazy children; for, Mission Rhumi – launched in Chennai on August 24 – is India's first reusable hybrid rocket on a mobile launchpad. An initiative of Space Zone India and Martin Group, Rhumi-1 carried three cube satellites designed to monitor and collect data on atmospheric conditions. The rocket also deployed 50 different Pico satellites, each dedicated to studying various aspects of atmospheric conditions.

At the helm of things was mission mentor Myswamy Annadurai, former ISRO scientist and affectionately called the 'moon man of India', who said, "Till now, only Elon Musk was doing a reusable launch vehicle but today, we have demonstrated it right here in Chennai. What we

witnessed today is almost like the rocket launches at Sriharikota. Rocket science can be taught in schools too because there are many opportunities here. Like how Chennai's schools throw up champions in sports, music and arts, rocket scientists can be honed too."

Weighing about 80 kilograms and 3.5 metres tall, the single-piece Rhumi-1 rocket combines the advantages of both liquid oxidiser and solid fuel propellant systems, making it a milestone in aerospace technology, he added. The mobile launch system allows scientists to adapt to various launch scenarios with ease from any location. Explained Anand Megalingam, Founder and CEO of Space Zone India, "By introducing a reusable hybrid rocket, we are not only reducing the financial burden of space exploration but minimising its environmental impact." Mission Rhumi has another goal: awareness about rocket science among students. Satrajit, for instance, underwent online classes on orbits and planets, before heading to BITS Pilani for a hands-on session with satel-



lites. He says, "It was amazing to know that whatever I had in my hand was probably going to be in space somewhere. With this

rocket being made in such a cost-effective manner, who knows, the day that children can build rockets with our own allowance is not far away."

## \*Bandaru Dattatreya Praises Film Unit for Exploring Sanatana Vedic Narrative

The production unit of the upcoming film "Production No.1 (Title Not yet Revealed)" had the honor of meeting with Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya at Raj Bhavan, the Governor's Bungalow in Hyderabad. The film, directed by Satish Kumar and produced by Kashetti Kumar under the K.K. Pictures Banner, is a highly anticipated pan-India movie set to be released in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada languages.

During the meeting, the production team shared details about the features of this currently under-production film. The Film explores thought-provoking questions about the future of the Sanatana Vedic tradition, the role of individuals in upholding dharma (righteous duty) for the country, and

the challenges faced by today's youth. The film also addresses the pressing issue of rape and other relevant social concerns. Governor Bandaru Dattatreya congratulated the film unit on their commendable efforts and expressed his support for the project. The event was attended by Producer Kashetti Kumar, Actor Anthannagari Rajender, Mishala Chandraiah, and Shikha Vijay. "We are thrilled to bring this important narrative to the forefront through the medium of cinema," said Producer Kashetti Kumar. "Our goal is to inspire audiences and facilitate meaningful discussions about the preservation of our rich cultural heritage and the responsibilities of every individual towards the nation."



## University of Southampton awarded licence to establish India campus



The UK's University of Southampton, world top 100 university, has become the first UK university to be granted a licence by the Indian government to establish a comprehensive campus in the country. The granting of a licence from the University Grants Commission (UGC) marks a significant step forward, allowing the University of Southampton to progress with its plans to offer world-leading education, research, knowledge exchange, and enterprise in India.

The University has been active in India for more than 50 years and has developed deep and mutually beneficial partnerships. The upcoming campus will enable the University of Southampton to build on these links by amplifying research col-

laboration and impact, extending teaching partnerships, creating two-way student and staff mobility, and ensuring local civic and community engagement. It aims to develop world-class, work-prepared graduates with specialist and transferable higher skills that will enhance India's fast-growing knowledge economy. The campus will undertake research and knowledge exchange in partnership with local universities, industries, and government, applying the results to deliver real-world social and economic impact, and enable a more entrepreneurial and innovative country. Speaking on the announcement, Mark E. Smith, President, and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton, said: "In the 21st century, no university can be truly global without en-

gaging with India. Our intention is to establish a campus that delivers social value and economic impact to India and the university by bringing together Southampton's world class activities in education, research, and knowledge exchange and enterprise, with all the talent of the rising global superpower that is India."

He further added, "Through this new campus, the University of Southampton will help deliver a critical element of the Government of India's transformative agenda, playing our part in harnessing the potential, talent and capabilities of Indian youth." Professor Andrew Atherton, Vice-President International and Engagement, said: "University of Southampton Delhi NCR will be the first comprehensive international campus in India. It will foster aca-

democratic collaboration and bring an international dimension to the Indian higher education system, opening up opportunities to study for a top 100 degree in-country. "We will develop world-class, work-ready graduates with specialist and transferable skills that will enhance India's fast-growing knowledge economy. We will undertake research and knowledge exchange in partnership with local universities, industries and government and apply the results to deliver real-world social and economic impact. "This is a hugely exciting initiative for India, and our university, and we thank the University Grants Commission of India, the Ministry of Education, the British High Commission, the Indian High Commission, and the British Council, for their confidence in our application" he added.

## Flood-affected Khammam attempts crawling back to normalcy

Khammam: With rains staying away for nearly 24 hours, people in the flood-hit Khammam have started making attempts to return to normal life.

Residents in Bokkalagadda, Moti Nagar, Damsalapuram, Danavaigudem, Prakash Nagar and Kalvoddu areas, which were inundated with Munneru floodwaters and residents in Kaviraju Nagar, Chaitanya Nagar, Cheruvu Bazar and others areas that were inundated by rainwater, have started salvaging their belongings. The residents started to clean their houses that turned muddy due to rains and floodwaters. However, lack of power supply and drinking water supply has been troubling the residents in affected areas,

the locals complained. It was estimated that over 15,000 households were affected in the city. Meanwhile, the floods caused by the continuous rains in the last few days damaged standing crops in about 57,000 acres as per preliminary assessment, according to officials.

Crops grown by as many as 37,000 farmers in 188 villages were affected. According to district agriculture officer D Pullaiah, crops in a large extent of area in Madhira mandal were damaged. It was estimated that crops in about 35,251 acres were damaged in Madhira mandal. Crops in 15,577 acres were damaged in Kusumanchi mandal. Crops in large areas of Sathupalli,