

Haryana Govt claims 29% reduction in stubble-burning incidents compared to the previous year

Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), October 28: The Haryana Govt claims that it has achieved 29% reduction in stubble-burning incidents compared to the previous year. Stating this, a government spokesperson said that the Haryana government is taking significant steps for crop residue management in the state. Following the directives of Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, a state-specific scheme has been implemented. This initiative provides financial assistance to farmers for crop residue management while setting zero burning targets for panchayats to curb stubble burning incidents. As a result of these efforts, there have been a total of 713 recorded incidents of stubble burning by ICAR this year, marking a 29 percent reduction compared to last year. The government spokesperson said that burning paddy stubble after harvest not only contributes to air pollution but also diminishes soil fertility and adversely affects farmers' health. Consequently, the government is actively raising awareness among farmers at the village level about the importance of not burning stubble. Thanks to these initiatives, 83,070 farmers have registered to manage 7.11 lakh acres of paddy area as of October 28, 2024. The registration deadline is November 30, 2024.

An official release informed that Incentive amount of Rs 223 crore has been given to farmers from the year 2020-21 to 2023-24. The spokesperson stated that the government is providing subsidized crop management equipment to farmers for both in situ and ex situ management. From 2018-19 to 2024-25, a total of 1,00,882 crop residue management machines have been made available to farmers at a subsidy of 50 to 80 percent. This year, farmers have purchased 9,844 machines.

Last week, a farmer awareness program was organized in the surrounding villages by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra Ambala of Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar. Agricultural scientist Dr. Devendra Chahal advised the farmers of the village not to burn crop residues. Farmers should give as much importance to crop residues as they consider the crop economically useful. Dr. Chahal said that crop residues help in maintaining the fertility of the soil, due to which the quality of the produce also improves. Therefore, farmers should make full use of whatever machinery is available to mix these crop residues in the field. Super-Seeder is also one of these machines, using which farmers can press the residues of paddy crop well in the fields and also sow wheat. Nowadays, it costs about two to two and a half thousand rupees to sow wheat in one acre with a super-seeder. Along with crop residue management, wheat sowing is also done very well, along with this, the farmer's time is also saved and early sowing is done. The government spokesperson further added that the farm-

ers are being given an incentive of Rs1,000 per acre for managing paddy crop residues. In addition, an incentive of Rs 7,000 per acre is provided for adopting alternative crops in paddy areas under the Mera Pani-Meri Virasat Yojana. This year, 33,712 farmers have registered for crop diversification, opting for other crops instead of paddy on 66,181 acres. From 2020-21 to 2023-24, incentives worth Rs 223 crore have been disbursed to farmers.

The spokesperson also mentioned that the government is offering an incentive of Rs 4,000 per acre for adopting Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR) technology. Furthermore, Gaushalas are also being given an incentive of a maximum Rs 15,000 as transportation charges of bales at the rate of Rs 500 per acre. Various industries are being established near villages to utilize stubble, allowing farmers to generate additional income instead of resorting to burning it. The state government has decided that red zone panchayats will be given an incentive of Rs 1 lakh for achieving zero burning target. The spokesperson said that the government has categorized villages into red, yellow, and green zones based on the incidents of paddy stubble burning in the previous year. Panchayats in the red and yellow zones will receive incentives from the government to reduce stubble burning incidents. Red



zone panchayats will be awarded an incentive of Rs 1 lakh, while yellow zone panchayats will receive Rs 50,000 for achieving zero burning targets. He said that despite the government's efforts and incentives to prevent stubble burning, strict action has been taken against law violators.

So far, a total of 334 challans have been issued, and fines amounting to Rs 8.45 lakh have been recovered from farmers. In addition, 418 'red entries' have been recorded in the field records of these farmers, and police cases have been registered against 192 farmers.

Reflections IAS Academy seminar held at CMR College of Engineering and Technology

Hyderabad: A career in civil services offers fulfillment through problem-solving, a dynamic work environment that encourages continuous learning and job security, says Dr. G. Vivekananda, Assistant Director from Ministry of Defense. Delivering keynote address titled 'Civil Services—the G.O.A.T Career for a Fresh Graduate' on Monday during an insightful seminar on civil services, organised by Telangana Today and Namaste Telangana in collaboration with Reflections IAS Academy at CMR College of Engineering and Technology, Dr Vivekananda highlighted the broader impact of civil services as a career choice that transcends personal ambition and focuses on societal transformation. In his talk, Dr. Vivekananda, who is also Chief Mentor at Reflections IAS Academy, outlined four motivating factors for pursuing civil services, emphasizing the role of civil servants as 'game changers' who address social challenges like poverty, education, and public health. Speaking to a lively audience, Dr. Vivekananda urged students to identify challenges in every sphere of life and think of offering solutions from their perspective. The UPSC-2014 topper in his



closing remarks inspired students to consider how their career choices could contribute to the nation's progress. Sriramana Muppalla, Director of Reflections IAS Academy, provided insights into the UPSC examination process and described it as a journey of profound knowledge

expansion. Major Dr. Narayana, Principal, CMRCET, advised students to look beyond placements and salary packages, encouraging them to pursue UPSC ranks to serve society. He thanked the Telangana Publications management for organizing these awareness sessions in colleges across Telangana.

In Jharkhand, a jostle for the women vote

Sukhiya Tirkey has never felt so important. After selling vegetables by the roadside in Ranchi for more than two decades, this is for the first time that the 48-year-old feels recognised as a constituency that can influence election outcomes. As campaigning picks up with Jharkhand heading towards a two-phase Assembly poll next month, Sukhiya and several others like her have emerged as an influential voting bloc, prompting political parties to actively solicit their support this year.

On October 14, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led coalition government in the State approved an increase in the assistance given to women from families living below the poverty line under the Mukhyamantri Maiya Samman Yojana (MMSY) from ₹1,000 per month to ₹2,500. The hike was triggered by the Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) promise of giving a monthly allowance of ₹2,100 to women in the State if it comes to power. The party has already started distributing forms recording details of the likely beneficiaries. While the raise in allowance is to come into effect from December, Jharkhand's 81 Assembly constituencies will go to polls on November 13 and 20. The vote bank as per the electoral rolls, the State has a total of 2.59 crore voters — 1.31 crore male and 1.28 crore female — this year. Women outnumber men in 32 of the 81 constituencies. Of these 32 seats, 26 constituencies are reserved for Scheduled Tribes (STs) and two for Scheduled Castes (SCs). Among these seats are Chaibasa, Ghatshila, Manoharpur, Kharsawan, Kunti, Shikaripara, Majhgaon, Maheshpur Littipara, and Simdega. The State has a total of 28 constituencies reserved for STs and nine for SCs. More women exercised their franchise than men in Jharkhand during the Lok Sabha election held earlier this year, a good enough reason for political parties to woo this segment of the population. According to Jharkhand Chief Electoral Officer K. Ravi Kumar, the reason behind higher women turnout was active participation by them and the migration of men from the State.

Of the 1.7 crore electors who cast their votes in the 14 Lok Sabha seats, 87.11 lakh were women and 83.85 lakh were men, he told reporters after the election. "The number of women voters who exercised their franchise was higher in 12 Lok Sabha seats. The number of male electors who turned up at polling stations was slightly higher in two constituencies, Ranchi and Jamshedpur," he said. "If we look at the figures Assembly segment-wise, women voters outnumbered men in 68 constituencies while the number of men who cast their votes was higher in only 13 Assembly seats," Kumar said. Realising the importance of women voters, soon after the Lok Sabha poll, the Hemant Soren-led government in August this year rolled out its flagship Mukhyamantri Maiya Samman Yojana (MMSY) for women aged 18 to 50. So far, 48.15 lakh women have registered and are receiving the benefits of the scheme. Women of 50 years and above are already



getting ₹1,000 per month under the universal pension scheme in the State. The Opposition BJP then announced its own version named Gogo Didi Yojana. Gogo is the Santhali word for mother and didi is sister in Hindi. In the competitive politics roiling the State in the build-up to the poll, the Soren government has now announced the hike to ₹2,500 per month — a decision that will entail an additional outlay of around ₹900 crore.

What women think Unaware of the political tug of war, Sukhiya says, "I never imagined that we will get ₹1,000 per month from the government. There are four women in our family and we all are getting ₹1,000 each, which means an additional ₹4,000 per month. We have heard the government is planning to increase the amount." For 48-year-old Neelam Lakra, it is the cash assistance that she owes her independence to. Living in a slum in Ranchi's Namkum, Neelam is happy that she is no longer dependent on anyone else for minor needs. "My husband is a daily wager and his earnings are not enough to run the family of five. This scheme has given us a lot of support to properly feed my three children. Getting ₹12,000 annually is a big relief for people like us," she says. As the political parties jostle to win over the women, beneficiaries like Neelam feel the competitive cash handout promises only help their cause. More competition also means more cash, she says. Of late, the promise of financial assistance to women has become a norm in poll-bound States. In the wake of financial distress, cash handouts seem to have helped the BJP tide over anti-incumbency in several States. For instance, the Ladli Behna scheme in Madhya Pradesh, providing ₹1,000 per month to women whose household income is ₹2.5 lakh, is said to have enabled the party to retain

power in the November 2023 Assembly election. After becoming the Chief Minister, Shivraj Singh Chouhan's successor Mohan Yadav raised the monthly amount to ₹1,250 and promised to gradually increase it to ₹3,000. Hoping to replicate the success in Madhya Pradesh, the ruling Mahayuti alliance — the BJP, the Shiv Sena of Eknath Shinde, and the Nationalist Congress Party of Ajit Pawar — in Maharashtra came out with Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana with an outlay of ₹46,000 crore to provide ₹1,500 a month to 2.5 crore women between the ages of 21 and 65 earning less than ₹2.5 lakh a year. The BJP successfully tried something similar in the recently concluded Haryana Assembly election as well. The Congress had promised ₹2,000 to every woman aged between 18 and 60 if it came to power whereas the BJP had promised ₹2,100 per month to women under Lado Lakshmi Yojana.

Despite going all out to woo the women vote in Maharashtra, the BJP has been targeting Soren in Jharkhand over the cash assistance scheme and calling it a political stunt before the election. The party's Jharkhand president, Babulal Marandi, had earlier accused the Chief Minister of luring voters by rolling out several schemes in the run-up to the election. "Hemant Soren cheated the people of Jharkhand for five years. Bholi bhali janata ko dana daal rahe hai takey phas jaye (He is laying the bait to trap the innocent public now that the election is nearing)," Marandi said at an event recently. Soren already transferred the third instalment of the scheme earlier this month. In a recent statement, the Chief Minister said, "We have connected half of the State's population with the Samman Yojana, which has created history in this country. Fifty lakh women have been con-

nected with this. We are empowering the mothers and sisters of the State." The first instalment was given on the eve of Rakshabandhan in August, second in September, and the third was rolled out in October. The fourth instalment would be transferred on the eve of Chhath Puja on November 5. Mounting an attack on Soren, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is also the BJP co-incharge of the Jharkhand Assembly election, accused him of tricking the women of Jharkhand by not giving ₹2,500 from the beginning and revising the amount only after the BJP's offer. Before the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct on October 15, around 60,000 women filled the forms for Gogo Didi Yojana, he said. "We are committed towards our promise of Gogo Didi Yojana and whenever the first Cabinet of the BJP-led NDA is formed, this scheme will start. Unlike Hemant Soren, we will not wait for five years. If he had the resources for giving ₹2,500, why did he start the scheme with ₹1,000?" Sarma said. Trying to blunt the Opposition's attacks, the JMM has fielded its Gandey MLA and Chief Minister's wife Kalpana Murmu Soren, who has been leading the JMM outreach, 'Maiya Samman Yatra', in a bid to connect with the State's women population. Kalpana entered politics earlier this year after her husband was jailed in an alleged money laundering case in March. He was later released on regular bail. She went on to contest and win the Gandey bypoll, a seat vacated after Sarfaraz Ahmad's election to the Rajya Sabha, by a margin of 26,000 votes. Despite entering the political arena only a few months ago, the Gandey MLA is the 'star campaigner' that every JMM leader wants to campaign in their favour. So far, she has done over 50 public meetings.

Dolby and Jin from BTS Celebrate His New Single "I'll Be There" in Dolby Atmos

Dolby Laboratories, Inc. (NYSE: DLB), a leader in immersive entertainment experiences, is teaming up with Jin of 21st century pop icons BTS in the latest chapter of the "Love More in Dolby" global brand campaign. Jin stars in the commercial to celebrate his new single "I'll Be There," which is now available globally in Dolby Atmos. Following the single "I'll Be There," Jin's highly anticipated first solo album Happy is set to release in Dolby Atmos worldwide on November 15th.

"When I first heard my new music in Dolby Atmos, I was truly amazed by the incredibly vivid and immersive experience. It felt like you are right inside the music," said Jin. "The theme of this new single and the new album is 'happiness.' I wanted ARMY (BTS' fandom) to fully experience the unique flavors of happiness through each song. Now, with Dolby Atmos, I believe fans around the world will feel the exact emotions that I wanted to share, more deeply."

"Jin has captivated audiences worldwide through his incredible performances and extraordinary ability to convey emotion through his music," said Todd Pendleton, Senior Vice President and Chief

Marketing Officer, Dolby Laboratories. "With Dolby Atmos, fans will feel even more connected to Jin as they are drawn into the fun sing-along moments and musical details of 'I'll Be There' and his upcoming album." Dolby Atmos is a completely new way to create and experience music that delivers artistic expression at its fullest capacity, forging a deeper connection between artists and their fans. Music in Dolby Atmos goes beyond the ordinary listening experience by putting listeners inside the song, revealing every detail of the music with unparalleled clarity and depth. Whether it's hearing the layers of instruments move all around, catching the subtle breath a singer takes between lyrics, or being enveloped in a wave of melodies, nothing compares to hearing music in Dolby Atmos.

Directed by GRAMMY®-nominated music video director and filmmaker Colin Tilley, the campaign's commercial explores how Dolby Atmos can transform an everyday moment into an extraordinary experience by putting fans right into the heart of the music scenes, where Jin delivers the powerful performances BTS is known for. The piece is the latest installment of



Dolby's "Love More in Dolby" global brand campaign, which celebrates transformative entertainment experiences brought to life by Dolby Vision and Dolby Atmos across music, movies, gaming, and more.

How to Experience Dolby Atmos Music

Consumers around the world can hear and feel the difference of Dolby Atmos

Music on popular global and regional streaming services, such as Amazon Music, Apple Music, TIDAL, QQ Music, Melon, and more. Whether you are listening at home, on your mobile device, or in the car, using products from major global brands like Samsung, Mercedes-Benz, and many more, Dolby Atmos unlocks new levels of emotion so that you love music more in Dolby.

India's Office Space Demand to Reach Record High of Over 70 mn sq. ft. in 2024: Savills India



66% of the overall leasing activity during this period.

The IT-BPM sector led the market with a 29% share in Q3, followed by Flexible Workspaces (23%) and the BFSI sector (22%). Additionally, large deals accounted for 50% of total leasing activity, with Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR, and Pune driving more than 50% of their respective leasing through such transactions. While demand soared, new office completions slowed down during the first nine months of 2024, with a total of 32.6 mn sq. ft. added, reflecting a 12% YoY decline. As a result, vacancy rates decreased to 15.5% by the end of September.

2024 Projections

Savills India forecasts that leasing activity will reach 70-74 mn sq. ft. by the end of 2024, representing a 17% increase from last year. New completions are also expected to accelerate, with a projected total of 60-62 mn sq. ft., a 22% increase from 2023.

Metrics (in mn sq.ft)	Q3 2024	YTD 2024	T D 2024F
Gross Absorption	20.2	55.1	70-74
Supply	15.3	32.6	60-62
Overall Grade A Stock	782.7	806-810	782.7

Source: Savills India Research

Cities	Gross Absorption
YTD 2024	Supply
YTD 2024	Grade A Stock

YTD 2024

Bengaluru	15.9	9.8	231.5
Chennai	6.7	1.7	91.3
Delhi-NCR	7.6	2.0	144.6
Hyderabad	8.7	8.5	125.7
Mumbai	9.6	6.7	121.4
Pune	6.6	3.8	68.2

Source: Savills India Research

"India's office market reached record-high absorption levels in Q3 of 2024, reflecting strong business sentiment amongst occupiers. With employees returning to

physical offices, demand has surged across all segments, including tech. We anticipate this momentum to continue in the last quarter of the year, potentially driving absorption levels to new record of over 70 mn sq.ft in 2024. Demand is likely to be driven by tech, BFSI, flex workspace and engineering & manufacturing occupiers," said Naveen Nandwani, MD, Commercial Advisory and Transactions, Savills India." said Naveen Nandwani, MD, Commercial Advisory and Transactions, Savills India.

City Highlights of Q3 2024 & YTD 2024 for India office market

The office space market in India is set to break records in 2024, with absorption projected to exceed 70 mn sq. ft., according to the latest report from Savills India, a global real estate advisory firm. The demand reached 55.1 mn sq. ft. between January and September 2024, marking a 30% year-on-year (YoY) increase across six major cities.

The Year-To-Date (YTD) leasing activity has set a new benchmark for the January-September period, aligning with 2022's full-year performance. With only 7 mn sq. ft. remaining to surpass 2023's total, 2024 is expected to achieve absorption levels in the range of 70-74 mn sq. ft.

Q3 2024 Surge

The third quarter of 2024 saw office absorption hit 20.2 mn sq. ft., a 28% increase from Q3 2023. Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR, and Mumbai collectively contributed

Police Commissioner CV Anand clarifies on 'prohibitory orders' in Hyd

Hyderabad: City Police Commissioner, CV Anand on Monday clarified the notification issued imposing prohibitory orders in the city 'has nothing to do with Diwali festival celebrations'.

Following statements by some on social media platforms over clamping prohibitory orders on Sunday, CV Anand said that "there are some other groups of people who are planning various types of agitations, surprise raids on Secretariat, CMs residence, DGP office, Raj Bhavan etc. We have intelligence inputs about it and this notification is to give legal backing to any police action in arresting such elements."



Continental Hospitals and Hyderabad Football Club Announce Partnership to Promote Health and Sports in the Community

In a landmark collaboration aimed at promoting health and sports within the Hyderabad community, Continental Hospitals and Hyderabad Football Club (HFC) announced their partnership at a press conference on October 28, 2024. The event featured key figures including Dr. Guru N Reddy, Founder and Chairman of Continental Hospitals, Dr. Raghu N Reddy, Director of Continental Hospitals, and Dhruv Sood, CEO of HFC, and showcased the unveiling of the new HFC team jersey prominently featuring the Continental logo. This partnership signifies both organizations' unwavering commitment to fostering health, wellness, and sporting excellence.

Dr. Guru N Reddy remarked, "This partnership is not just about football; it's about building a healthier community. Together, we can elevate the standards of sporting health and wellness for our youth. We recognize that, on average, a player sustains two injuries per season, leading to approximately 50 injuries in a team of 25. The most common injuries are muscle strains, ligament sprains, and contusions, with an injury incidence of 6.6 injuries per 1,000 hours in men's professional football. Alarmingly, more than 50% of players have suffered at least one injury over the past 12 months during both training and matches, with around 6–8% experiencing more than three injuries. Our Sports Center is equipped with sports medicine-trained physicians and comprehensive rehab facilities, including aqua therapy, robotic gait training, and much more to sup-



port these athletes effectively." Expressing his enthusiasm, HFC Head Coach Thangboi Singto stated, "Continental Hospitals is a name built on trust over years of outstanding healthcare. I am proud and truly happy to witness this historic moment for HFC as we partner with such a reputable institution."

Dhruv Sood added, "We are thrilled

to be partnering with Continental Hospitals, the pillars of healthcare in Hyderabad. Through Vitanova, our new rehabilitation center, players will have access to top-tier recovery facilities that will enhance their performance and overall health. This collaboration underscores our commitment to well-being for our team and our fans." The partnership also marks the launch of

VITANOVA, Hyderabad's largest rehabilitation center at Continental Hospitals, which will offer advanced recovery facilities and a range of treatments for various sports-related injuries. Dr. Raghu N Reddy stated, "We are excited to partner with HFC to offer our expertise in sports health and rehabilitation, fostering a stronger, healthier athletic community."

OPPO launches Cross-Country Warranty Services Between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and India

In line with its commitment to offer unparalleled service experience, OPPO India today announced the launch of its new cross-country warranty service, now available for select devices purchased within India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. This initiative allows OPPO customers to access comprehensive warranty, repair, and upgrade services at authorised OPPO service centres across the regions. The cross-country warranty service covers a range of OPPO models, including the A3x, A3, A3 Pro 5G, Reno12 series, and F27Pro+ 5G etc and is available to customers in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and India. Starting from 31 October, customers can bring their OPPO devices, along with their purchase receipt and warranty card, to any local authorised service centre in India and the GCC to benefit from free warranty services and system upgrades. For devices whose warranty period has expired or are not covered, OPPO offers repair services at a charge, allowing customers to replace damaged spare parts, including the mainboard, screen, and battery at competitive prices determined by local service centres. To ensure

a smooth experience, customers are advised to back up their data prior to any upgrade, as system updates may lead to data loss. The warranty period commences upon the customer's activation of the E-Warranty card, and all service-related charges will depend on the local policies of the service centre. As OPPO India continues to innovate and enhance customer experiences, this initiative marks a significant step in providing reliable support and after-sales service for its customer across India and the GCC. By ensuring easy access to essential services, OPPO aims to deliver greater convenience, reaffirming its commitment to customer satisfaction, quality care and reliability that it is known for. OPPO India recently earned No 1 position in customer satisfaction for after-sales with 62% of its customers rating their in-store after-sales service as 'very satisfactory'. The study comprised key areas of repair quality, costs, speed of resolution, transparency, staff expertise and multilingual communication. In August 2024, Counterpoint Research carried out a survey comprising 2,000+ customers among India's top five smartphone brands to measure their after-sale service experiences.

Warranty Coverage in India & GCC

Secured, Professional, Convenient

Enjoy the reliable warranty service and exceptional support for your OPPO device across India and GCC!



Tech Mahindra Inks MoU with the University of Auckland to Drive Innovation in AI, ML and Quantum Computing

Tech Mahindra (NSE: TECHM), a leading global provider of technology consulting and digital solutions, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the University of Auckland (UoA), New Zealand's #1 University (QS World University Ranking 2025 #65).

This MoU will accelerate research and innovation in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and quantum computing across various industries, including healthcare, banking, financial services, and insurance. This also includes cooperation with the government sector. Tech Mahindra and UoA's collaboration will enhance the cooperation between industry and academia, with the goal of improving UoA graduates' employability. The collaboration will also focus on cutting-edge AI and ML technologies, such as spiking neural networks and 1-bit LLMs (Large Language Model). In addition, Tech Mahindra will be advancing quantum security through post-quantum cryptography. Additionally, the organizations will leverage AI and quantum ML in healthcare, with applications such as drug discovery and digital biomarkers

for personalized therapy, enabling innovations in the healthcare sector globally. Harshvendra Soin, President - Asia Pacific and Japan Business, Tech Mahindra, said, "AI and quantum computing represent a paradigm shift in how we approach complex problems, and their potential to revolutionize industries is immense. Our technical prowess, coupled with the University of Auckland's expertise in AI and post-quantum security, will drive innovation that enables our customers and benefit society." Joint research initiatives between UoA and Tech Mahindra will further integrate academic data resources and expert research insights to develop industry use cases for global markets. The collaboration will introduce Generative AI and its benefits to Indigenous communities and offer internships at Tech Mahindra, providing potential candidates with the opportunity to learn AI, ML, and other emerging technologies. Partha Roop, Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Associate Dean International at the UoA's Faculty of Engineering, said, "The University is keen to establish



this partnership with a leading global tech company originally from India. India has led the IT innovation globally for the past three decades, and I envisage that it will also lead the AI revolution. UoA is both agile and world-leading, especially in Wireless Power Transfer (developed in the Faculty of Engineering by Prof. John Boys and

his team), robotics, and statistical machine learning, which were pioneered through the R programming language (created in the Faculty of Science at UoA). This agreement provides a stepping stone for our students to explore real-world challenges and gain hands-on training from accomplished Tech Mahindra professionals."

M. Venkata Krishna Reddy honoured with Doctorate



M. Venkata Krishna Reddy, Assistant Professor in the Computer Science and Engineering Department at CBIT, has successfully completed his Ph.D. in Computer Science and Engineering from Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad (JNTUH) in September 2024. His doctoral journey was guided under the supervision of Dr. P.V.S. Srinivas, Principal of VBIT College, Hyderabad, with Dr. M. Chandra Mohan, Professor in CSE at JNTUH, serving as his co-supervisor. Venkata Krishna Reddy hails from Kothakota Village in Wanaparthy District, Telangana. His Ph.D. thesis focused on the timely and critical issue of secure communications in mobile ad-hoc networks, entitled "Secured Routing using

Adaptive Trust Approach in Mobile Ad-hoc Networks." The major contributions of his research include:- Developing a trust-based approach to identify and establish secure routes by locating trustworthy nodes within networks.- Innovating methods to detect and eliminate malicious nodes from routing processes utilizing an adaptive trust framework.- Designing an energy-efficient method to secure data transmission between source and destination in mobile ad-hoc networks, thereby enhancing overall network performance. On this momentous occasion, Prof. C.V. Narasimhulu, Principal of CBIT, along with faculty and staff, extended their heartfelt congratulations to Venkata Krishna Reddy for his exemplary achievement, reaffirming their commitment to fostering academic excellence.

Curbs on social media, protests for Secretariat security personnel

Hyderabad: Stressing that there was a constant surveillance on personnel posted on security duty at Secretariat, the Chief Security Officer (CSO) of the Secretariat has instructed Telangana Special Police personnel and officers not to post, share, like or comment on any messages against the TGSP system, police officers and the State government on social media platforms. Pointing out that Section 144 was

in such groups. Instigating messages were being posted against the TGSP system and police officers, he said. "There is constant surveillance on all your movements and the people you meet. Personnel should exit from such WhatsApp groups," the CSO said in the orders. Personnel and their family members should not participate in any protests, rasta roko or other demonstrations, which were prohibited. In case, if any per-



in force covering an area of two kilometres around the Secretariat, the CSO said gathering of more than five persons was prohibited. This apart, if any personnel participated in protests, rasta roko programmes or in laying siege to the Secretariat, legal action would be taken against them, he said in an order issued on Monday.

Further, a few personnel were also admins in different WhatsApp groups and were adding contacts of other personnel

sonnel participated, they would have to face lot of inconvenience, he said. The CSO specifically instructed the personnel not to post, share, like or comment any messages against the TGSP system, police officers and State government on WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter). In case if any personnel were caught indulging in such activities, departmental action would be initiated against them.

For product consistency, Air India plans to minimise overlap with Vistara aircraft on common routes

Air India, Vistara, aircraft overlap, merger, route-level, product quality, In its nearly 10 years of operations, Vistara had made a mark for itself as the premier full-service carrier in India that offered a superior product in a market dominated by budget carriers. (Express Archives) Air India plans to minimise the overlap between its older aircraft and Vistara planes at the individual route level after the carriers' impending merger in a bid to provide certainty to flyers regarding the quality of product they are likely to experience, according to sources in the know. Vistara's 70 aircraft—63 narrow-body and seven wide-body jets—offer a superior passenger experience than most of Air India's fleet, which still has a number of old legacy aircraft from its government ownership days.

Air India has already announced that after the merger, which will take effect on November 12, the Vistara product will continue as it is for a few months at least and customers will be able to identify flights operated by the Vistara aircraft and crew easily as they will have a four-digit flight number starting with 2, against Air India's three-digit flight numbers. Sources indicated that the product differentiation is likely to continue at least till June, when the retrofit programme for Air India's legacy narrow-body fleet is scheduled to be completed. With new aircraft coming in and

older aircraft undergoing refurbishment, Air India will eventually be able to offer a uniform product across its fleet and the planes will largely become fungible.

In the interim, the Tata group airline will try and ensure that each route has consistency in its product offering, which would mean that the carrier will look to deploy Vistara's aircraft and its own new aircraft on certain priority routes like those connecting metropolitan cities with one another, and deploy Air India's older aircraft on certain other routes, per sources. The idea is to set the customer's expectations right and offer a consistent product on that route irrespective of the flight booked. The rejig will not be limited to just the domestic network of the enlarged Air India, and would include international routes as well where currently both Air India and Vistara operate. Slots at certain international airports are also being adjusted accordingly. "Vistara aircraft and Air India's new aircraft will most likely be used to operate metro-to-metro routes, while the older planes will be deployed on some other routes. The overlap will be minimised on international routes as well, like Delhi-Frankfurt flights are likely to be operated by the Vistara aircraft, while Delhi-Paris may be served only by Air India aircraft... Of course, a few overlaps here and there cannot be avoided," said a source with direct



knowledge of the matter. In its nearly 10 years of operations, Vistara had made a mark for itself as the premier full-service carrier in India that offered a superior product in a market dominated by budget carriers. With the Tata group deciding to merge Vistara into the group's flagship airline Air India—which the Tatas acquired from the government in January 2022—there were concerns about Vistara's product and service quality after the merger. Under government control, Air India was under financial stress, and this reflected in its product and

service quality, which was seen as below the standards expected from a full-service carrier. While the now-privatised airline has undertaken a mammoth fleet modernisation and expansion plan, it still has a large number of legacy aircraft that are in a rundown state. The \$400-million upgradation of the airline's entire narrow-body fleet started last month and is expected to be complete by the middle of next year. As for its legacy wide-body aircraft—Boeing 787s and 777s—Air India expects their retrofit to start early next year.

Aurum24 – kitchen.café. bake-world Opens at Tellapur

In the newest part of the city of Hyderabad a cafe for coffee and good food is a must. Which is how Aurum24 Cafe was conceptualized. The idea of the cafe began with a conversation between friends AK Solanki, Jyotsna Sri, Venkatesh and Padmaja. Each of them brought with them their thoughts of accounting, interior design, and culinary art. The idea was to bring all these thoughts and experiences under one roof to create a cafe that sets a gold standard in the quality of ingredients in their dishes to the warmth of the atmosphere in Tellapur. Aurum24 Cafe is an eatery for families that is spread in two levels. The ground floor has a restaurant and bake shop and the first floor comes with a banquet hall for private events and outdoor seating. The outdoor space on first floors gives a view of the city's new landscape.

Aurum24 Cafe is more than just a cafe, it is a place built for memories with karaoke, a space for storytelling and what not. It is a cafe that promises to surprise diners with their foods and coffee, the founders plan to make it a cafe for experiences. AK Solanki explained, "The name 'Aurum24' comes from the Latin word for gold. It is a symbol for the team's commitment to excellence. But we're more than just a place for coffee. We've built a space where families, professionals, and friends can come together, relax, and make memories. The vision behind Aurum24 is to redefine cafe culture and make every visit to Aurum24 Cafe a



golden experience." Aurum24 Cafe's space is designed to welcome everyone from families to professionals who can work

from the cafe. It is also child friendly. Apart from the comfortable seating, ample plug points are equipped to help diners remain

charged as they work. What are the foods that one can expect at Aurum24 Cafe. Jyotsna Sri elaborated, "

Why this is not just another BRICS in the wall

The Kazan Declaration and leadership interactions marked the success of the 16th BRICS Summit hosted by Russia on the theme of “strengthening multilateralism for just global development and security”. Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India’s priorities and approach for the expanded BRICS+, which was meeting for the first time at summit level. Not many anticipated that a report by Goldman Sachs on the economic potential of four emerging economies — Brazil, Russia, India and China — would capture the global imagination in the manner it has. The decision to constitute the group was taken when the four leaders met in the margins of G8 Outreach in 2006 in St Petersburg, when Russia was still a member, and their desire was not to break the umbilical cord with the developed world, but to use all levers for their development targets. As a 21st century grouping, BRICS showed the ambition and innovation expected of a Gen Z institution. It developed a broad development agenda and sought reform of global governance with focus on delivery. It incorporated South Africa in 2010, doubled membership in 2024 and set up a new tier of partner countries at Kazan.

Economic slowdown in the West, the widespread impact of Covid and the outbreak of conflict in Europe, West Asia and South China Sea accentuated the divide between the West and Russia-China. The contestation between the two led to narratives from the West that BRICS was anti-West, while BRICS members responded that it was non-West. Bilateral tensions played a role, G7 was seen as representing the West, BRICS representing the Global South and G20 had elements of both. However, BRICS founding members were middle powers with economic and strategic potential. They sought to work in partnership with the West and the Global South to achieve their objectives, but could not be bound in alliance formations. At Kazan, BRICS leaders, many of them close partners of the West, pointed out that BRICS sought partnerships and desired good relations with all countries and was not directed against any. The thrust of the BRICS agenda, since early days, was economic development through intra-BRICS cooperation as well as collaboration with multilateral development banks. It expanded to various sectors of the economy, explored projects for cooperation and negotiated action plans. BRICS countries experienced rapid economic growth with tangible benefits to citizens. In fact, BRICS overtook G7 in terms of GDP, economic growth rate, access to critical materials and population.

BRICS members created new instruments and institutions when the global system did not respond adequately to their aspirations. The new instruments, including the Contingency Reserve Arrangement or the New Development Bank, were not alternatives to MDBs, but rather to supplement their efforts. At Kazan, there was priority on intra BRICS engagement in different economic fields. The expansion of membership gave the group greater heft. Besides, BRICS could engage other members of the Global South. The Russian presidency promoted the decade-old understanding on trade in local currency and new mechanisms of financial settlement. While



this was, in part, a response to sanctions imposed on certain BRICS countries, its broader objective was to achieve flexibility in the exchange of goods and services, new access in BRICS markets and efficiency in financial transactions. There were suggestions for a BRICS currency or a digital currency, but they were premature and would require deeper integration of the diverse economic situations and institutional frameworks. Admittedly, some new trade would be conducted in local currencies, but the dominant presence of the US dollar seems unlikely to be shaken by these measures.

Multilateral institutions such as the UN, WTO and WHO and Bretton Woods structures such as the World Bank and IMF that hold the key to global governance are unable to respond to contemporary challenges on development and security. There is an urgent need for reform, but consensus is lacking and multilateralism is in a coma. Even within BRICS, a founding member has not been helpful, particularly with regard to the reform of UNSC. At Kazan, leaders had wide-ranging discussions on regional and global issues that were reflected in the Declaration. On the key issue of UN and UNSC reform, it is welcome that the expanded BRICS+ continued with the Johannesburg understanding, even though reference to specific countries and concrete measures for reform could not be agreed upon. On terrorism and its financing, there was an urgent call for closer coordination to fight the menace. Admittedly, reform of global governance can only take place within the multilateral system but groupings such as BRICS, G7, G20 can play a role. Consensus on geopolitical issues could be challenging and the expansion of members may bring more complex situations. BRICS

does not have a secretariat, it depends on the participation of members and the presidency. A cornerstone of the group’s decision making has been its consensus-based approach towards agenda, plan of action and membership.

BRICS’ success became a magnet for other countries. Besides, emerging countries desire more space. The recent inclusion of Egypt, Ethiopia, UAE, Iran and Saudi Arabia was on the basis of agreed criteria. Their participation enriched the cooperation agenda and expanded regional reach. At Kazan, there was agreement on the guidelines for admission of a new tier of partner countries. With varying economic levels and political structures, an expanded

BRICS will need strong commitment to its ethos. At Kazan, PM Modi highlighted the importance of citizen-centric development, diplomatic initiatives for security challenges, fight against terrorism and urgent reforms in global governance. BRICS could remain open to new members or partners that subscribed to the BRICS ethos, its consensus-based approach and contributed to BRICS’ and global growth. As a founding member of BRICS, the fifth-largest economy and the fastest growing major economy, India plays a unique role within it. It has not only shaped its agenda and priorities but has been instrumental in being the bridge between Global South, BRICS, G7 Outreach and G20.

LinkedIn fined \$335 million for privacy violations in ad tracking

London: Microsoft-owned professional networking platform LinkedIn was on Thursday fined 310 million euros (around \$335 million) for privacy violations related to its tracking ads business. The Irish Data Protection Commission (IDPC) issued the under the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The inquiry examined LinkedIn’s processing of personal data for the purposes of behavioural analysis and targeted advertising of users who have created LinkedIn profiles. The decision, made by the Commissioners for Data Protection, Dr Des Hogan and Dale Sunderland, concerns the lawfulness, fairness and transparency of this processing. The decision includes a

reprimand, an order for LinkedIn to bring its processing into compliance, and administrative fines totalling 310 million euros, the Irish regulator said in a statement. DPC Deputy Commissioner Graham Doyle commented that the lawfulness of processing is a fundamental aspect of data protection law and the processing of personal data without an appropriate legal basis is a clear and serious violation of a data subjects’ fundamental right to data protection. The networking platform had sought to claim (variously) “consent”, “legitimate interests” and “contractual necessity” based legal bases for processing people’s information — when obtained directly and/or from third parties — to track and profile its users for behavioural advertising.

1968, a John Lennon love story: Beatles Ashram in Rishikesh set for a makeover

In the February of 1968, a lovestruck John Lennon would go on early morning walks to the post office on the premises of Chaurasi Kutiya, a retreat in Rishikesh on the banks of the Ganga where he and the other members of the Beatles band practised yoga guru Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation. His post office walks, as his wife Cynthia who accompanied him on that India visit would later realise, was to check if singer Yoko Ono, with whom he was in a relationship, had sent him a telegram. Inside one of the meditation huts of the now abandoned Chaurasi Kutiya ashram is a pop art that immortalises this love story – a line from Yoko's telegram to Lennon that reads, "Look up at the sky and when you see a cloud, think of me."

Lennon's fledgling love story, one of the many priceless nuggets from the Beatles' India stay in 1968, will now come to life as the Uttarakhand government plans to renovate the ashram. It hopes to turn the 17-acre space – with a string of concrete, double-storey hobbit houses, pathways overrun by weeds and deserted buildings – into an 'International Heritage Tourism destination'. The Beatles during their stay at the ashram in 1968. Standing on the banks of the Ganga, the ashram is now a space frozen in time. Under tall trees and amid patches of wild canna plants are the buildings and meditation centres of Mahesh Yogi's Chaurasi Kutiya, which after the Beatles' 1968 stay became popular as the Beatles Ashram. The iconic British band spent nearly a month here, meditating and writing at least 30 songs, including those from The Beatles (White Album) released later that year. For the Ahmedabad-based HCP Design, Planning & Management Pvt Ltd, which is executing the renovation project, this is the second ashram project after the Gandhi Ashram Redevelopment Project in Gujarat. Helmed by architect Bimal Patel, the firm has handled several high-profile projects, including Central Vista and the new Parliament building in Delhi, and the Kashi Vishwanath corridor project in Uttar Pradesh. According to Anand Patel, project head at HCPDPM, "The project is expected to commence by the end of 2024. It will take about 18 months to be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 90 crore." Inside the ashram Part of the Rajaji Tiger Reserve, on the eastern banks of the Ganga, the ashram was set up by Mahesh Yogi in 1963, with his Transcendental Meditation Teacher Training Course attracting participants from around the world. He is known to have built it with a USD 100,000 grant from American heiress Doris Duke. Among the most famous visitors to the ashram were the Beatles, who were then famously embarking on a journey from psychedelia to transcendence. In February 1968, John Lennon, George Harrison, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr arrived at the Rishikesh ashram accompanied by their wives and their manager. Here, they wrote some of their most popular songs, including 'Back in the USSR', 'Dear Prudence', 'Julia' and 'The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill'. Ved Bhavan Constructed in 1976 at Chaurasi Kutiya in Rishikesh, Ved Bhavan was used as a lecture hall and to conduct classes. Chaurasi Kutiya gets its name from the 84 medita-

tion rooms – 42 each on either side of a yoga centre. The complex has nearly 25 buildings, most of which are in a dilapidated state, including the sprawling bungalow that Mahesh Yogi lived in while at the ashram. Though it's unclear when he left the ashram, the spiritual guru died years later, in 2005, in the Netherlands. Among the few buildings that are relatively untouched by time are the unique pyramid-shaped Anand Bhavan and Siddhi Bhavan, built in 1976, which served as residences for those training to be teachers of Transcendental Meditation. Inside the ashram, the story of the Beatles is told through a gallery with over 20 photographs taken by Paul Saltzman, a Canadian filmmaker and television producer who chronicled the Beatles' stay. A striking feature of the ashram is the series of concrete huts, which served as meditation caves for "sanyasis and brahmacharis". The walls of the 121 huts, built in 1976-78, are embedded with round pebbles sourced from the river banks. Each of these huts have a narrow, winding stairway that leads to the floor above. As per the renovation plan, at least 20 of these huts will be refurbished for people to use as meditation spaces. Keeping a legacy alive was in 1961 that land for the ashram was leased to Mahesh Yogi by the then Uttar Pradesh government. After the 20-year lease expired in 1981, the place was taken over by the state government. While the ashram remained abandoned, its Beatles connection continued to draw visitors. In 2015, the Uttarakhand forest department took over the ashram, which is the only part of the Rajaji Tiger Reserve that is open through the year. That year, the ashram reported 20,000 visitors, which spiked to 35,000 in 2018 when Paul McCartney came to celebrate 50 years of the Beatles' visit to Rishikesh. The ashram saw more tourists in June 2023, when the Uttarakhand government, which had hosted a three-day Infrastructure Working Group (IWG) meeting in Rishikesh as part of the G20 summit, took the delegates to the ashram. That year, the number of visitors rose to 45,000. A vision document for the redevelopment has been readied and is now with the Public Works Department (PWD) of the Uttarakhand government for vetting, a state government official told The Indian Express. Uttarakhand Forest Minister Subodh Uniyal said not much of what is inside the ashram will be disturbed. "The plan is to keep it in as-is condition. The idea is to preserve the legacy of the Beatles," he said. Though the project is being undertaken by the state tourism department, the area falls in the jurisdiction of the forest department as it is part of the reserve forest that is a habitat for tigers and elephants, among other protected species. Conservator of Forests & Director of Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Koko Rose, told The Indian Express, "Around 9-13 buildings will be refurbished – the Maharshi's bungalow, the building where the Beatles stayed, the Vedic kitchen. There will be no new construction and no razing. The idea is to enhance the tourist experience. Being a forest area, nobody will be allowed to stay overnight, play loud music or do anything that could disturb the wildlife." "A cafeteria, a museum shop and administration



office will be housed in the renovated buildings. The other buildings will have exhibitions on the Maharishi, Beatles and the Rajaji National Park. We plan to repair and

restore 12 of the 25 buildings on the site. All the remaining buildings will be left as they are to serve as a memory of the time gone by," he said.

OpenAI plans to launch new powerful AI model 'Orion' by December: Report



San Francisco: ChatGPT maker OpenAI is reportedly planning to launch its next AI model called 'Orion' in December this year which is potentially up to 100 times more powerful than GPT-4. According to a report in The Verge, unlike the release of OpenAI's last two models — GPT-4o and o1 — Orion won't initially be released widely through ChatGPT.

The report mentioned, citing sources, that the Sam Altman-run AI company is planning to grant access to companies first, in order to help them build their own products and features. OpenAI or its CEO Altman were yet to react to the report. According to the report, Microsoft is "preparing to host Orion on Azure as early as November". Microsoft also declined to comment. "The company's goal is to combine its LLMs over time to create an even more capable model

that could eventually be called artificial general intelligence, or AGI," the report mentioned. The release of Orion comes as OpenAI, which has secured a historic \$6.6 billion funding at a \$157 billion valuation, is restructuring itself as a for-profit entity. Last month, three top executives — including Chief Technical Officer Mira Murati — left the ChatGPT developer. Of the 13 people who helped found OpenAI in 2015, only three now remain at the company. According to reports, Murati is raising money from venture capitalists to finance her own AI startup. The new funding in OpenAI was led by previous investor Thrive Capital. The VC firm invested around \$1.3 billion. Microsoft reportedly invested a little less than \$1 billion, while Nvidia pledged \$100 million and SoftBank reportedly put in \$500 million.