

National Deworming Day Launched in Khammam

“Khammam, July 13 Indian Chronicle:

“District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO) Dr. D. Rama Rao formally inaugurated the National Deworming Day programme at Kalavoddu Nayabazar School in Khammam on Monday. “On the occasion, Dr. Rama Rao administered Albendazole tablets to students and highlighted the importance of deworming and maintaining good personal hygiene. He advised children to wash their hands with soap before meals and after using the toilet, keep their nails trimmed, eat hygienic food, and drink only safe and clean water.” Addressing the gathering, Dr. Rama Rao said that intestinal worm infections can lead to anaemia, malnutrition, stunted growth, and reduced concentration in studies among children. He urged officials, teachers, and health staff to work in coordination to ensure that all 2,87,579 eligible children aged 1–19 years in the district receive Albendazole tablets under the government's National Deworming Programme. “He further stated that by 5:00 PM on Monday, 2,82,196 children had been administered the tablets, achieving 91% coverage across the district. “The programme was attended by District Immunization Officer Dr. Pratap Sampath Kumar, Programme Officer Dr. Lakshmi Narayana, Deputy District Mass Education and Media Officer K.V. Raju, District Vaccine and Logistics Manager Ramana, Venkateswara Nagar Urban PHC Medical Officer Dr. Devi Sri, Health Supervisor Jayapal, ANM Sharada, District Immunization Technician Ramakrishna, RBSK Medical Officer Dr. Ravi Kumar, Nagamadhuri, health staff, Headmistress Usha Rani, teachers, and students.



Technology Key to Curbing Cyber Crime, Strengthening Digital Security: Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt



“Khammam, July 13 Indian Chronicle:““Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt said that technology plays a crucial role in preventing cyber crimes and strengthening digital security. “A one-day training programme was organized at the Police Training Centre for Station House Officers (SHOs) on cyber crime prevention and investigation. The programme covered the use of advanced technology, digital forensics, the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, the Money Restoration Portal, the Grievance Redressal Mechanism Portal, the Coordination Portal, and relevant legal provisions. “Addressing the participants, the Police Commissioner said that effective policy coordination is essential to tackle the growing threat of cyber crime. He noted that cyber criminals are increasingly exploiting advanced technology to commit offences, and law enforcement agencies must use the same technology to counter them effectively. “He emphasized the need to continuously upgrade cyber security measures and strengthen the district's capabilities in cyber crime investigation, response, and enforcement through the adoption of advanced technological tools. “The Commissioner also observed that a significant number of cyber crime victims are well-educated individuals, highlighting the importance of public awareness and vigilance. “Additional DCP Ramanujam and Cyber Crime ACP Phaninder also participated in the training programme.



Deworming Drive Held at Nelakondapalli

“Khammam Nelakondapalli July 13 Indian Chronicle:“Government Medical Officer Dr. R. Shravan Kumar stressed the importance of eliminating intestinal worm infections during the observance of National Deworming Day. Albendazole tablets were distributed to students at the Social Welfare Residential Girls' School in Nelakondapalli. “Speaking on the occasion, officials said that administering Albendazole tablets to children and adolescents aged 1 to 19 years helps prevent problems such as lack of concentration, anemia, and poor physical growth. They noted that regular deworming contributes significantly to improving both the physical and mental health of students. “The programme was attended by Tahsildar P. Ram Prasad, MPDO M. Yarraiah, Sarpanch Sheelam Venkata Lakshmi, School Principal Srilatha, and other officials.



Work to Strengthen Public Confidence in Government Education

“Khammam Nelakondapalli July 13 Indian Chronicle:“MPDO M. Yarraiah urged newly appointed staff to work with dedication and help build public confidence in government education. “Speaking at a programme held at the Mandal Parishad Office on Monday, the MPDO distributed appointment orders to six teachers and six ayahs selected for Free Primary



Schools. “Addressing the appointees, he said the government has introduced Free Primary Schools to strengthen the public education system and that being selected to serve in these schools is a valuable opportunity. He encouraged the staff to provide quality education to young children with commitment and sincerity. “He further stressed that the teachers and support staff should work with honesty, dedication, and a sense of responsibility to fulfill the government's vision of improving government education. “Tahsildar P. Ram Prasad, Mandal Education Officer B. Chalapathi Rao, CRPs Prasad and Venkateswarlu, along with other officials, were present at the programme.

FORTUNE Honda BigWing opens exclusive showroom and workshop in Hyderabad

“Indian chronicle, Secunderabad,“ July 13: “FORTUNE Honda BigWing, the premium retail network of Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd. (HMSI), inaugurated an exclusive showroom and workshop at Erragadda here on Monday, expanding its premium motorcycle footprint in Telangana. “The facility was inaugurated by Tikendra Pratap Singh, Senior Manager (Dealer Development), HMSI,



and Harish Havaji, Area Service Incharge, HMSI. Present on the occasion were FORTUNE Honda BigWing directors Nirav Modi and Ashish Modi, Chief Executive Officer Peter Paul, Chief Financial Officer Ravi Prakash, Zonal Manager (Service) Ashish Kumar Mishra, BigWing Sales Manager Moiz Basheeruddin, Service Manager Jagadeesh Babu, customers and motorcycle enthusiasts. “Situated opposite Metro Pillar No. A-975 at Erragadda, the new outlet showcases Honda's premium motorcycle portfolio, including the CB350 H'ness, CB350RS, CB350C, NX500, XL750 Transalp and Hornet 750. The facility also features a customer lounge, genuine accessories and a modern workshop equipped with advanced diagnostic tools and trained technicians. “The dealership will offer test rides, finance and insurance assistance, and comprehensive after-sales support. A company spokesperson said the new outlet underscores Honda BigWing's commitment to delivering a world-class premium motorcycling experience while further strengthening its presence in Telangana.

Make Use of Free Legal Aid Services: Para Legal Volunteer Kolipaka Nagamani

“Khammam Nelakondapalli July 13 Indian Chronicle:“Para Legal Volunteer Kolipaka Nagamani urged the public to make effective use of the free legal aid and advisory services available to them. “As per the directions of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Para Legal Volunteers conducted a legal awareness programme for the third consecutive day on Monday in Tirumalapuram village of Nelakondapalli mandal. “Speaking on the occasion, Nagamani said that several



laws and welfare provisions have been introduced for the benefit and protection of the public. She explained that free legal aid centres have been established under the supervision of Para Legal Volunteers to educate people about their legal rights and provide necessary assistance. “She appealed to vil-

lagers to avail themselves of these free legal services. She also informed that Para Legal Volunteers will undertake a week-long village-level outreach programme to identify the legal issues faced by residents and offer free legal guidance and support. She assured that the volunteers would remain accessible to assist people with legal matters. “The programme was attended by Para Legal Volunteers Kishan Rao, M. Nagamani, P. Susheela, Nagendra, Padmavathi, K. Nagamani, K. Nagendra, Uday, Nagalakshmi, Rukmini, and others.

Questions Raised Over Protection of Endowment Lands in Mudigonda and Mutharam

“Khammam (Mudigonda), July 13 | Indian Chronicle” Concerns have been raised over the protection and management of Endowments Department lands in Mudigonda Mandal, with local residents seeking greater transparency regarding temple properties and their administration. “According to revenue records, the Endowments Department owns 638 acres and 16 guntas of land in Mudigonda Mandal. However, residents say there is little clarity regarding the present status of these properties, including how much land remains under government control, how much is under dispute, and whether any portion has been encroached upon. “Locals have also called on the authorities to disclose the annual revenue generated from these lands, explain how the income is accounted for, and specify the temples or developmental activities for which the funds are utilised. “Residents recalled that officials had previously erected signboards identifying several survey numbers as Endowment Department lands within Mudigonda Gram Panchayat limits. However, the boards were reportedly removed within a short period, leading to speculation and raising concerns about the long-term protection of temple properties. They alleged that officials attempting to safeguard the lands had faced resistance, while permanent measures to secure the properties were yet to be implemented. “Questions have also been raised over lands reportedly allotted to priests for cultivation as part of traditional service arrangements. Locals have sought a comprehensive inquiry into whether such lands are being used in accordance with government regulations, treated as private property, or leased to third parties. “Similar concerns have emerged in Mutharam village, where revenue records reportedly show 138 acres and 15 guntas of Endowment land. Residents have questioned who currently possesses these lands and alleged that illegal soil excavation is taking place in parts of the area without effective intervention from the concerned authorities. They have demanded an immediate investigation and public disclosure of the facts. “Stressing that temple properties represent the faith and trust of devotees, residents said safeguarding such assets is the collective responsibility of the Government, the Endowments Department, and the Revenue Department. They urged the authorities to conduct a comprehensive survey of every acre, digitise land records, demarcate boundaries, remove encroachments wherever found, and initiate legal action against violators. “The residents further appealed to the State Government to clarify the present status of all Endowment lands in the region and release a white paper detailing the income generated from these properties and its utilisation, in the interest of transparency and public accountability.

Every Vote Matters – Speed Up the SIR Programme: Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy

“UPPAL, INCHARGE, KISHORE, JULY 13 (INDIAN CHRONICLE): Uppal MLA Bandari Lakshma Reddy has expressed concern that the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) programme in the Uppal Assembly constituency is not progressing at the expected pace. He urged every party leader and worker to take responsibility by visiting every household and ensuring that the names of all eligible voters are included in the electoral rolls. “Stressing that every vote is valuable, the MLA said no eligible voter should be left out of the voter list. He appealed to party leaders and volunteers to create awareness among the public and encourage eligible citizens to verify their voter details. Those whose names are missing from the electoral roll or whose details contain errors should immediately approach the concerned election authorities to have the necessary corrections made. “Bandari Lakshma Reddy further called upon party lead-



ers, booth-level in-charges, and grassroots workers to work in close coordination and conduct door-to-door visits to make the SIR programme a success. He emphasized that every vote is precious in a democracy and that ensuring the inclusion of every eligible voter is a collective responsibility.

TGSRTC bus depot should be set up in Bhuvanagiri and additional buses should be run.. Request to Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar:- TPCC member. Former Planning Board member Tangallapalli Ravi Kumar

“(Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau.. Indian Chronicle.. July 13):- TPCC member & former Planning Board member Tangallapalli Ravi Kumar on Monday met State Transport BC Welfare Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar in Hyderabad and handed over a petition signed by Bhuvanagiri Town Municipal Chairman Tangallapalli Srivani Ravi Kumar on the issues of Bhuvanagiri bus stand. “Yadadri - People are facing serious problems due to the lack of a TGSRTC bus depot in Bhuvanagiri, the district headquarters. There are no direct buses to Hyderabad, Warangal, Suryapet, and Nalgonda. Buses going to Warangal do not halt in Bhuvanagiri at night. Due to this, the residents of Bhuvanagiri town are facing serious problems. “Thousands of devotees visiting Yadagirigutta and Swarnagiri temples and pilgrims visiting Yadagiri Gutta are facing serious problems due to lack of direct transport facilities. They said that the bus stand does not even have basic facilities like waiting hall, toilets and drinking water. 1. Bhuvanagiri bus stand should be upgraded to a *TGSRTC bus depot immediately. “2. Additional buses should be run on Hyderabad and Warangal routes. Steps should be taken to ensure that Warangal buses halt in Bhuvanagiri at night. “3. Special buses should be arranged for devotees going to Yadagirigutta and Swarnagiri. “4. We requested the Minister to provide basic facilities at the bus stand and fulfill the long-standing desire of the people of Bhuvanagiri. We thanked the Minister for responding positively to our request. Leaders Kura Shiva Kumar, Bharat Raju Kashi and others participated in this program.



Justice for Victim, Stricter Safety Measures for Women Sought

“Indian Chronicle, Secunderabad July 13 : “A peace rally was organised by leaders of the BRS party in Secunderabad condemning the alleged rape of a minor girl in Rajasthan. The rally, held near Ekashila Chowrasta in Amber Nagar of the Boudhanagar Division, was attended by senior BRS leader and president of the Secunderabad Padmashali Sangham, Manda Jagan. “Addressing the gathering, Mr. Jagan demanded immediate justice for the survivor and stringent legal action against the accused. He urged the Union and State governments to strengthen measures for the safety and security of women and girls through the effective enforcement of stringent laws. “Stating that every girl has the right to live in a fear-free environment, he said the party would continue its campaign until justice is secured for the victim. Sumalatha, Sujatha, Manju, Mallesh and others participated in the rally.



TribeVibe Entertainment announces the return of Rang Morla, bringing Aditya Gadhvi back to Ahmedabad for 10 nights of Navratri magic

“Hyderabad: Last Navratri, Ahmedabad witnessed the rise of a cultural phenomenon as Aditya Gadhvi brought thousands together for ten unforgettable nights of music, devotion and celebration. This year, that experience returns on an even grander scale. TribeVibe Entertainment today announced the second edition of Rang Morla ft. Aditya Gadhvi, Ahmedabad's premier Navratri experience, is set to take place from October 10th to October 19th, 2026. “Building on the success of its landmark debut, Rang Morla returns with an even more ambitious vision for 2026. Conceived as a celebration that brings together music, culture, community and devotion, the festival has established itself as Ahmedabad's most premium Navratri experience, offering audiences a consistent and immersive way to celebrate all ten nights of the festival. “At the heart of the experience is Aditya Gadhvi, who will once again perform live across all ten nights at a single venue creating a rare continuity that allows audiences to return night after night and be part of a shared cultural journey. Designed around the distinct identity of Rang Morla, every element of the festival from its décor and production design to its programming and hospitality has been thoughtfully curated to deliver a world-class celebration rooted in Gujarati tradition. “Beyond the live performances, Rang Morla offers a holistic Navratri experience. With no restricted dancing zones, audiences can immerse themselves freely in the festivities across the entire venue, while premium hospitality and offerings will provide an elevated experience for those seeking a more exclusive way to celebrate. “With enhanced production, larger-scale experiences and a continued focus on culture and community, Rang Morla 2026 aims to raise the bar once again, cementing its position as one of Ahmedabad's most anticipated festive destinations. “Speaking on the return of Rang Morla, Aditya Gadhvi said, “Navratri is our identity, our joy and our devotion. Rang Morla is my way of giving back to the people and culture that shaped me and the love we received last year made it one of the most special moments of my life. In Ahmedabad, I never sing alone, thousands of voices sing with me. Returning for the second edition of Rang Morla feels like coming home. This is my tribute to



TribeVibe

A BookMyShow Enterprise

Ahmedabad, Gujarat and everyone who celebrates Navratri with the same passion and devotion that I do. This year, we're bringing back everything audiences loved and even more.”

Lancet Study highlights NZ smoking rate drops from 40% to 7% with safer alternatives: Insights for India

“Hyderabad: The latest Lancet Regional Health – Western Pacific study has reported one of the fastest national smoking declines ever recorded. Daily smoking in New Zealand was around 40% among men and one-third among women in the mid-20th century, falling to 15% by 2015–16 under conventional tobacco control, then dropped below 7% by 2022–23 after safer nicotine alternatives were formally recognised as cessation aids in 2018/19. “Using joinpoint regression analysis a statistical method that identifies the precise point in time when a trend changes direction and measures how sharply it shifts researchers confirmed a five-fold acceleration in decline, from 3.5% to 17.9% annually. For India, home to 13.5 crore smokers and carrying one of the world's heaviest tobacco-related health burdens, the findings provide a timely evidence-based reference point. “Dr Saurabh Tomar, MBBS, MD Pulmonary Medicine, Interventional Pulmonologist, Aakash Healthcare, Dwarka, New Delhi, notes, “The Lancet study confirms what clinicians observe: conventional tobacco control has a ceiling effect. Despite New

Zealand's full WHO toolkit plain packaging, graphic warnings, and a decade of excise hikes smoking declined only gradually. The structural shift came when regulated, substantially less harmful nicotine alternatives were recognised as cessation tools and made accessible to adults in 2018/19. Science shows it is tobacco combustion, not nicotine, that produces 7,000+ chemicals causing lung cancer, COPD, and cardiovascular disease. India's policy must reflect this distinction.” “New Zealand's experience shows how adult smoking reduction can be achieved alongside youth protection — a balance often debated in India's regulatory discourse. After tightening rules with age limits (18 years), flavour restrictions, bans on disposables, and nicotine caps, youth daily smoking among 14–15-year-olds continued to fall to historic lows, even as youth vaping prevalence rose. The Lancet authors stress that adult declines occurred without reversing youth smoking trends, affirming that nicotine itself is not the cause of disease — combustion is.

Sonalika Celebrates 20 Lakh Production milestone at the World's Largest Integrated Tractor Manufacturing plant in Hoshiarpur, Punjab; Marks a Historic Milestone in 30 Years journey.

“Hyderabad: India's No.1 tractor export brand Sonalika Tractors recently celebrated the grand rollout of its 20 lakhth tractor from its World's Largest Integrated Tractor Manufacturing plant in Hoshiarpur, Punjab. The new achievement commemorates a powerful chapter in the company's 30-year glorious legacy of developing farmer-centric solutions powered by world-class innovation and reinforces its position among the world's leading tractor manufacturers. “Ever since rolling out its 1st tractor 30 years ago in 1996, Sonalika has consistently strengthened its capabilities to challenge industry benchmarks and put the small non-industrial town of Hoshiarpur on the world map. The company gradually built a complete business ecosystem of manufacturing support partners in the area and today, the town of just 18 lakh has evolved into a global manufacturing hub for Sonalika Tractors. From manufacturing just 2 tractors a day during its inception

days, the brand has come a long way, now rolling out a brand new tractor every 2 minutes that fulfils the growing needs of farmers in India, the world's largest tractor market as well as meet export commitments across 150+ countries. “Maintaining the highest quality standards remains paramount for Sonalika, which consistently leverages its advanced automation processes powered by robotics and automation. Every Sonalika tractor undergoes comprehensive rounds of testing and validation to meet the highest standards of performance, durability and reliability that farmers can trust throughout the lifecycle of ownership. A remarkable symbol of the brand's sheer scale of manufacturing prowess is that the facility is fully equipped to manufacture every part in-house that goes into making of powerful tractors. “Sharing his thoughts during the celebration ceremony, Dr. Amrit Sagar Mittal, Vice Chairman, International Tractors Limited, said.

Flipkart's GOAT Sale returns for its third edition; brings GOAT-level deals, brands and offers to shoppers across India

Hyderabad: Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, has announced the return of its much-awaited third edition of GOAT Sale. Scheduled to go live on July 4, 2026, with Early Access from July 3, 2026, for Flipkart Plus and Black members, the sale brings customers access to some of the biggest offers on top brands across categories. Inspired by the popular cultural term 'GOAT' – 'Greatest Of All Time', the campaign leans into a playful, Gen Z-forward world of humour, memes and offbeat storytelling. Anchored by its iconic Goat mascot and supported by quirky characters such as Don the Buffalo, the sale transforms deal discovery into an entertaining experience, making exciting offers feel as fun and shareable as they are rewarding. "To build on this high-energy identity, Flipkart has launched new TVCs that bring alive the playful universe of the GOAT Sale

through larger-than-life characters, cultural cues and exaggerated storytelling. The films feature the iconic GOAT mascot flipping ordinary deals into over-the-top shopping moments, alongside Don the Buffalo, a humorous lucky charm who guides shoppers towards greater savings during the sale. Packed with visual gags, witty wordplay, desi humour and internet-native quirks, the campaign captures the spirit of today's digital-first shoppers. "Speaking about the campaign, Pratik Shetty, Vice President, Growth and Marketing at Flipkart, said, "Over the last two editions, the GOAT Sale has grown into a distinctive Flipkart property, bringing together culture, humour and value for customers across India. With this edition, we are strengthening it as a high-impact shopping moment for customers looking for the biggest offers on top brands. The campaign's playful GOAT universe helps us engage Gen Z and digital-first audiences in a relatable language."

METLIFE GLOBAL CAPABILITY CENTER RECOGNIZED AMONG INDIA'S BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR 2026



MetLife

Hyderabad: MetLife, one of the world's leading financial services companies, announced that it has been ranked 16 in India's Best Companies To Work For in 2026 by Great Place To Work®. The recognition underscores MetLife's continued commitment to fostering a culture of trust, inclusion and innovation, where employees feel empowered to grow, collaborate and drive meaningful impact. "This achievement reflects the MGCC's strong focus on building a workplace culture rooted in people-first practices, continuous learning and inclusive leadership. "This moment is both a celebration and a reminder. Strong workplaces don't happen by chance they are built every day. We will keep listening, learning and working together to make MetLife an even better place to work," said Ashish K. Srivastava, Managing Director at MetLife Global Capability Center (MGCC). "This year's Great Place To Work® study highlights the growing importance of trust and leadership in enabling business performance in the age of AI. Drawing insights from more than 5.7 million employee voices across India, the study recognizes organizations that consistently deliver exceptional employee experiences through high-trust workplace cultures and strong people practices. "In 2026, MetLife was recognized as a Great Place to Work® in 34 markets around the world, reflecting the company's unwavering focus on fostering an inclusive, purpose-driven culture where employees can thrive. "The full report and the complete list of India's Best Companies To Work For in 2026 are available here.

'This is the fabric of our country': As actor Vikrant Massey speaks about his inter-faith roots, we sought stories of young adults navigating dual faiths

In today's world, as barriers of religion, caste, and other divisions are increasingly fading, many are growing up in households where their parents practice different faiths. 12th Fail actor Vikrant Massey, who revealed his parents had an interfaith marriage—his father is a Christian and mother, a Sikh—recently shared his experience of growing up in such an environment. Adding to the family's pluralistic story, Massey also mentioned that his brother, Moeen, embraced Islam. "My brother does Laxmi puja on Diwali. His conversion is his personal choice. But we celebrate Diwali and Holi together here. On the occasion of Eid, we celebrate it at his place, having biryani. Today, that fulcrum is absent (in society)," Massey said. "My father has been to Vaishno Devi temple (located in Katra, Jammu and Kashmir) six times. He is a Christian and goes to church twice a week even now. But that's what India has always been like. We go to gurudwaras and many Hindus go to Ajmer Sharif Dargah (located in Rajasthan). This is our Hindustan. Why is it so surprising? There's a temple in my house. My son's name is Vardaan. This is the fabric of our country."

While most children are raised with a singular religious perspective, kids of parents who practice different faiths gain a deeper understanding of two distinct worldviews. Indianexpress.com spoke with several individuals who grew up in interfaith households to learn about their experiences — the benefits and challenges, the unique traditions, moments of inner conflict between faiths, and how these dynamics shaped their relationships with family members and peers.

Growing up with parents of different faiths Pranjal Kumar, 21, recalled her childhood with traces of two distinct spiritual traditions—her father's Hindu customs and her mother's Christian practices. "I was exposed to two distinct religious traditions, which instilled open-mindedness and curiosity in me," she told indianexpress.com. This exposure gave her a balanced perspective on life, and encouraged her to explore and embrace diversity, fostering a lifelong journey of self-discovery. Similarly, Sahil Khan, 25, described his home as a "beautiful amalgamation of faiths." He grew up celebrating Christmas with Christian friends and Eid with Muslim neighbours. "Religious hatred never entered our house or mind. Living in a dual-faith household ingrains tolerance in you whereas in households with a single religion, this often seems like a matter of personal choice," he said.

"I was exposed to two distinct religious traditions, which instilled open-mindedness and curiosity in me," said 21-year-old Pranjal Kumar. "I was exposed to two distinct religious traditions, which instilled open-mindedness and curiosity in me," said 21-year-old Pranjal Kumar. (Source: Pranjal Kumar) Sonia Rodrigues, 36, said that experiencing both Hinduism and Roman Catholic traditions taught her that, at the core, "all religions share the same foundational principles: love, forgiveness, compassion, and the pursuit of truth." "I fasted on Ekadashi and during Lent, celebrated Diwali and Christmas alike. This balance taught me to embrace universal

human values," she said. "My mother was Catholic and my dad a Hindu," said Rhea Cheryl Shivan, 32. "While they had a Christian wedding, my dad wasn't obliged to convert. I was raised Catholic, as is common in many households in my family and friend circles, but my father occasionally shared aspects of his religion with us (He's a believer in a higher power but not necessarily a practicing Hindu)," she told indianexpress.com. Shivan's parents raised her to be very mindful and respectful of all religions, and said that her home library was a symbol of inclusivity, with the Bible, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Quran side by side. Feeling conflicted between the two religions

"I don't believe I ever felt conflicted between two religions," Shivan said, adding that culturally and socially, people usually tend to adopt the practices of the maternal side, and this was the case for her. "Hindu festivals or religious practices became moments of exploration and learning. This continues to be true today." Khan echoed this, "Never happened." However, for Kumar it was the opposite. "There were certainly moments when I felt conflicted or torn between the two religions. During religious holidays or family gatherings, I often found myself navigating between different traditions and practices. However, my parents were always supportive and understanding, allowing me to explore both faiths without feeling pressured to choose one over the other." "My parents believed that religion should never be imposed," said Rodrigues. "I was equally fine fasting on Ekadashi or Mahashivratri as I was during Lent. Festivals like Diwali and Christmas were celebrated with the same enthusiasm and joy." Rhea Cheryl Shivan (second from right) spoke about how her parents raised her to be very mindful and respectful of all religions Rhea Cheryl Shivan (second from right) spoke about how her parents raised her to be very mindful and respectful of all religions (Source: Rhea Cheryl Shivan) Relationships with extended family members or peers "Coming from a family where many of my parents' generation had interfaith marriages, relationships vary," Shivan said. She acknowledged that not all family members and friends are as open and accepting of other religions as they are. "There have been heated debates, but also unifying moments—especially during weddings—when we manage to blur the lines and celebrate love and togetherness, irrespective of religion." Rodrigues confessed that her parents had a love marriage, but not against the family's will. "As a result, our relationships with extended family members have remained warm and positive. In fact, being part of an interfaith household often adds an interesting dynamic to these relationships." Khan said, "My social life has also been enriched." He believes his openness towards other religions draws him to people from diverse backgrounds, and his peers are often curious to learn about different religions from him.

Although a few relatives were initially curious or had questions about his parents' interfaith marriage, Kumar acknowl-



edged that the majority ultimately came to welcome and embrace his family's one-of-a-kind dynamic. "My friends were also interested in my background and frequently inquired about my religious beliefs. These discussions allowed me to share my experiences and promote understanding and tolerance," she said. Psychological benefits and challenges of being raised in interfaith households Neha Parashar, senior clinical psychologist at Cadabams Hospitals, said, "Growing up with exposure to two distinct faiths fosters open-mindedness and tolerance." She cited a study in the Journal of Intercultural Psychology (2018), which found that children from interfaith families tend to develop a nuanced understanding of cultural diversity. "Adjustment, mutual respect, and communication become foundational values in such households. Skills such as critical thinking, compassion, empathy, and the ability to hold meaningful dialogues are cultivated, strengthening interpersonal relationships," said mental health counsellor Anuckriti Garg. Sahil Khan, 25, described his home as a "beautiful amalgamation of faiths." (Source: Sahil Khan)

In terms of the challenges, Smitha Kashi, consultant art psychotherapist at Spandana Health Care, stressed that children may experience internal conflicts if the beliefs of both parents are at odds or if extended families express disapproval. "Inconsistencies in how the faiths are practiced can lead to confusion or a feeling of not fully belonging to either tradition. It is crucial for parents to provide clarity and stability while encouraging exploration and dialogue about faith," she said. In families where one faith dominates, Parashar noted that children may feel pressured to favour one belief system over the other, "leading to guilt or anxiety. Development of empa-

thy, adaptability, or critical thinking skills According to Garg, "In interfaith households, without a single theological framework, children are encouraged to explore diverse cultures, ideas, and perspectives. As a non-normative structure, interfaith families are more likely to foster an appreciation for diversity, inclusivity, and empathy. Learning to navigate the stigma associated with interfaith households equips children to adapt and cope with challenging situations." Parashar concurred, saying, "Children in interfaith families often grow up adapting to two sets of norms, celebrations, and expectations. This adaptability makes them more comfortable in multicultural environments, a key trait in today's globalised world." She is also of the opinion that reconciling differing beliefs, values, or practices pushes children to think critically about their own identities and moral frameworks. "They learn to evaluate which aspects of each faith resonate with them personally, fostering independent thought and intellectual growth," she said. Sonia Rodrigues, 36, said that experiencing both Hinduism and Roman Catholic traditions taught her that, at the core, "all religions share the same foundational principles Sonia Rodrigues, 36, said that experiencing both Hinduism and Roman Catholic traditions taught her that, at the core, "all religions share the same foundational principles (Source: Sonia Rodrigues) Can navigating dual religious identities help build resilience or unique coping mechanisms? Yes, navigating dual religious identities can foster resilience, according to Parashar. "Children learn to mediate between differing viewpoints, a skill transferable to social and professional situations," she said. "When supported effectively, they often develop a robust sense of identity, grounded in the ability to synthesise and embrace diverse aspects of their upbringing," Kashi said.

When Chennai parks turn into open air art galleries

More than 500 artists across age groups will turn Senmozhi Poonga into a dazzling kaleidoscope of colours on February 2. The second edition of Chennaiyil Oar Oviya Sangamam, an art exhibition presented by Indian Art Factory, will see participants, some from other cities, take every inch of their stall under tree canopies and behind plants to present a vibrant art gallery. The event is a big stage for aspiring and upcoming artists. Many of these artists do not have the means or the qualification to present their works at art galleries. While the larger goal of taking art to public spaces is to bridge the gap between artists and audiences through creative expressions, the road to this is not so easy.

For six editions, the Art Fest at Nageshwara Rao Park in Mylapore, curated by journalist and publisher Vincent D. Souza and artist Ganapathy Subramaniam, has served as a date for public engagement. This year, however, the fest scheduled to take place during the last week of February, will see a change of venue. Since civic works are under way at Nageshwara Rao Park, the venue is not fully suitable for an art show, says a post on Facebook. It meanwhile wants people to keep their artworks ready. In 2023, Anna Nagar Tower Park got to host the Tamil Nadu Art and Craft Trust Expo 2023 but with conditions. Greater Chennai Corporation did not give permission for artworks to be sold, they could only be exhibited. "That was the condition laid down to me to use this venue and we agreed as we wanted to give many struggling artists a platform and to some extent the open air exhibition served its purpose," says the organiser Jaffer Beig who is a member of Tamil Nadu Artists Association.

Ganapathy Subramaniam of Art Fest says they too were asked not to promote the event as a "sales event". "Art requires a lot of promotion, so the least support we ask for is that Greater Chennai Corporation give us space," says Ganapathy. Like the Chitra Sante held annually on the streets of a neighbourhood in Bengaluru, such events need continuity and some support from the government or the civic body in terms of providing a venue that can draw people. Jaffer is looking for a space to host the art exhibition this year but he can only afford a minimal amount as fee. Ganapathy says not all public spaces are suited for hosting an art event. "Nageshwara Rao Park was right in every sense from location to size and the space plays host to various events including the Mylapore Fest so we did not have to promote it," he says.

Selvakannan Rathinam, founder, Indian Art Factory, says organising an event of such scale is not easy. "I have paid the Horticulture Department ₹75,000 towards rent for a day, which is fine but I have been requesting a waiver in entry fee for visitors on the D-Day or it would not draw the public," says Selvakannan. From 125 artists in the first edition, this time the event has 525 people, 70 from other states, taking part in it. "We do not have an application process to shortlist artists; we look at the Instagram profile and their artworks and charge ₹1500

per stall and they have a conformed space at the venue," says Selvakannan. As a self-taught artist he has faced many rejections from art galleries so he does not like to shortlist participants. Last year, the artist community made ₹4 lakh selling works. This time, our target is ₹25 lakh, so we want a good footfall, he says.

A majority of organisers of art events and artists will swear by Bengaluru's Chitra Santhe. Happening for the last 22 years, the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath organises this art festival around its campus and extend it to a few VIP roads on the first Sunday of January. Streets are strictly pedestrian only for the entire day, vehicular traffic is diverted for art to spread out in all forms, shapes and sizes. So big has this street art festival grown that this year the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation offered feeder services to the venue and Namma Yatri offered free autorickshaw rides. Shashidhar Rao S.N., general secretary, Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, says the festival has had its own set of challenges that were ironed out gradually.

Last year, 1,800 artistes from 22 states presented their works and over six lakh people attended the day-long festival. A number of the participants are from rural areas of Karnataka who get a platform. "A number of stalls have sold more than ₹3



lakh worth of art and we don't charge any commission from them except the registration fee of ₹1000 that covers breakfast, lunch and accommodation for outstation artists," says Rao. From a manual process, three years ago an exclusive website was designed for participants to process their application form, know whether they are shortlisted and make the payment. Does the Karnataka government fund the event? Rao says the government has been supportive but they don't have a fixed amount being given every year. "Sometimes prom-

ises are made and sometimes we get only 20% of the amount but we have no complaints.

We are happy with the support various departments give us including by cordoning off vehicles for 12 hours which is a big challenge in a city like Bengaluru," he says. Rao says registration fee is one component through which the expenses of organising this festival is met. Given the increasing crowd that has been turning up for the event, the Parishath has been mulling about moving it to a park.

Time for Congress to walk the talk

The Congress recently announced the launch of 'Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan', a campaign to commemorate the 75th year of the Constitution. Hindutva ideologues have denigrated M.K. Gandhi while their antipathy towards Dr. B.R. Ambedkar became evident through the disparaging remarks made by Home Minister Amit Shah in Parliament. In this light, this campaign appears to hold promise. Since coming to power in Karnataka in 2023, the Congress government has signalled its commitment to the Constitution. It hosted an international conference titled 'Constitution and National Unity' in February 2024 and held massive celebrations in September 2024 to mark the International Day of Democracy and the Chief Minister urged people to abide by constitutional values.

Notwithstanding these, a genuine commitment to democracy must minimally ensure that everyone feels like an active participant in a consultative process. Therefore, spaces for peaceful dissent should not be curtailed. In 2021, the BJP government in Karnataka passed the Licensing and Regulation of Protests, Demonstrations and Protest Marches (Bengaluru City) Order, making public protests outside a designated area illegal. The grounds for these were that the "unauthorised manner adversely affect traffic movement, which cause huge vehicular congestion." After the order, protests in Bengaluru have been limited to a small park ambushed by a parking lot; it is ironically called Freedom Park. Protests at-

tempted to be held anywhere else have met with police crackdowns and FIRs.

The right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly is a fundamental right (Article 19). Indeed, the very idea of satyagraha or peaceful civil disobedience is one of the biggest contributions of India to the rest of the world. When tenant farmers in Bihar's Champaran district were forced by the British to cultivate indigo and were heavily penalised for any crop failures, Gandhi initiated the historic Champaran Satyagraha in 1917. He defied government orders to leave Champaran; this resistance led to the Champaran Agrarian Law providing relief to farmers. In 1923, the Bombay Legislative Council permitted people across castes to use places built and run by the government. However, Dalits were prevented by caste Hindus from drinking water from public tanks. In defiance, in 1927, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar led thousands of Dalits to walk to Chavdar tank in Maharashtra's Mahad and drank water from the tank in protest. These, among many others, have given the world a grammar of dissent.

The Congress government in Karnataka has continued the undemocratic order passed in 2021. On August 15, 2022, 72 farmers protesting against government acquisition of their land in Devanahalli were arrested and FIRs were registered against them. Numerous pro-Palestine protesters have been detained. The police slapped FIRs against several people who gathered at the steps of Town



Hall in Bengaluru to protest against the assault of two Manipuri women. The Karnataka High Court quashed those FIRs, but the process of fighting itself became a punishment. In 2023, on Gandhi's birth anniversary, hundreds of citizens walked from the Gandhi statue to Vidhana Soudha as a satyagraha to reclaim the rights to peaceful assembly. They were detained by the police and an FIR was filed against several people. Although election rallies and religious processions cause traffic, only protest rallies are banned. Controlling traffic is a civic matter. The government's rationale that protests held at a particular spot cause traffic is unfounded. For instance, protesting at the steps of Town Hall does not cause traffic.

JSW MG Motor India Unveils the MG MAJESTOR, India's first D+ Segment SUV

Longest, Widest, and Tallest dimensions - stands above D-segment SUVs



Hyderabad

JSW MG Motor India today showcased the MG MAJESTOR, its all-new offering as India's First D+ SUV crafted for customers who seek a lifestyle defined by bold presence, unyielding dominance, superior capability, rock-solid reliability, and unmatched refinement. After breaking cover at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025, the MAJESTOR now claims center stage as MG's most rugged, durable, and premium SUV tailored for the Indian roads and beyond. Built for peak performance and to deliver commanding road presence and all-terrain performance, premium comfort, and advanced safety, the MAJESTOR showcases cutting-edge 4x4 prowess raising the bar with segment-leading innovations, luxury features, top-tier safety, and enduring build quality. Starting today the MAJESTOR is available for pre-booking while full range pricing and market availability will be announced closer to launch.

Commenting on the occasion, Anurag Mehrotra, Managing Director, JSW MG Motor India, said, "India's pre-

mium SUV customer is evolving rapidly, looking not just for space, but for a vehicle that projects stature, inspires confidence, and integrates seamlessly into a more ambitious lifestyle. With MG MAJESTOR, we have created an SUV that is rugged in its capability, refined in its comfort, and dependable in its engineering. MAJESTOR for us represents our vision of what a true, full-size SUV should stand for, which is a commanding presence, sophisticated premium craftsmanship, intelligent in technology, and uncompromising in performance."

Robust Exterior:

Resting on a massive 2950 mm wheelbase, the MAJESTOR asserts dominance at the longest (5046mm), widest (2016mm), and tallest (1870mm) - unmatched in class. Its Mosaic Matrix Combination Grille, Dragon Eyes DRLs, split headlamps, connected LED tail lamps with sequential turn signals, raised hood line, and 19-inch alloy wheels amplify a bold, upright, rugged profile. Yet, it maintains a sophisticated, premium aesthetic that turns heads on city streets or highways

Premium Interior:

Step inside for an expansive haven in black theme with plush leather and sleek center console. Driver and co-driver seats are ventilated, offer massage function, memorize positions, and can be adjusted in multiple ways (12-way driver, 8-way passenger). A panoramic sunroof floods light, while 64-color ambient lighting sets the mood. Three-zone AC ensures personalized comfort.

Flexible in 6- or 7-seater configs, it suits families or adventurers. Dual 12.3-inch displays (instrument cluster and infotainment) support wireless Android Auto/Apple CarPlay. Immersive 12-speaker JBL sound, dual wireless chargers, 220V outlet, and 75+ iSMART connected features underline a tech-forward, luxurious drive every time.

Off-Road Mastery

At the heart of the MAJESTOR lies true SUV engineering, powered by a 2.0-litre twin-turbo diesel engine that churns best-in-segment power@215.5 PS and 478.5 Nm torque mated to best-

in-class 8-speed AT (Automatic Transmission) in both 2WD and advanced 4WD. The Advanced 4WD system with 10 off-road modes balances worlds — on-road ease, off-road might.

In Auto Mode, the vehicle intelligently operates in 2WD during regular driving conditions and automatically switches to 4WD the moment it detects loss of traction. This ensures better fuel efficiency during daily use while delivering enhanced off-road capability exactly when required. This intelligent mode is particularly effective in conditions such as rain, snow, and slippery surfaces which require higher speeds.

Further strengthening its rugged credentials, the MAJESTOR becomes the first in the segment to offer front, rear, and centre differential locks, enabling it to pull itself out of extreme situations even when one or more wheels lose traction or lift off the ground. Supported by Crawl Control Mode, 219 mm ground clearance, and an 810 mm water wading capability. The MAJESTOR is engineered for durability and reliability across the toughest terrains.