

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Monday, 10 February, 2025

UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

## GBS outbreak fuels fears of water quality in Pune

PUNE: For hours, the Chavans didn't know what had gone wrong with their son. He had been unwell for a few days, down with a bout of diarrhoea, but on January 12, seven-year-old Sai Chavan suddenly fell to the ground, and stopped moving. Mother Noor Jahan and father Suraj rushed him to hospital where doctors were flummoxed: Sai had symptoms they couldn't diagnose. Eventually, he was taken to a private hospital in Pune city and it was there that specialists had answers for the couple - their son had Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS). By early February, the Chavans' neighbourhood of Nanded Gaon had enough cases to be classified as the "primary outbreak zone" - nearly 90 cases would come from this area and nearby localities of Kirkatwadi, Sinhagad Road and Khadakwasla, all that were not long ago merged with Pune Municipal Corporation. On February 4, almost a month after the first cases emerged, health authorities released their findings. Bacteria Campylobacter jejuni had made its way into the water supply, they said, triggering a mass infection event. So far, more than 180 people have been sickened; six have died. The Chavans found themselves at ground zero. "We should never have trusted the corporation's water, it was our mistake," said Noor. Near her stood Suraj, trying to get his son to walk again. But Sai's knees buckled; he was still in pain.The family was given a municipal tap connection after Nanded Gaon merged with PMC in 2021, but with a catch. : the water they got - for an hour

## 'Hold BJP accountable for poll promises': Kejriwal's directive to Delhi AAP MLAs

**NEW DELHI:** Newly-elected MLAs of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) met party supremo Arvind Kejriwal at his house on Sunday, a day after the party faced drubbing in the Delhi assembly election, winning only 22 out of the total 70 seats it contested. After the meeting, Atishi, who won from Kalkaji, said that Kejriwal directed the MLAs to focus on serving their constituencies and hold rival BJP accountable for their poll promises. **Effective Governance and PromisesTransparency and Accountability** "Today, Arvind Kejriwal ji held a meeting with the newly elected 22 MLAs and directed them to focus on serving their constituencies. He emphasised the responsibility to fulfill the people's trust and solve their problems. He also spoke about holding the BJP accountable for their promises, like providing Rs 2,500 to women in Delhi by March 8, continuing free electricity, maintaining quality government schools, and free treatment in Mohalla Clinics and government hospitals. The AAP will ensure the BJP fulfills these commitments and continues the work done



over the past 10 years," Atishi told news agency PTI. Acknowledging the Delhi mandate, Atishi said the election was fought with "hooliganism" that had never happened in the history fo Delhi. "Right now analysis is going on as to why AAP lost, but this is the mandate of the people of Delhi, we respect the mandate. This election was conducted with so much hooliganism, such an election would have never happened in the history of Delhi," Atishi said. She said the AAP would "play the role of constructive opposition". "Where money is being distributed openly, liquor is being distributed openly, police are getting it distributed, and whoever is complaining about this is being put in jail...But we

## What happened when Biren Singh tried to resign as Manipur CM in 2023

**NEW DELHI:** Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh submitted his resignation to Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday. Singh, who was accompanied by 14 BJP and NPF MLAs, had just returned from Delhi before making the move. State BJP president A Sharda and senior BJP leader Sambit Patra were also part of the delegation. Singh's resignation comes amid growing political ten-

sion, with the opposition Congress pushing for a no-confidence motion against his government. Just a day earlier, he had convened a meeting with BJP-led alliance MLAs to discuss the upcoming assembly session, set to begin on February 10. In his letter to the governor, Singh expressed gratitude for the central government's interventions and developmental initiatives, stating that it had been an honour to

serve Manipur. In 2023, Singh found himself at the centre of a political storm when he attempted to resign following intense pressure over the state's ongoing ethnic violence. The resignation drama, was marked by protests and a torn letter.Thousands of supporters, mostly elderly women, blocked his convoy as he attempted to reach Raj Bhavan. Singh got down from his vehicle.

## Uneasy calm in Imphal after Biren steps down, security up

**GUWAHATI:** Immediately after chief minister N Biren Singh resigned on Sunday afternoon, an uneasy calm descended upon the city of Imphal, the capital of strife-torn Manipur, with substantial deployment of police and security personnel on the streets to prevent any outbreak of violence. Imphal witnessed several violent incidents during the past two years after an ethnic

clash started on May 3, 2023. In the past, public outrage spilled onto the streets as people voiced their protest against the loss of innocent lives and property with even ministerial and MLA residences becoming targets. However, as news of chief minister Biren Singh's resignation spread rapidly, the city experienced hours of silence and disquiet. Manipur Police, CAPF, Army and Assam Rifles.

## Odisha HC grants bail to thief with 'sapling plants' condition

**Orissa** An Orissa HC judge has granted bail to a man facing prosecution for alleged theft on the condition that he plant 200 saplings of local varieties such as mango, neem, and tamarind around his village in Jharsuguda district and maintain them for two years, reports Lal Mohan Patnaik.Manas Ati had been in judicial custody since December 25 last year for allegedly stealing six electric poles in villages under Kolabira police.

## Murder convict uses jail earnings to pay Rs 1 lakh court fine

**KALABURAGI:** As the heavy gates of Kalaburagi central jail swung open last Thursday, Durgappa, 68, stepped out. But freedom came at a price - Rs 1.1 lakh, to be precise. The murder convict was set to walk free in November 2024 on account of good behaviour during his 12 years behind bars. But a court-mandated fine stood between him and his release. With no family support and no financial



means outside, his fate seemed uncertain - until his own earnings as a prison cook came to his rescue. A farm hand from Karnataka's Raichur district, Durgappa was convicted in 2013 for murdering his wife the year before.

The sessions court sentenced him to life imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 1.1 lakh, with an additional 18 months of jail time if he failed to pay. He was lodged in Raichur jail, and transferred to Kalaburagi the same year. His life behind bars could have stretched till 2027 had it not been for a remission granted on account of good conduct. The only hurdle? Paying the court fine.

## Militants loot arms from IRB outpost in Thoubal

**GUWAHATI:** Militants raided an India Reserve Battalion (IRB) outpost in Thoubal district of Manipur and looted six SLRs, three AK-series rifles, and a large quantity of ammunition Saturday night. Additional forces were deployed and a search was conducted, yielding eight stolen weapons. However, one SLR remained missing at the time of reporting. An investigation has been launched to determine how the attack was carried out, which left three security personnel wounded, police said. Sources said gunmen arrived in multiple vehicles, seized weapons at gunpoint, and fled with around 270 rounds of ammunition and 12 magazines. Police identified militants from Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) as the attackers, though other groups are also suspected to have been involved. A KCP militant was



arrested Sunday. The looting of arms from forces has been a persistent issue in Manipur since the outbreak of ethnic violence on May 3, 2023. Mobs and insurgent groups have taken away thousands of weapons and ammunition from police stations, IRB outposts, and armouries. In the initial months of violence, an estimated 4,000 weapons, including AK-series rifles, SLRs, and carbines, were

looted, along with over 6 lakh rounds of ammunition. While forces have managed to recover a portion of the arms, a large number remained in circulation, fuelling extortion, targeted attacks, and insurgency. tried to convince them, but they refused to budge, forcing him to return home. The six-hour-long demonstration outside his residence culminated dramatically when cabinet

minister L Susindro Meitei read out Singh's resignation letter in front of the crowd, only for the women to snatch it from his hands and tear it apart. The build-up to this political drama began when women protesters at Ema Market issued an ultimatum to the government to end the unrest following a deadly gunfight between security forces and rioters. Hours later, tensions escalated as mobs vandalized BJP offices in Thoubal and Imphal West. Early the next morning, Singh held a meeting with his ministers, where the decision to resign was taken. Eventually, he was forced to clarify on social media that he would not be resigning. "At this crucial juncture, I wish to clarify that I will not be resigning from the post of chief minister," he posted on Twitter.

## After Biren red card, all eyes on Delhi's next pick for captain

**GUWAHATI:** As former footballer N Biren Singh was shown the red card and sent off as Manipur CM, BJP now finds itself in extra time, scrambling to pick a player who can turn the game around.With the state deeply divided, the party will look for a playmaker who can rebuild trust and governance in Manipur; someone capable of bridging the gap between the warring Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities. The question is - who will be the captain when the state administration and security apparatus are deeply fractured? Among the frontrunners is rural and pan-chayati raj,

## Bengaluru cops pull the plug on Ed Sheeran the busker

**BENGALURU:** Imagine taking a leisurely Sunday stroll, only to stumble upon your favourite artiste performing on the street, followed by the shock of him being put on pause. That's exactly what happened when Ed Sheeran treated Bengaluru to a surprise gig on Church Street during his India Tour - a true 'Peak Bengaluru' moment. Just as fans gathered in awe, police unplugged the mic mid-performance, citing lack of permission and footpath encroachment. As officers tried to escort him away, Sheeran told the crowd, "We've permission to be here, but this policeman is shutting it down. See you later!" Ed Sheeran says had permission, Bengaluru cops deny any approach. Ed Sheeran began singing



at 11.51am but was shut down just a minute later. This reignited debates about whether authorities should be more flexible and welcoming to spontaneous artistic expressions. The local Cubbon Park police denied that permission was granted for the performance. When TOI tried to contact the management of Ed Sheeran, they were unresponsive. Ed Sheeran is in Bengaluru as part of his India tour. Sheeran, however, later posted on Instagram: "We had permission to busk, by the way.

## Congress says Manipur CM Biren Singh's resignation came 'too late'

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress on Sunday criticised the timing of Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh's resignation, arguing that his removal should have come earlier to prevent the deepening crisis in the state. Reacting to Singh's resignation, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said, "For nearly two years, BJP's CM Biren Singh instigated division in Manipur. PM Modi allowed him to continue despite the violence, loss of life, and the destruction of the idea of India in Manipur. The resignation of CM Biren Singh shows that mounting public pressure, the SC investigation and the no-confidence motion by the Congress have forced a reckoning.

## UK MP 'complains' about London Station Sign Board written in Bengali

**Elon Musk** expressed support for Rupert Lowe's stance that London station names should be displayed only in English. The discussion was sparked by bilingual English and Bengali signs at Whitechapel station, introduced to celebrate the area's British Bangladeshi community. UK MP Rupert Lowe 'complains' about London Station Sign Board written in Bengali and not English alone,



Elon Musk responds Tech billionaire Elon Musk has added his opinion to an ongoing discussion about bilingual signage at London's Whitechapel station. Responding to a post by

Rupert Lowe – UK MP for Great Yarmouth on X (formerly Twitter), Musk replied with a simple "Yes." Lowe's post argued that station names in London should be displayed "in English, and English only," referring to Whitechapel's signs, which include Bengali a l o n g s i d e English.Sharing the post, Lowe wrote "This is London - station name should be in English and English only".



## Editorial

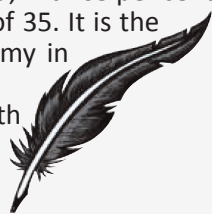
### Clumsy and ill-informed analogy gone wrong

**President** George W Bush was famous for his quite often hilarious gaffes, but he has been receiving steady competition from the 81-year-old President Joe Biden. The latest Biden pronouncement may be more by way of a clumsy and ill-informed analogy gone wrong. Luckily for him, his presidential election rival, the almost 78-year-old Donald Trump, makes quite a few bloopers too.

Republican contender, former President Donald Trump, may be tough on Mexican immigrants with his infamous, if not too effective, border fence and wall, but Democrat Joe Biden, the incumbent president, is in harmony with the Democratic Party pro-immigration stance. This even in the face of internal advice that he should tough talk on the same border issue. Of course, hordes of poor and largely illiterate illegal immigrants in 2024 who don't speak English are not as welcome as they were in the 1870s. In the 19th century and before, immigrants, largely from Europe, slaves brought in from Africa, and some immigration from China, helped to populate the vast country. They threw out the British colonists, pushed back the French and Mexicans, subdued the native Red Indians, built the engines of growth, and even fought a civil war amongst themselves. Immigrants, many originally poor and persecuted in their erstwhile home countries, have been a crucial feature of American DNA. This is what Biden meant, but perhaps he should have stopped right there. Immigrants into America are known and lauded for their hard work, ingenuity, and grit, and Biden was addressing a crowd of mostly Asian Americans. More recently, the brilliant IIT educated ones from India, its 'brain drain' and America's gain, have been most useful in building America's preeminence in IT, other technology, and commerce. Scores of Indian-origin CEOs of marquee companies on the Nasdaq and S&P 100 indices have led to the joke that you can't be CEO in America if you aren't Indian. It is a complete makeover of the earlier American image of India as a land of teeming poverty, with tigers, snake charmers, and fakirs thrown in. President Joe Biden, keen to distinguish his candidature from that of Donald Trump, decided to praise immigrants at a campaign reception fundraiser. On the campaign trail for Biden 1.0, he had vowed to enact legislation to make the immigration process more 'humane' in contrast to President Trump's mostly intended, but not implemented, harsh measures. This time, too, Trump is speaking of deportations.

However, as president, Biden could not make much progress on immigration legislation without bipartisan support because of surges of illegal immigration at the southern border. And calls, certainly from Republicans, but even from Democrats, to seal the border and crack down on asylum seekers. Some went so far as to call for banning asylum altogether. But the consensus is that, at this fundraiser, Biden let his analogies run away with him. Biden said American allies and partners Japan and India are struggling economically 'because they're xenophobic'. He included 'frenemy' China and combatant Russia in the illustration as well. Japan is opening up to a cautious immigration policy as it grapples with its diminishing and ageing population, and its economy has been showing signs of recovery from a 25-year-long recession. It is keen, however, not to import terrorism and other social upheavals into its very well-ordered culture. India is the most populous country in the world, with 65 per cent of its people under the age of 35. It is the fastest-growing major economy in the world.

, with 6-7 per cent GDP growth per annum.  
, and harbours.



## Responsibility of the police is also to stop drug smuggling

The responsibility of the police is also to stop drug smuggling, but it is also almost a failure in this matter, and even if some honest policemen catch drug smugglers somewhere, then nothing much happens to the drug smugglers. Many times they get released easily on the basis of money or on bail. The job of the Drugs Department is to stop drug smuggling, but it also seems almost unsuccessful in this. Anyway, drug smuggling is continuously increasing and so is the number of drug users. The Central Government should pay full attention to this and drug smugglers should not be spared under any circumstances. The police should keep a close watch on such gangs outside or around schools, who smuggle drugs and make innocent school children their victims. It is surprising and sad that not only minor boys studying in schools fall prey to these drug smugglers, but minor girls also fall prey to this. Not only the Modi government at the centre, the state governments, the drug department, de-addiction centres, the police, but also the teachers teaching in schools and the parents of the children should pay attention to this. Because a small negligence can ruin the lives of children who are considered the future of the country. And I think this can be felt the most by those parents whose children have ruined themselves or are ruining themselves by getting addicted to drugs. **Recently**, news of school going children taking



drugs has come to light in Gujarat. And this matter came to light when parents took two children to the doctors after their strange behaviour and their sleeping at home after tuitions, when the doctors got the urine test of both the children done. Actually, these children used to drink coffee somewhere while returning from tuitions, after which they used to hit the bed and sleep as soon as they came home. These children neither ate food on time, nor studied properly, nor talked to anyone properly, nor listened to anyone in the family. On this, the family members showed them to the doctors and then it was found out that both of them take drugs. Living in a tower of Jhanda Lal Chowk, they were caught stealing bicycles in school uniform and it was revealed that they had started taking drugs, they were stealing to buy drugs. Actually, about a week ago, Gujarat Police arrested 5 people with about 500 kg of cocaine under a joint operation. Earlier in June this year, hybrid ganja and other drugs worth about Rs

3.5 crore were hidden in children's items in Gujarat, which were seized by the police. And before that, more than 3 thousand kg of drugs worth crores were recovered from Gujarat at Adani Port. Similarly, drugs worth crores are recovered every year in Gujarat and apart from arresting a few people, the police or AIIMS department is unable to take any action that can completely stop it. And today, not only in Gujarat, but in other states as well, the business of drug smuggling is increasing. The question is who is behind this? And the second question is why children, especially those studying in schools, are being made victims of drugs? Till a few years ago, it was seen that only children who pick garbage take drugs? But now the cases of children from well-off families taking drugs and other types of intoxication are increasing. The increase in the number of child patients coming to de-addiction centers is no small matter. In the year 2022, the Modi government of the Center itself told the Supreme

Court that 1 crore 58 lakh minor children in the country between the ages of 10 and 17 years are consuming some form of intoxication, most of whom consume a particular type of dangerous intoxication. For example, they are taking drugs etc. The government had also told the court that minor children of this age are consuming many types of intoxicants including cocaine, hashish, marijuana, alcohol, heroin, LSD, morphine, opium, cannabis. Citing a survey, the Modi government of the Center had told the Supreme Court that among all types of intoxicants, the people of India consume alcohol the most, about 16 crore people, out of which more than 5 crore 7 lakh people are seriously addicted to alcohol. After alcohol, they prefer cannabis and opium intoxication, the population of those who consume them is more than 3 crore 1 lakh, out of which the number of cannabis addicts is about 25 lakh. This matter came to light when a petition was filed in the Supreme Court by an NGO named Bachpan

Bachao Andolan and the Supreme Court had sought a reply from the Modi government at the Centre. In this matter, the Modi government at the Centre also provided many other information about drug addicts, but did not take any concrete steps to stop drugs and other types of intoxicants. Anyway, every year on 8 June, National Drug Destruction Day is celebrated on a large scale in India and every year on 26 June, International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is also celebrated at the international level and on both these occasions, children are the victims. Not only the Central Government, its de-addiction centres, but also the state governments and their de-addiction centres and all the government institutions working in the name of de-addiction spend crores and billions of rupees, but despite this, the number of drug addicts is increasing in India from drug trafficking to drug addiction, in which the most worrying thing is children getting addicted to drugs. While the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre of the Central Government has launched a very ambitious scheme like Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan (NMB A) across the country, whose de-addiction centres are running in every district of the country, despite this, the increasing number of drug addicts, especially children, is not only a matter of concern, but it also seems clear that the government is wasting money on these de-addiction centres.

### Maharashtra: MVA Or Mahayuti? All Depends On Who Wins 4 Zones

**With** elections due in a month, election fever has gripped the entire Maharashtra. While the MVA has released a list of 158 candidates, Mahayuti has announced candidates for 182 seats. Maharashtra has six key regions—Vidarbha, Marathwada, Western Maharashtra, North Maharashtra, Mumbai and Thane-Konkan—each of which has its own dynamics. Naturally, the alliance that wins four of these six regions will go on to form the government, and thus, parties are tailoring their strategies zone-wise. While Vidarbha has 62 seats, the Northern zone has 35, Marathwada 46, the Western zone 70, Mumbai 36, and Thane-Konkan 39. In the Lok Sabha elections earlier this year, the MVA was leading in Vidarbha, the West, Marathwada and Mumbai and was able to win 30 of the 48 Lok Sabha seats. The ruling Mahayuti was ahead in just the North and Thane-Konkan regions. The MVA and the Mahayuti each have three

players, with specific strengths. The Congress led from the front in Vidarbha, defeating the BJP in one-to-one contests. In Mumbai, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena held sway, and in Western Maharashtra, it was the Sharad Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) that came out on top.

In Marathwada, all three parties from the MVA played their part. On the other hand, from the Mahayuti, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena was ahead in the Thane-Konkan, while the BJP dominated Northern Maharashtra.

The BJP and the two factions of the Shiv Sena have emerged as the only parties with a pan-state presence in the state and they led in assembly segments in all zones in the general elections. On the other hand, the Congress was not in the lead in any assembly segment in the Thane-Konkan region, as was the case with the Sharad Pawar-led NCP in the Mumbai segment.

### Why India's Citizenship Amendment Act is Justified Under International Law

**The** Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) is a legislative enactment passed by the Parliament of India on 11 December 2019 to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955. This amendment allows Indian citizenship to be granted to religious minorities, including Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians, who fled from the neighbouring Muslim-majority countries of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan due to religious persecution, or fear thereof, before December 2014. Under the CAA 2019 amendment, migrants who entered India by 31 December 2014 are eligible for fast-track Indian citizenship. The amendment reduced the residence requirement for naturalisation from eleven years to five. Its aim is to provide a dignified life to persecuted religious minorities who are unable to freely practise their faith in their home countries. Under the Citizenship Act of 1955, illegal migrants were ineligible for Indian citizenship. They could apply for citizenship under Section 5 of the Citizenship Act, but if unable to provide evidence of Indian origin, they were required to pursue citizenship through naturalisation under Section 6. This often resulted in the deprivation of numerous opportunities and benefits. The exclusion of Muslims from the amendment has been criticised by India's Opposition parties, legal scholars, sections of civil society, leftist student groups, and others for being unconstitutional in light of India's secularism, the right to equality, and democracy. In this article, I will assess whether the CAA violates international law, particularly concerning the right to a nationality and the principle of non-discrimination. An analysis of India's international obligations is relevant to the current litigation because Article 51(c) of the Constitution of India requires the State to 'foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in

the dealings of organised peoples with one another'.

The right to a nationality is enshrined in Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "everyone has the right to a nationality" and that "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality or denied the right to change his nationality." International law stipulates that it is for each State to determine, through domestic law, who its citizens are. This determination must be consistent with general principles of international law, particularly those relating to the acquisition, loss, or denial of citizenship. The right to nationality qualifies as a civil and political right. As is clear from Article 15 of the UDHR, the right to nationality, in a general sense, relates to the acquisition, change, and loss of nationality. The acquisition covers the automatic conferment of nationality at birth by descent (jus sanguinis) or based on the place of birth (jus soli), as well as the subsequent acquisition of nationality ex lege, for example, through marriage, after a certain period of residence, by declaration, registration, or upon application through naturalisation, or by option. The change of nationality relates to the possibility of dual or multiple nationality or the right to renounce one's nationality. Loss of nationality, finally, includes all forms of forfeiture of nationality, whether through renunciation, withdrawal, lapse, or nullification. The rights and obligations protected by the right to nationality apply to individuals in all procedures relating to the acquisition, change, and loss of citizenship. The international legal framework does not currently provide for a general right to the nationality of a specific state. In other words, the right to nationality in international law does not grant a right to be naturalised in a particular state. Given the principle that are largely free.

### The euphoria of June 4 has waned

**The** euphoria of June 4 has waned. Narendra Modi is no longer seen as 'vulnerable'. Rahul Gandhi's seemingly impeccable "strategy" is being questioned, albeit in murmurs. Though no one in Congress can dare to seek his downgrading, when you hear talk of the need for Sonia Gandhi to be active again, it signals disappointment with the present Rahul Gandhi-Mallikarjun Kharge-KC Venugopal-Jairam Ramesh leadership. Priyanka Vadra's presence in rallies is much sought-after—she had minimal exposure in Haryana—but nobody can suggest that openly within the Congress. Rahul Gandhi's

image as a possible counter to Modi has been dented after the Congress's drubbing in Haryana. Also, given that the election saw the Congress facing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) one-on-one, its dismal performance has now sown doubts among its allies in Maharashtra and Jharkhand, as well as in Delhi and Bihar. The Congress is not new to assembly election defeats. After the 17th general election in 2019, the party could form governments in only three states: Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana. It played at best a supporting role as a junior coalition partner in Tamil Nadu and

Jharkhand—a role that it will again reprise in Jammu & Kashmir now as a minor ally of the National Conference government. This is in sharp contrast to its status till 2005, when the Congress had ruled more than half the states in India. The Congress's resurgence in this year's Lok Sabha elections, in which it managed to bag 99 seats, was seen by many as an end to its lasting misfortune since 2014, when it couldn't muster even the minimum numbers to be recognised as the official Opposition party in the Lok Sabha. On the eve of Gandhi's US trip in September, Sam Pitroda, the Indian Overseas Congress

chief, had even gone as far as to say that Rahul was "more intellectual" than his father, Rajiv Gandhi, and a "better strategist" who had all the qualities to be a "future Prime Minister". Around this year naturally made Rahul and his aides buoyant; they thought the worst was finally over. But Haryana voters were to soon undo this excitement. Just a month later, on October 8, the Grand Old Party was at pains to figure out how it managed to let slip an almost certain victory. A WhatsApp message circulating in some Congress circles sums up the party's position: "A fact is information minus emotion."



## Ecuador's conservative president announces tariffs on Mexican exports



Ecuador's conservative president said Monday that he is raising tariffs on Mexican imports in a move that echoes the trade barriers that U.S. President Donald Trump announced - but then paused - against Mexico. Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa said Monday that the 27% tariff to be applied on Mexican goods was aimed at boosting local manufacturers. But the conservative leader may also be seeking favor with Washington, where the Trump administration said

Saturday it would impose its own 25% tariffs on Mexico. Top 10 winners and losers in Delhi elections Trump and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum announced Monday that the tariffs would be halted for now to give the two sides more time to negotiate. Trump has demanded that Mexico do more to crack down on illegal immigration and fentanyl smuggling across the border. Noboa, who took time away from a re-election campaign to attend Trump's inaugu-

ration last month in Washington, has hailed Trump's win as a victory for Latin America. Ecuador's announcement comes amid the South American country's separate and bitter diplomatic dispute with Mexico, which last year severed diplomatic ties after Ecuadorian police broke into the Mexican Embassy to arrest Ecuador's former Vice President Jorge Glas. Ecuador's move was widely condemned as a breach of international law, while Ecuador said that Glas was wanted for fraud

## Bitcoin, Trump's meme coin tumble after US tariff announcement

Bitcoin, Trump's meme coin tumble after US tariff announcement on Canada, Mexico, China An advertisement of Bitcoin, one of the cryptocurrencies, is displayed on a building in Hong Kong, on November 18, 2021. (AP Photo) Cryptocurrency prices fell after President Donald Trump announced new tariffs on goods from Canada, Mexico, and China. Bitcoin dropped from around \$105,000 on Saturday to about \$92,000 on Sunday night. However, it later recovered to over \$100,000 on Monday after Trump paused tar-



iffs on Mexican and Canadian goods. Other Cryptocurrencies hit hard, including Trump's meme coin. While bitcoin showed some recovery, other cryptocurrencies saw larger losses. Ethereum, dogecoin, and other digital assets declined sharply. Trump's own meme coin traded at

around \$19 on Monday, about 75 per cent below its peak when he launched it before his second inauguration. Also Read: Donald Trump Tariff News "These are riskier cryptos than bitcoin," Garrick Hileman, a cryptocurrency analyst was quoted as saying by news agency .

## Bajaj Auto to ride into e-rickshaw segment by end of ongoing fiscal

NEW DELHI: Bajaj Auto is gearing up to enter the domestic e-rickshaw segment by the end of this fiscal to tap a 'sizeable opportunity' in a fast-growing but highly unorganised market, according to a top company official. The company expects to get reg-

ulatory clearances towards the end of the ongoing quarter for its e-rickshaw that will enable it to enter the segment which is about 45,000 units a month, Bajaj Auto Executive Director Rakesh Sharma told analysts. "By the end of this financial year, we also

intend to launch a modern 'e-rick', which will set an absolutely new standard in the segment and bring a very high level of satisfaction to both owners and passengers. The e-rick segment is almost as large as the auto segment and the new e-Rick .

## Statistics ministry should focus on district-level data: Amitabh Kant

NEW DELHI: The statistics ministry must now shift focus to districts and unveil district-level socio-economic data, which can drive comprehensive improvements in outcomes, Amitabh Kant, India's G20 Sherpa, said on Friday. "Whether it is district-level GDP, or district-level socio-economic data, the time has come to generate district-wise data for better targeting and design of policies," Kant said at an event organised by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation (Mospi) to mark 75 years of the National Sample Survey (NSS). Kant called for continued innovation in the statistical field to keep data a power-



ful tool for growth, inclusivity, and competitiveness and urged that adoption of new technologies will make India globally more relevant. "Technologies such as AI and ML (Machine Learning) can significantly improve data collection methods by automat-

ing processes. For instance, the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) is exploring AI to enhance data collection and analysis, aiming to improve the timeliness and quality of official statistics," said Kant. He said incorporating non-traditional data

sources, such as satellite imagery and mobile data, can complement existing survey data. "The success of the next 25, 50, or even 100 years of India's growth will depend on how well we continue to collect, interpret, and use data," Kant said. Rao Inderjit Singh, MoS for statistics & programme implementation, pointed out how NSS surveys have influenced key areas like employment, consumption, health, and education, driving critical policy decisions. He emphasised govt's ongoing commitment to advancing NSS, integrating new technologies, and ensuring it remains relevant in the years to come.

## Media and travel dominate political parties' poll expenses



Delhi: According to Election Commission audited reports, political parties spent 2023-24 on ads, helicopter flights, and media consultants. Offering insights into their spending during a year of many state elections. The reports may only cover part of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections' spending patterns, announced on March 16. Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Mizoram had assembly elections during this time. With a budget of

₹1,754 crore, the BJP prioritized media presence, spending roughly 58% on commercials and electronic media. Party advertising and publicity costs were ₹91.39 crore and electronic media ₹43.84 crore. Press conference expenses increased to ₹90.99 lakh from

₹71.60 lakh last year. From April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, the party won three state assembly elections and lost Karnataka. With 240 Lok Sabha seats, it returned to power as part of the National Democratic Alliance coalition without a majority.

## Fiscal, monetary steps to help boost consumption, says minister

NEW DELHI: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said Saturday that coordinated fiscal and monetary actions by govt and RBI will help boost consumption and there are initial signs of a good order book for the first quarter of the next fiscal year, which will help boost private investment. "After the budget, the few inputs I have received from some business leaders is that the orders for fast-moving consumer goods for April-June are already getting booked, and the industry is clearly seeing signs of a possible recovery of consumption," she told reporters after addressing the RBI board. As a result, many companies are looking at reviewing their capacity utilisation, she said, adding



that the triggers for a consumption-driven cycle are clearly being felt by those who have to decide on investments. "So, I see this as a positive sign and with yesterday's (Friday's) decision of RBI, together things can move in alignment and the required traction we made in this course," FM said, while promising to work in coordination with the central bank just as was the case even during Covid-19. In the budget, FM announced income tax relief of Rs 1 lakh crore, while on Friday, RBI cut repo rates by 25 basis points, a first

in five years. With the rupee weakening against the dollar and the central bank ending up sucking out liquidity as it sought to guard against excessive volatility, RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra sought to assure market players saying that it would be "watchful and agile" in responding to the requirements and will "use all tools available". "We will be very, very watchful, alert and very nimble and agile in whatever are the requirements of the banking system to provide liquidity, both transient.

### New I-T bill may be introduced in House on Tuesday

NEW DELHI: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to introduce the new income tax bill in Parliament on Tuesday, with the legislation likely to be referred to a standing committee for examination. "I hope to have it introduced in Lok Sabha in the coming week. The process is the committee gives its recommendation, it comes back, and then the government, through the Cabinet, takes a call on whether these amendments.

## Britannia looks to hike prices by 4.5%

BENGALURU: Britannia Industries plans to increase prices by about 4.5% by the end of the fiscal year, the company said during its post-earnings investor call on Friday. The company raised prices by 2% in the third quarter, which added

Rs 100 crore to the revenues in the quarter. The company reported consolidated revenue from operations of Rs 4,463 crore for the third quarter, a 6.5% year-on-year growth. Delhi Election Results 2025 Saffron surge in Delhi as BJP

ends AAP's reign in landslide victory "Everyone's been late to the party of price increases. Everyone is becoming alive to the fact that this inflation is not going away," said vice chairman Varun Berry. He noted that initial expectations of a

short-term impact from govt-imposed palm oil duties and normalising cocoa prices have not materialised. The price adjustments come amid a sustained inflationary environment, with food inflation remaining high.

## Our primary objective is price stability: RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra

MUMBAI: RBI governor Sanjay Malhotra assured markets that the central bank would provide all the liquidity required to ensure that interest rates are passed on. In his first media interaction, he provided a peek into his thought process. Excerpts: What gives you optimism about growth? We analyse all parameters regularly, including high-frequency indicators. Whether one looks at agriculture - with good reservoir levels - or other sectors,

my detailed assessments in the MPC (monetary policy committee) statement reflect a positive outlook. The recent Nielsen survey shows consumption growth at over 7%, which augurs well. Similarly, manufacturing activity is also picking up, as seen in the PMI. All these factors give us optimism. Is growth a priority over inflation? Unlike other countries with dual objective, RBI Act has given us a clear mandate - our primary objective is inflation

and price stability, while keeping growth in view. We remain focused on meeting these objectives. Since inflation is coming down, we felt we could be more supportive of growth. However, we also maintain a neutral stance, allowing us to proactively respond to evolving macroeconomic conditions. Will RBI be comfortable with inflation within the tolerance band (2-6%)? When you appear for an exam, some may aspire to just pass. At RBI, we aim to be on

top of everything. Our primary objective is price stability: RBI gov On RBI's decision to use cease-and-desist norms to discipline banks... These measures are taken after great consideration and thorough thought, only after giving the entities an opportunity to comply. We do not wish to use them frequently - this is a measure of last resort, applied in the rarest of rare cases when all other options have failed. These actions are taken in the public interest.



## The Chandra Shekhar Azad T20 Tournament kicked off with a grand opening



**Panchkula:** The first-ever franchise-based cricket tournament in Chandigarh, the Chandra Shekhar Azad T20 Tournament, organized by the UT Cricket Association (UTCA) commenced on Thursday with a spectacular opening ceremony at Tau Devi Lal Stadium, Sector 3. The event was graced by distinguished guests, franchise owners, team players, cricket academies, and enthusiastic sports fans.

The chief guests included Rajiv Verma (IAS), Chief

Secretary of UT Administration, and Harpreet Kaur Babla, Mayor of Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, Prerna Puri (IAS), Secretary, Sports, UT and Saurabh Arora, Director, Sports, Vinay Partap Singh, Excise & Taxation Commissioner, Haryana along with UTCA President Sanjay Tandon and Tournament Executive Chairman Dr. Rupesh Singh.

The matches will begin on February 7, with the final set for February 23. A total of

33 matches will be played, and entry to all matches is free, with live telecasts. The event was also attended by UTCA General Secretary Devendra Sharma, Executive Committee members CA Alok Krishna, Yuvraj Mahajan, Ravinder Singh, Hari Singh Khurana, and Daniel Banerjee, along with Rikrit Sarai, Managing Director of Satluj Group of Schools, and Dr. Anshu Kataria, Managing Director of Aryans Group of Colleges among other dignitaries.

## Uttarakhand has 37 UCC 'prohibited' relationships

**Delhi:** The newly implemented Uniform Civil Code in Uttarakhand lists 37 "prohibited relationships" for men and women. The relationships under Schedule 1 of the Act are mostly blood relatives, extended family, and three-generation links, many of which are unattainable owing to age gaps. Some strange men's forbidden partnerships. Historically, young people married young. Such cases may still occur, therefore we included them. "The Act requires religious authorities to certify that these relationships are allowed under their conventions before



marrying or living together. UCC sees clergy as "any person who conducts marriage ceremonies in accordance with customs and practices of the community concerned." Gaur said the registrar may refuse petitions that contravene public policy and morality even with a

religious certificate. He said UCC rules explicitly state that a registrar can refuse to register a relationship if the applicants are closely related by blood or family ties and their marriage is either not permitted by their customs or, even if allowed, contradicts public policy and moral standards.

## 409 newly qualified CAs conferred degrees

**Panchkula:** As many as 409 newly qualified CAs conferred their degrees at a convocation ceremony organized by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) at Indradhanush Auditorium on Friday. The event was presided over by CA Abhishek Singh Chauhan, Chairman ICAI Chandigarh Branch in the presence of

the governing council, senior CAs and proud parents. Addressing the gathering, CA Chauhan emphasized the importance of innovation in the field of accountancy, underscoring its role in driving national prosperity. Present on the occasion, CA Atul Gupta, Past President of ICAI, highlighted ICAI's stature as the world's largest pro-

fessional body for Chartered Accountants, established by an Act of Parliament. The ceremony also featured inspiring addresses by Central Council Member and Convocation Coordinator Raj Chawla, NIRC Member Shalini Gupta, and other senior Chartered Accountants of the tricity.

## Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena to form Sanatana Dharma protection wing



**Delhi:** Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Party (JSP) president Pawan Kalyan announced the formation of the Narasimha Varahi Brigade to safeguard Sanatana Dharma in Telugu states Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. I speak for the Jana Sena Party, not the NDA. "Several people have asked us to keep a youth wing, cultural wing, etc., but with Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy's blessing, we will set up a wing to protect Sanatana Dharma," Pawan Kalyan added. Pawan Kalyan stressed the significance of respecting religion, especial-

ly when visiting Hindu temples and practicing Sanatana Dharma.

Sanatana Dharma guides India and the world, he said. Visiting Hindu temples and adopting Sanatana Dharma requires some ideals. The country can not survive without Sanatana Dharma, a guiding light for the globe,

he said. The JanaSena president stressed religious tolerance but defended Sanatana Dharma. "We respect churches and mosques, but we will punish any act that hurts Hindus. He stated social media posts mocking Hinduism or Sanatana Dharma are prohibited. Kalyan added that the

## Karnataka govt pressured to restore 4% Muslim quota

**Delhi:** Since last year's assembly elections and this month's bypolls to three assembly seats showed the Muslim community had consolidated behind the Congress party, they are pressuring the government to restore their 4% reservation. The previous BJP government eliminated the quota, but the Supreme Court delayed the decision. In 2023, the Supreme Court deemed the quota abolishment "prima facie shaky and flawed", making it a difficult matter. It is unclear whether and

**Delhi:** According to Election Commission audited reports, political parties spent 2023-24 on ads, helicopter flights, and media consultants. Offering insights into their spending during a year of many state elections. The reports may only cover part of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections' spending patterns, announced on March 16. Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Mizoram had assembly elections during this time. With a budget of



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₹71.60 lakh last year. From April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, the party won three state assembly elections and lost Karnataka. With 240 Lok Sabha seats, it returned to power as part of the National Democratic Alliance coalition without a majority.

## Consumer initiatives launched by telecom minister Scindia

**Delhi:** Telecom minister Jyotiraditya Scindia introduced three projects, including the National Broadband Mission 2.0 and Sanchar Saathi mobile app, to improve connection and consumer convenience. The Sanchar Saathi software lets users report suspicious calls and SMS from phone logs. To prevent unauthorized use, users can identify and manage all mobile connections granted in their name. Other functions include blocking, tracing, and recovering lost or stolen mobile phones and verifying their legitimacy to ensure users buy legitimate gadgets. As an extension of the DoT's 2023 Sanchar Saathi platform, the app has disconnected 2.75 crore fraudulent mobile connections and secured over 25 lakh lost or stolen



devices. The National Mission (NBM) 2.0 seeks to position India at the forefront of digital transformation with high-speed internet and meaningful connectivity for everybody. The plan extends operational optical fibre cable (OFC) connectivity to 270,000 villages by 2030 with 95% uptime from 50,000, improves fixed broadband download speeds, and provides broadband connectivity to 90% of anchor institutions (such as schools and Panchayat offices). Other goals

include providing 100 Mbps download speed nationwide, reducing Right of Way application average disposal time to 30 days by 2030 from 60 days, increasing rural internet subscribers per 100 people to 60 from 45, and powering 30% of mobile towers with sustainable energy by 2030. We want 60 out of 100 rural households to have broadband. To strengthen rural India's digital infrastructure, we aim for a minimum fixed broadband download speed of 100 mbps "Scindia remarked.

## 10 Haryana farmers fast indefinitely in Khanauri for Dallewal

**Ten additional** farmers began a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri protest site in solidarity with Jagjit Singh Dallewal, whose indefinite fast for farmer demands worsened his health. In addition to Dallewal, 111 Punjabi farmers have fasted



indefinitely for three days. Since February 13,

2018, farmers under the SKM (non-political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha have camped at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana to demand a legal minimum support price (MSP) for their crops.

Security forces prevented them from marching to Delhi. Farmer leader Abhimanyu Kohar told reporters at the Khanauri border that 10 farmers from Hisar, Sonapat, Panipat, and Jind districts began their fast-unto-death on Friday.

## DU to expand PhD admission slots by 20-25 pc

**Delhi:** Delhi University's executive council (EC) resolved to boost PhD admission seats by 20-25% from the last round of admission. The EC also allowed a university representation on St. Stephen's College's governing body to connect DU and the college.

DU also updated donation rules to fund scholarships, honors, and capital assets. Under this, the government, trusts, and corporations may set up scholarships.

**Delhi:** The Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (Yeida) approved the layout design for the projected Film City in Sector 21, allowing filmmaker Boney Kapoor-led Bayview Bhutani Film City Private Limited to begin building. On December 24, 2024, Bayview Bhutani submitted the layout plan for clearance because work cannot begin without it. Yeida officials approved the layout plan following a thorough planning and high-level committee assessment. The concessionaire must get authorization for spe-

cific parking, landscaping, and horticulture work and phase the project, according to the authorities. Officials said the developer must establish a film institute and get GRIHA 4-Star/IGBC Gold accreditation for green buildings to minimize environmental damage and carbon footprint during construction. "We authorized the layout plan, allowing site building. The concessionaire will now schedule site work. The concessionaire must build according to the terms and conditions "Yeida CEO Arun Vir Singh remarked. Construction of the 1,000-acre Film City project, with the first



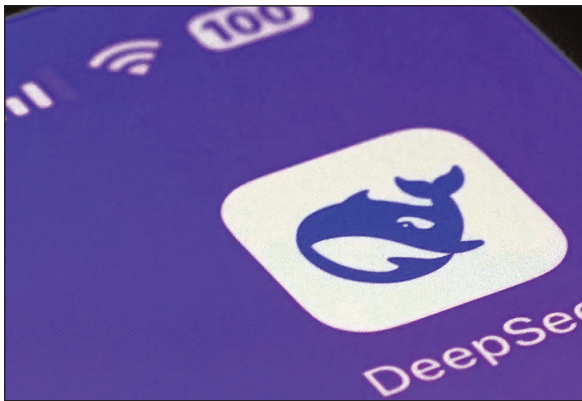
phase encompassing 230 acres, is estimated to cost ₹1,510 crore over eight years. The project also builds a film institute with excellent technology to teach filmmaking, acting, music, and cinematography. According to officials, Kapoor said centralizing such facilities will save production costs by giving filmmakers access to crucial equipment and services. Film City will have air-conditioned indoor shooting locations for harsh weather. The new studio floors will be 40,000-60,000 square feet to accommodate huge setups and various backdrops.

## Yeida approves Film City layout



## India's servers will host DeepSeek's AI models for security

**Delhi :**The Indian government said it will host Chinese startup DeepSeek's AI models on its computers to monitor security and safety. The country increased its efforts to give computers to entrepreneurs and researchers to accelerate the development of localized AI 'foundational models' or tech solutions to offset US and Chinese AI developments. IT and electronics minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the government is buying 18,693 GPUs to provide "affordable compute" to large and growing IT enterprises and AI researchers. Foundation models are AI solutions educated on large datasets to fulfill several tasks. The models are adaptable and can be customized for special uses. Vaishnaw noted that DeepSeek was constructed with 2,000 GPUs, therefore the Rs 10,372 crore IndiaAI mission's high-tech GPUs are enough to power



India's AI quest. He dismissed concerns about India being late in its AI quest, saying it has US assistance as a valued partner. We are punctual. Computer access is most vital. This is now accessible. We are fit. Getting the computer facility was crucial to the goal." He added India is optimistic Nvidia will provide GPUs regularly despite US government limitations on some countries. "I'm reiterating that we are seen as a trusted country, we're seen as a country which respects IP rights, (and) we're seen as a country which understands the technological development prospects and all the

points related to that." DeepSeek's recent popularity hasn't concerned the government. The good news is that DeepSeek is open source and we will soon host it on Indian servers like we did Llama. Everything open source can be hosted on our servers to ensure data privacy. He said we'll do that soon. Vaishnaw claimed preparations have begun. "The team has worked out the details on how many servers are required, how much capacity is required." Ministry sources informed that numerous institutions, including CERT-In and the National Cyber Security.

## DU will discuss the Viksit Bharat curriculum and Gita-based courses

**Delhi:** According to officials, the standing committee of Delhi University (DU) will meet to evaluate suggestions for a number of value addition courses (VAC), including four that are centered on the Bhagavad Gita and one called An Introduction to Viksit Bharat. The committee's emphasis on incorporating modern applications of Indian philosophy and development topics into the curriculum is highlighted in the agenda, which was made public on Wednesday.

With themes like "Gita for Holistic Life," "Gita and Leadership Excellence,"



"Gita for Sustainable Universe," and "Gita for Navigating Life Challenges," four of the six VACs that are being considered are centered around the Bhagavad Gita. Based on Karmayoga, Jnanayoga, and Bhaktiyoga, the Gita for Holistic Life syllabus suggests teachings on self-management, resolving problems in modern life, and methods of action,

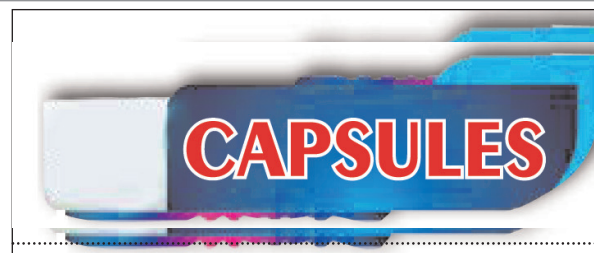
knowledge, and devotion. The course will also include practical components. The other courses will cover similar thematic applications of Gita's teachings to leadership, sustainability, and life's problems. Gita may undoubtedly be able to offer us some direction, but it seems ridiculous to introduce so many VACs on Gita. In addition to practical elements like field trips to communities, self-help groups, and farmers' organizations, the proposed chapters will address the role of technology, infrastructure, agriculture, and sustainability, he said.

## Tamil Nadu should appeal SC ruling on domicile quota

**Delhi:** A day after the Supreme Court banned domicile-based reservation in specialized and higher education including PG medical courses, MK Stalin's Tamil Nadu government declared it would file a review petition to vindicate its rights and uphold social justice. Health minister Ma

Subramanian said the SC order would affect the state's 69% reservation and quotas for in-service applicants in government medical colleges and minorities in self-financing medical colleges. He said that the order would violate state rights. The Union government receives 15% of under-

graduate medical seats and 50% of postgraduate medical and super speciality seats through the state quota each year. "All super specialty seats were lost. "TN gave government doctors a quota for super specialty courses after a court battle," he told reporters. He stated the Centre



## The government of Maharashtra says it would not pay for eggs for the midday meal.

**Delhi ;**The opposition vehemently criticized the decision, as Maharashtra became the latest BJP-ruled state to ban eggs from midday meals for students in grades 1 through 8. The school education department changed the list of foods served during midday meals in a government resolution this week, eliminating the inclusion of sugar and eggs. Rather, it instructed schools to serve nachni sattv and "egg pulao" as optional meals. Nonetheless, it stated that these things, as well as sugar for desserts, had to be organized by the general public without the need for further government support. The state has changed the list to adhere to the meal items prescribed by the Center, according to an official who defended the action. While some states use their own resources to offer eggs, the federal government, which provides 60% of the funding for midday meals, does not include them in its list. Goa and Madhya Pradesh recently banned eggs due to criticism from some groups.

## Health and wealth benefit from flexible work hours.

**Delhi:** The Economic Survey supports allowing manufacturers to average legally capped working hours over three weeks or longer rather than week-by-week. Industry captains want larger hours. It claims that agile regulations will assist management satisfy production demands and grow."New Labour Laws are an improvement. With flexible legislation and competent implementation, firms may develop and create more jobs.

## Senior students joined Business Blasters

**The Delhi** government created the Business Blasters Senior project to foster entrepreneurship among state-funded university and Industrial Training Institute students to create jobs. At the event, chief minister Atishi used a McKinsey research to say India will need 90 million non-agricultural jobs by 2030. Who will create jobs if everyone focuses on JEE and UPSC or job hunting? She stated this project answers that question. This 2021 program, previously limited to government schools, has expanded. Startup teams will receive Rs 50,000 in seed funding, up from Rs 2,000 in the school version. Atishi noted that India's 42% graduate unemployment rate necessitated such programs: "Despite



Indians leading some of the world's most innovative companies, the country struggles with unemployment." Economics was presented in textbooks in Class 9. India was a 'developing country'. The books optimistically predicted India's development by 2020. For many, education is about getting a good job. Failure if that doesn't happen. "Everyone fears risk, plays safe, and settles for a stable

job," she remarked. Atishi shared success tales of students who conquered obstacles through the school-level program, including one who ran a logistics and courier firm with 50 employees before graduating. Another low-income student produced low-cost Bluetooth speakers during the pandemic and won capital by outlining a thorough expansion strategy, including hiring IIT grads.

## DU to expand PhD admission slots by 20-25 pc

**Delhi:** Delhi University's executive council (EC) resolved to boost PhD admission seats by 20-25% from the last round of admission. The EC also allowed a university representation on St. Stephen's College's governing body to connect DU and the college. DU also updated donation rules to fund scholarships, honors, and capital assets. Under this, the government, trusts, and corporations may set up scholarships. Under this, the establishment of scholarships will be allowed by government entities, trusts, business houses.

**Delhi:** To do well on the NEET UG 2025 exam, candidates must answer 180 questions in 180 minutes. The NTA has reverted to its pre-Covid exam design, which is expected to increase competition in the May 2025 exam. As per the modified pattern, section B which consisted of optional questions have been removed which has decreased the exam time from 200 minutes to 180 minutes. The NTA declaration made candidates and experts anxious, as it may reduce the overall competition. Health



Ministry officials say question paper difficulty will determine competition levels. The NTA cut the extra 20 minutes and optional questions to restore regularity in the exam schedule.

Because the pandemic is finished, candidates must return to the original exam format. The

adjustment isn't frightening as the syllabus is unchanged. Additionally, we need to enhance our time management abilities to complete the exam within 180 minutes, which is already challenging," says a NEET UG 2025 aspirant from Delhi on the condition of anonymity.

## New UPSC PwBD guidelines avoid misconduct and fraudulent certifications

**Delhi:** The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)'s CSE 2025 requires online submission of certificates and documents at the preliminary stage of the exam, which includes submitting the necessary information and supporting documents for various claims, such as date of birth, category (SC/ST/OBC/EWS/PwBD/Ex-Servicemen), educational qualification, and Service preferences, with the Online A. Examination candidature will be canceled if the registration and online application form lack the relevant information/documents. "All of these changes should be explicitly stated in the notification, or the exam-conducting authority can create an educational video for spe-



cially abled candidates," he says. They appear puzzled and unable to complete the Prelims application form (due February 11, 2025). Candidates must also write about their interests, hobbies, achievements, and NCC Scout participation in the Prelims, which were previously announced after the Mains. "The goal is to get the best candidate profile information before the Prelims," Kottaram explains (IRS) officers were recruited under PwBD reservation advantages. UPSC

must examine claims and papers if aspirants submit fraudulent documents. Kottaram notes that mental illness is a grey area in the notification's five impairment categories, making it easy to misuse. After the Puja Khedkar controversy, aspirants who took the Personality Test/Interview this year reported rigorous medical tests over 2-3 days at top medical institutions like AIIMS, SafdarJung Hospital, etc. to eliminate assessment irregularities.

## Fewer dropouts, but school retention issues

**Delhi :** The Economic Survey 2024-25 released in Parliament shows that less than half of Indian students complete higher secondary education, despite declining dropout rates across all levels. Dropout rates were 1.9% for primary (Classes I to V), 5.2% for upper primary (Classes VI to VIII), and 14.1% for secondary. Retention rates—the percentage of children who stayed enrolled since first grade—were 85.4% for primary, 78% for elementary, 63.8% for secondary, and 45.6% for higher secondary. According to the education ministry's Unified



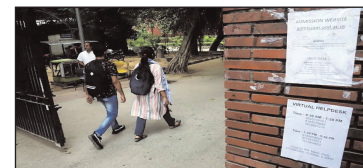
District Information System for Education-Plus (UDISE+ 2023-24) report, India's enormous educational system serves 248 million students in 1.5 million schools with 9.8 million instructors. Government schools make

up 69% of schools, enroll 50% of pupils, and employ 51% of teachers. The research showed 22.5% private schools, 32.6% student enrollment, and 38% teachers. Digital infrastructure has improved. Computers in

schools rose from 38.5% in 2019-20 to 57.2% in 2023-2024, while internet connectivity rose from 22.3% to 53.9%. The poll said the NEP 2020 is based on the idea that "education and human capital development are among the foundational pillars of development." The union government introduced NEP on July 29, 2020, to modernize the education system from school to higher education while maintaining it "rooted in Indianness". Higher education enrollment rose 26.5% to 43.3 million in 2021-22 from 3.42 crore in 2014-15, according to the poll.

## While smaller departments struggle with faculty shortages, DU adds PhD seats

**Delhi :** Delhi University's executive council (EC) increased PhD admission slots by 20-25% from the previous round. The EC authorized a university representative on St Stephen's College's governing board to communicate with the DU. DU amended scholarship, prize, and capital asset giving guide-



lines. Under this, government bodies, trusts, corporate houses, PSUs, NGOs, and other national and international organizations, as well

as individuals, can establish scholarships. Scholarships must be funded by Rs 5 lakh for 10 years and Rs 10 lakh for 20 years. The EC authorized Anil Kumar Aneja, HOD-English and St Stephen's university representative, to communicate. The Indian National Teachers' Congress chairman, Pankaj Garg,

claimed teachers who requested for promotions after 2020 are still waiting. The second PhD admission round for 2024-25 will consider June and December 2024 UGC NET scores. NET + JRF passers are preferred. Additional seats for single girl child students in DU PG programs were also approved.



## Rohit overtakes Chris Gayle to become second-highest six-hitter in ODIs

**India captain** Rohit Sharma surpassed Chris Gayle's record for the second-highest number of sixes in ODI cricket during his impressive innings.

The milestone came during the second ODI between India and England in Cuttack on Sunday. Rohit displayed his destructive batting skills on what proved to be an excellent batting surface while chasing a target of 305 runs.

Rohit moved past Gayle's record of 331 and took his tally to 338 sixes in ODIs during his 119-run knock off 90 balls. Pakistan's Shahid Afridi maintains the overall record with 351 sixes in ODI cricket.

The rankings now show Sanath Jayasuriya of Sri Lanka in fourth place with 270 sixes, while former Indian captain MS Dhoni holds the fifth position with 229 sixes. Rohit



approached his innings with patience, taking time to settle before launching his attack. His first significant shot came on the fifth ball of the second over. With a well-timed flick of his wrists, Sharma cleared the boundary rope to overtake Gayle's record. The Indian captain continued his aggressive approach in the following over. He hit Saqib Mahmood for a six with an extended arm cover drive. Rohit followed this with another six in Mahmood's next over, demonstrating his excellent timing and technique. After surviving a close LBW appeal off

Mark Wood's bowling, Sharma remained unfazed. He immediately responded by hitting the next delivery for a six over long-on. He reached his half-century in just 30 balls, completing it with a well-executed cut shot for four. The innings showcased Sharma's ability to combine patience with aggressive batting, as he carefully chose his moments to attack while maintaining control of his innings. His performance demonstrated why he continues to be one of cricket's most prolific six-hitters, particularly in the ODI format.

## Floodlight glitch disrupts India-England 2nd ODI in Cuttack

A floodlight failure halted the second ODI between India and England at the Barabati Stadium when India were 48 for none in their chase of 305 runs. The outage occurred with Rohit Sharma batting solidly on 29 and Shubman Gill on 17. The packed crowd created an electrifying atmosphere despite the disruption. Floodlight glitch disrupts India-England 2nd ODI in Cuttack for 35 minutes. A significant technical glitch caused embarrassment to the BCCI when one of the floodlights stopped working during the second ODI



between India and England at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack on Sunday. The match was halted for approximately 35 minutes when a floodlight near the clock tower malfunctioned whilst India were comfortably positioned at 48 without loss after 6.1 overs, pursuing a target of 305 runs.

The initial problem began at approximately 6:15 PM when some floodlights temporarily went out but were quickly restored as England's Saqib Mahmood prepared to bowl to Rohit Sharma. Shortly after, a complete blackout of the lights forced the players to leave the field.

## La Liga: Madrid derby ends in stalemate as Kylian Mbappe rescues point for Real Madrid

**NEW DELHI:** Kylian Mbappe's timely strike secured a hard-fought 1-1 draw for Real Madrid against their fierce rivals Atletico Madrid in a tense La Liga encounter on Saturday. The result maintained Los Blancos' slender one-point lead over Atletico at the top of the

table, while also keeping Barcelona within striking distance in third place. The match was a closely contested affair, with both sides displaying their defensive resilience and intensity. Atletico drew first blood in the first half through Julian Alvarez's controversial penalty, which

was awarded after a VAR review for a clumsy challenge by Aurelien Tchouameni on Samuel Lino. Alvarez coolly converted the spot-kick with a cheeky Panenka, much to the frustration of the Real Madrid faithful, who vented their anger towards the officials.

## 'Wanted to bat as deep as possible,' says top-up Rohit Sharma as India seal ODI series

**NEW DELHI:** Skipper Rohit Sharma roared back to form ahead of the Champions Trophy on Sunday, scoring his 32nd ODI century in India's four-wicket victory over England in Cuttack. After his whirlwind 90-ball 119 that included 12 fours and 7 sixes, Rohit attributed his success to breaking down his batting approach during the chase of 305.

Alongside Rohit, Shubman Gill hit 60 while Shreyas Iyer and Axar Patel scored 44 and 41 not out respectively, taking India to an unassailable 2-0 lead in series.

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"It was good and really enjoyed being out there, scoring some runs for the team. Important game with the series on the line but I broke it down to pieces about how I wanted to bat. Longer than T20s and short-

er than Tests and I wanted to break it down. I wanted to bat as deep as possible and that was my focus. "Looking at the pitch - when you play on black soil, it tends to skid on a bit and you have to show the full face of the bat initially. Then

they bowled into the body and kept it on the stumps and that's where I prepared my plan and tried to access the gaps," said Rohit, who got Player of the Match award, in the post-game presentation ceremony. Prior to the match in Cuttack, concerns had grown over Rohit's poor form and batting readiness for the upcoming Champions Trophy. He dispelled the doubts, pulling off a masterclass in the tricky chase. Rohit praised the support from his batting partners Gill and Iyer, with whom he formed partnerships of 136 and 70 runs respectively.

## Jasprit Bumrah set to start rehabilitation, BCCI could play waiting game

**NEW DELHI:** Jasprit Bumrah is all set to commence his rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru after he underwent scans and thorough assessment under the watch of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) medical team. It is reliably learnt that the reports were internally discussed and now the seamer is likely to start physical activity - some gym work, even light bowling - in the next 24-48 hours. Go Beyond The Boundary with our YouTube channel. SUB-



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The International Cricket Council (ICC) deadline to make changes to Champions Trophy provisional squad is a couple of days away - February 11 midnight Dubai time as the support period starts February 12 - and it will not be a surprise if the Indian cricket board plays the waiting

game with Bumrah. They followed a similar route even when Hardik Pandya was injured during the group stages of the 2023 ODI World Cup. 'ILT20 is great for UAE cricket': Sehwaag anticipates thrilling finale "Even if there is a 1% chance, the BCCI is likely to wait.

## French energy giant Total puts Adani Gp investments on hold

**Delhi: Total** Energies, a French oil company, has suspended investments in Adani Group entities pending the conclusion of US bribery allegations against its founder. The Paris-based company, which owns key investments in Adani Group's renewable energy and gas distri-



bution operations, said it was unaware of the US solar power corruption inquiry. "Total Energies rejects corruption in any form," it declared. "This indictment does not target Adani Green Energy (AGEL) itself, nor any AGEL-related companies." Total Energies claimed it learned about Gautam Adani's and others' indictment from US public pronouncements. Gautam Adani, his nephew and Adani Green Energy executive

**NBCC India will buy sick PSUs and redevelop land banks**

**Delhi:** Two sources say NBCC India Ltd. wants to buy defunct public sector undertakings (PSUs) to redevelop and monetize their land. The state-run construction company wants to leverage its success in developing land for government-owned companies. Developer is in talks to acquire non-operational PSUs through a new entity to monetize their land banks.

## Dubai Capitals crowned ILT20 champions as Sikandar Raza

The International League T20 (ILT20) season ended with a nerve-jangling final at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Sunday as the Dubai Capitals (DC) were crowned the champions after a stroke of luck followed game-changing knocks from Rovman Powell and Sikandar Raza, who delivered a four-wicket win over Desert Vipers (DV) in a thrilling finish. Sikandar Raza's unbeaten knock of 34 runs in just 12 balls stole the show in the last two overs of DC's chase, which saw remarkable hitting from the all-rounder to take his team past DV's 189/5, after Powell set up the chase with his innings of 63 off 38 balls. After DC lost David Warner (4), Gulbadin Naib (5) and Sam Billings (6) early, opener Shai Hope played the anchor to



score 43 off 39 balls, while Rovman Powell played the role of the aggressor after getting a reprieve when he had scored only 2. While it looked like wicketkeeper Azam Khan had cleanly stumped Powell off the bowling of spinner Nathan Sowter, replays showed his gloves slightly in front of the stumps when he collected the ball to remove the bails. It was, thus, ruled a no-ball and Powell went on to add 61 runs more. It turned out to be the game-changing moment of the match. Powell then kept rubbing salt into the Vipers' wounds, adding 80 runs with

Hope and then a brisk 41 runs with Dasun Shanaka (21 off 10), before getting dismissed off the last ball of the 18th over bowled by Sowter. The match turned into a Raza show for the next eight deliveries, which saw 4 fours and a six coming off his bat to deliver the title-clinching win. David Payne (2 for 28) and Mohammad Amir (2 for 35) took two wickets each for the Vipers. Earlier, the Vipers put up an impressive 189/5 on the board because of the efforts of Max Holden, who made 76 off 51 balls, and captain Sam Curran, who remained not out on 62 from 33 balls.

## Tgana rejects Adani's 100-cr contribution

**Delhi:** Telangana chief minister A Revanth Reddy announced that the state government will not accept the ₹100 crore CSR donation from the Adani Group for the Young India Skills University in Ranga Reddy district, citing current circumstances and controversies. We thank you for committing 100 crore to Young India Skills University on behalf of your Foundation via letter. We have not sought donors for physical transfers of monies since the university did not acquire the IT exemption under section 80G, Ranjan wrote. The official added that he was "instructed by the chief minister not to seek the transfer of funds in view of the present circumstances and arising controversies". According to the US Department of Justice indictment, Adani executives and Azure Power executives bribed Indian government officials in five states to win solar energy supply contracts worth over \$2 billion over 20 years between 2020 and 2024. The scam purportedly started in Odisha and spread to Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu & Kashmir. The Telangana chief minister said everyone may lawfully invest, despite accusations that the state government accepted Adani Group funding. Reddy said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has stated that the company that wins the bids according to the regulations will invest.

