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

ED imposes Rs 3.44 crore fine on BBC World Service India for FDI violations

New Delhi. The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (Dipam) on Monday invited bids from merchant bankers for helping govt in the planned stake sale in select public sector banks and listed financial institutions. The request for proposal (RFP) published by Dipam said govt intends to empanel book running lead managers, merchant bankers-cum-selling brokers for a period of three years (further extendable by one year) in the context of dilution of govt's equity in select public sector banks (PSBs), and listed public financial institutions (PFIs), using Sebi approved methods in accordance with the existing guidelines. The last date for submitting the bids is March 27. In her 2021-22 Budget speech, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that govt will take up the privatisation of IDBI, two other state-run banks and one general insurance company. But so far, the progress has been limited. After presenting her 2025-26 Budget, Sitharaman had said that privatisation will happen at least for those entities which are in the list approved by the Cabinet. The merchant bankers will advise govt on the timing and the modalities of the transaction. The RFP said that merchant bakers can apply for empanelment for the stake sale under two categories. Category 'A+' would be for a transaction size of Rs 2,500 crore. or more, and category A for trans-

RJD gave 'jungle raj' to Bihar, ate animal's fodder: PM

PATNA: PM Narendra Modi launched Monday a sharp attack on Bihar's main opposition party RJD, accusing it of imposing "jungle raj" during its tenure in office before 2005. Without directly naming RJD president Lalu Prasad Yadav, he took a swipe at him over the fodder scam as well as his recent remarks on Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj. "Those who ate fodder meant for animals cannot think about farmers' welfare in the country," Modi said, speaking at Kisan Samman Ceremony in Bhagalpur. He also released the 19th instalment of PM Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, providing financial assistance of Rs 22,700 crore to farmers nationwide. Modi accused RJD politicians of disrespecting Hindu traditions. "These jungle raj wallahs are speaking vulgar things about Maha Kumbh. These people were opposed to Ram temple in Ayodhya too. I know the people of Bihar will not forgive them," he said. Lalu had criticised the rush at Maha Kumbh following a stampede at New Delhi railway station, where at least 18 people were killed.



Questioning the crowd surge, Lalu remarked: "What does Kumbh signify? It is 'faaltu' (meaningless)." PM Modi sought to connect Maha Kumbh to Bihar's cultural roots, particularly Mandar Parvat in Banka district. Mandar Parvat is linked to the mythological churning of the ocean, which is said to have produced the nectar stored in a pot (kumbh). Drops of this nectar are believed to have fallen in Prayagraj, Nashik, Ujjain, and Haridwar. Kumbh Mela is held in these places. Modi repeatedly used the phrase "chara churane wale" (those who stole fodder), making pointed references to the corruption scandal that took place during Lalu's tenure as CM of undivided Bihar. Lalu has been convicted in multiple cases related to the scam. Modi also alleged that

those responsible for "jungle raj" in Bihar "harboured hatred" for India's heritage and faith. The PM also highlighted his govt's commitment to Bihar's progress. He announced the establishment of a large power plant in Bhagalpur, ensuring ample coal supply and employment opportunities for Bihar's youth. "The rise of a Viksit Bharat will begin with Purvodaya," he said, calling Bihar a key pillar of eastern India's economic and cultural resurgence. Among the new infrastructure projects, Modi announced a Rs 5,000 crore highway from Munger to Bhagalpur. He also confirmed the approval of a new railway line and a bridge from Vikramshila to Kataria. Stay updated with breaking news, bank holidays and upcoming public holidays . in march.

PM Modi to attend Bimstec meet in Thailand in April

NEW DELHI: India has conveyed to Thailand that PM Modi will travel to the country for the Bimstec summit on April 3-4, said official sources on Monday. Apart from India and Thailand, the inter-regional Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation includes as member states Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan and its summit is



held biennially. For India, as the SAARC summit process remains stalled, Bimstec provides an important platform for promoting regional cooperation, connectivity and security. The last

summit, held virtually by Sri Lanka in 2022, saw the adoption and signing of the Bimstec Charter, which formalised the grouping into an organization made up of member states that are littoral to, and dependent upon, the Bay of Bengal. This year's summit will see Bangladesh taking over as the Chair from Thailand. It will also be followed closely for a likely meeting. between Modi and

Sops for women bleeding SRTC Rs 3 crore each day: Minister

MUMBAI: Stirring controversy, transport minister Pratap Sarnaik said MSRTC is suffering losses due to the discounts given to women and senior citizens, and that no new concessions will be given from now on. "Our sisters get a 50% concession, senior citizens also get concessions for years in buses, and due to those concessions, the situation has become such that MSRTC buses are losing Rs 3 crore each day. If we keep giving concessions to everyone, I think it will be difficult

to run MSRTC," said Sarnaik. With buzz that the concession for women and senior citizens will be shut in MSRTC, DCM Ekanth Shinde stepped in and clarified that none of the concessions will be stopped. "The Majhi Ladki Bahin scheme will not be discontinued. At the same time, the 50% discount given to beloved sisters in MSRTC bus travel will not be discontinued. Also, the discount given to senior citizens will not be discontinued," said DCM Shinde.

Cold wave to grip North India from Sunday; Delhi sees wettest December

NEW DELHI: The India Meteorological Department on Sunday forecasts cold wave conditions across North India starting from Sunday, December 29, as per a statement released by the agency. From December 29 to January 1, isolated cold wave conditions will affect Himachal Pradesh, while Punjab and Haryana will face similar conditions until January 3. Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and Rajasthan may also experience cold wave conditions on December 30 and 31.

Jharkhand civil services topper, IRS brother & mom found dead

RANCHI/KOCHI: A Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) exam topper whose career got caught in a protracted legal tangle and a CBI probe into the fairness of the selection process was found dead with her IRS officer brother and their mother in a govt accommodation in Kerala's Kochi on Friday, six days after she failed to appear for a court hearing in Ranchi. Shalini Vijay, assistant director in the Jharkhand social welfare department, was on leave



since 2020. She and her brother Manish Vijay, additional commissioner of central excise and customs in Kochi, are suspected to have entered into a suicide pact along with their mother Shakuntala. The matriarch's body was found covered in a white cloth with petals sprinkled all over,

leading investigators to presume she died before the siblings purportedly took their lives in separate rooms of Manish's official quarters at Eechamukk in Kochi's Kakkanad neighbourhood. Investigators aren't ruling out the possibility of Shakuntala dying of any natural cause before her son and daughter hanged themselves. "We will know the details for sure, including the time of death, only after the autopsies," said assistant.

High court comes to aid of ex-soldier's kin, grants disability pension

CHANDIGARH: Punjab and Haryana HC has ordered that a disability pension be granted to the legal heirs of a soldier who was discharged on medical grounds for neurosis which manifested as recurrent nightmares after his lover killed herself, reports Ajay Sura. A division bench comprising Justice Sureshwar Thakur and Justice Sudeepti Sharma passed these orders recently while allowing a plea filed by a former Indian Army gunner from Punjab's Hoshiarpur. The petitioner, who had moved HC in 2020, died on May 14, 2021, during the pendency of the case, which was represented by his legal heirs after his death. The soldier was enrolled in the Indian Army on July 30.

Kumar continued to ignore ...; the lines in Infosys vs Cognizant lawsuit that names CEO and other charges

"Caught red handed" stealing trade secrets and more.... Sharp barbs continue to be exchanged in the lawsuit between Infosys and Cognizant. In the very recent charges, Cognizant claimed that Infosys was caught "Red handed" stealing trade secrets of its healthcare software TriZetto. Infosys on its part named its former President and now Cognizant CEO in the counter lawsuit. Ravi Kumar held the position of President in Infosys when he resigned in October 2022. He replaced Brian Humphries as Cognizant CEO in January 2023. The US headquartered company said in its 22-page court response to Infosys lawsuit filed earlier this month: "Infosys was caught red-handed misappropriating TriZetto trade secrets that Infosys originally had

access to through non-disclosure and access agreements (NDAAs)." Cognizant's latest reply made in a Dallas (US) court comes a month after Infosys filed a lawsuit against Cognizant in January, stating that its CEO Ravi Kumar engaged in misuse of trade secrets to obstruct the company's healthcare software platform, Infosys Helix. What Infosys said in its lawsuit against Infosys In its January 9 counter lawsuit filed with the US District Court for the Northern District of Texas, Infosys accused Cognizant CEO Ravi Kumar of delaying the launch of the company's Helix platform when he was heading the project and negotiating for a job with Cognizant. "Kumar had championed Infosys Helix from his senior position at Infosys.

French President Emmanuel Macron and US President Donald Trump revived their famously tactile diplomacy on Thursday, exchanging hugs, handshakes, and backslaps during their meeting. However, despite the warm gestures, the two leaders did not see eye to eye on every issue—particularly when it came to discussions on Ukraine. The longstanding public camaraderie between the two leaders, evident since Trump's initial presidency, continued as Macron arrived for another meeting, though with underlying complexities. During their Oval Office discussion, disagreements emerged regarding Trump's changed stance on Russia and Ukraine, despite Macron's attempt to maintain cordiality through physical gestures.



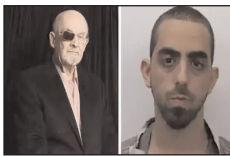
Macron and Trump on Europe 'extending loans' to Ukraine In an unprecedented move for an Oval Office visitor, the French leader halted his 78-year-old counterpart mid-speech when Trump incorrectly stated that Europe was merely extending loans to Ukraine. "No, in fact, to be frank" said Macron, touching his US counterpart's arm to stop him mid-sentence, "we paid 60 percent of the

total effort and it was -- like the US -- loans, guarantees, grants." Trump responded with a smirk, stating: "If you believe that, it's ok with me." 'Macron's a smart customer': Trump Despite their divergent views on Ukraine, their personal rapport remained evident throughout the meeting. "He's a smart customer," Trump remarked, tapping the 47-year-old's upper

arm whilst recounting an incident in Paris where he discovered discrepancies between what the French leader had communicated in French about a trade agreement and what had been conveyed to him. Trumps praises Macron speaking French Macron responded by holding Trump's hand as they shared laughter, with Macron appearing to wipe away tears of amusement. Their arrival at the West Wing was marked by an embrace and a firm handshake. Trump also responded to Macron speaking in French by praising the language, saying, "That is the most beautiful language... I have no idea what he said, but it is the most elegant, beautiful language." as

American-Lebanese attacker Hadi found guilty of attempting to kill Salman Rushdie

A jury on Friday found Hadi Matar, an American-Lebanese man, guilty of attempting to kill novelist Salman Rushdie by storming a stage and repeatedly stabbing the Satanic Verses author. Matar now faces up to 25 years in prison and is set to be sentenced on April 23, a court official confirmed. He was convicted on charges of attempted murder and assault. His legal team had attempted to prevent witnesses from portraying Rushdie as a victim of persecution, following Iran's 1989 fatwa that called for the author's assassination over alleged blasphemy in The Satanic Verses. Matar had previously admitted.



Musk shares Fashion magazine Vogue's cover with Ukraine President and his wife

Elon Musk has no love for Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky. One of the most-important persons in Donald Trump's administration -- Elon Musk has not only slammed Zelensky openly but also many a times made fun of him. And here Elon Musk seems to be sharing US President Donald Trump's not-go-happy opinion about Zelensky.

Elon Musk has been criticizing Volodymyr Zelensky on his social media platform, X (formerly Twitter). The Tesla CEO has gone on a near tirade against Zelensky, accusing him—without evidence—of running a "massive graft machine feeding off the dead bodies of Ukrainian soldiers." In a post, he shared the cover of

fashion magazine Vogue on which Volodymyr Zelensky and his wife Olena Zelenska appeared. In July 2022, the fashion magazine Vogue had carried five photos of Ukraine's first lady Olena Zelenska, and of these two were with Volodymyr Zelensky himself. The cover titled, 'Portrait of Bravery.

Mohit Chauhan won the hearts of the audience with his live performance

Prayagraj: On Monday, famous singer Mohit Chauhan mesmerized the devotees and music lovers with his melodious voice on the cultural stage of Kalagram. A wonderful confluence of Bollywood and Sufi music was seen in his performance, which deepened the spirituality of the Sangam coast. The audience danced a lot to his tunes. He won the applause of the audience by singing one song after another. First of all, he sang Mashkali.... Then when he sang Sada Haq.... Ethe Rakh from the film Rockstar, the youth started dancing. Mohit forced the audience to dance to the songs Nadaan Parinde... Tusme Hi Lagi Lagan... After this, she entertained the audience by presenting songs like "Tu Jaane Na", "Masoomiyat Ki Barishen", "Sada Haq", "Phir Se Ud Chala". During this, Kalagram was packed with audience. She received a lot of applause by presenting Meri Bheegi Bheegi Si, Palkon Pe Reh in her soulful voice. On the demand of the audience, she won the hearts of the audience by presenting Pahadi folk songs. Mohit Chauhan's program went on late in the night and the audience kept dancing. A large number of

outsiders also came to the campus to listen to Mohit Chauhan's songs. The next presentation was by Aamad Dance Center founder and Kathak maestro Rani Khanam, who gave the audience an unforgettable evening with her captivating rhythm and beautiful expressions in her dance. Rani Khanam mesmerized the audience with her solo performance along with a great performance with her senior dance group. She presented a sample of her excellent control over expressions and speed. She brought together technical brilliance and artistic innovation and presented the depth and beauty of Kathak to the audience with ease. After this, she sang flute Musician Ajay Prasanna mesmerized the audience by playing melodious tune on the flute. The next performance was given by Sushmita Das. In the same folk dances, artists from Assam performed Holi Ger dance with instruments like Dhol, Kundi, Thali, Tasa, folk dances of Haryana, Garhwal dance of Uttarakhand, Dholu Kunittha dance of Karnataka, Chindhu Yakshagana of Telangana, and Mukha Bhauna dance of Assam were also presented.

Tribute paid to Mrs. Krishna Gupta

Prayagraj: A meeting was organized to express condolences to Mrs. Krishna Gupta, patron of Prayagraj Golden Club Durga Puja Committee and religious and social organization Parivartan, in which all the people observed silence for 2 minutes for the peace of the soul. Durga Puja Committee President's son Jai Sharan Gupta said that Mata ji had dedicated her entire life for the welfare of the society. During the time of Corona, by taking cooperation from everyone, she organized a huge bhandara for lakhs of people and delivered ration to their homes. For continuous cow service, she has been feeding pet dogs and getting poor children admitted to schools for free for education. Despite being paralyzed in one limb for 8 years, she continuously promoted all the works. At the end of the condolence meeting, Metropolitan President of Hindu Yuva Vahini Monu Gupta said that we have suffered a great loss. He told that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Honorable Yogi Adityanath ji used to come to her residence on her call to inquire about her well-being many times before becoming the Chief Minister. We cannot compensate for this in our entire life. We will be able to do it but by continuing to follow his ideals and the work he told us to do, we can keep his name alive and get his blessings. Mainly Rajesh Kesarwani, Rinku Verma, Purnima Gupta, Diksha Raksha, Awadhesh, Pappu Verma, Raju Gupta, senior journalist Kunwar Ji Pandey, former Mandal President of Bharatiya Janata Party, Manoj Mishra, Dinesh Vishwakarma, councillors were present. Senior leaders of Bharatiya Janata Party expressed condolences.

Maha Kumbh has religious and spiritual importance for Nepal too: Sunil Kumar

PRAYAGRAJ. A large number of devotees from all over the country continue to arrive at the Shankaracharya camp of Govardhan Math Puri Peeth, Sector-18 Harshvardhan Marg. Member Assam Legislative Assembly Upal Dekha reached Kumbhnagar with many devotees. After bathing in the Ganga, Maha Yagya was performed at the camp of Govardhan Math and blessings were taken from Shankaracharya Ji Maharaj. Famous industrialist, social worker Vinod Wagdodia Calcutta West Bengal, International wrestler Bharat Man Singh Hyderabad Telangana, Naman Gupta Aditya Mahajan Nowshera Rajouri Jammu and Kashmir, along with many devotees offered sacrifices in the Maha Yagya and received prasad.

The cultural heritage of India and Nepal is one. We both are Sanatan Dharmis and consider cow as mother. Just as Maha Kumbh has religious and spiritual importance for the Sanatan Dharmis of India, it is the same for Nepal too. It is a matter of good for-

tune for us that Shankaracharya Swami Adhokshajananand Devtirth of Govardhan Math Puri has become a spiritual bridge between the two countries today. These words were said by Sunil Kumar Yadav, the Finance Minister of Madhes State of Nepal, at the Shankaracharya Camp after taking a bath in the confluence at the Maha Kumbh.

Sunnel Kumar Yadav, the Finance Minister of



Madhes State of Nepal, offered oblations in the Maha Yagya along with a delegation of the Nepali Congress at the Shankaracharya Camp of Govardhan Math Puri on Harshvardhan Marg in Sector 18 of Kumbh Nagar. He worshipped the Charan Paduka of Adi Shankaracharya and received blessings from Shankaracharya Swami Adhokshajananand Devtirth. On this occasion, he said

Yogi accuses Opposition of spreading propaganda against Mahakumbh

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, during the Motion of Thanks on the Governor's address on the fifth day of the Budget session on Monday, castigated the Opposition for allegedly spreading negative propaganda about the Mahakumbh. Refuting the claims that a particular caste was being barred from attending the event, he asserted that everyone was welcome to participate with respect and good intentions. The Mahakumbh has demonstrated a true sense of national unity with people from all backgrounds bathing together at the same ghat without discrimination – an unparalleled message of harmony and oneness, which, he stated, is the essence of Sanatan Dharma.

However, he warned that those with ill intentions would face consequences

and any attempt to create chaos at the Mahakumbh would be met with strict action. Unlike the Opposition, he said the government has never played with matters of faith.

The chief minister emphasised that the Mahakumbh, organised by followers of Sanatan Dharma, is a globally unparalleled event. Millions of devotees have come together on a shared platform, contributing to its success in their way—a matter of immense pride.

He drew a parallel to last year's grand Pran Pratistha ceremony at Shri Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya, an event that captivated the world. This year, the organisation of the Mahakumbh offers devotees the opportunity to experience both Ayodhya and Kashi closely.

CM Yogi highlighted that these two landmark



events – the consecration of Ram Lalla at Shri Ram Janmabhoomi and the Mahakumbh – embody the vision of “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” and serve as milestones in the Prime Minister's vision. He said, “Beyond their spiritual significance, they also hold great economic importance for the nation.”

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in a strong rebuttal to the Opposition, stated that unlike the Samajwadi Party, his gov-

ernment has never played with the matters of faith. He pointed out that during their tenure, the then chief minister didn't even take the time to oversee or review the Kumbh arrangements. “As a result, they appointed a non-Sanatani as the event's in-charge, leading to chaos, corruption, and pollution during the 2013 Kumbh. The sacred Triveni Sangam of Maa Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati was so polluted that even the Prime Minis-

ter of Mauritius refused to take a dip,” he added.

“In contrast, this year, the Mahakumbh has seen participation from people across the nation and the world. The President, Prime Minister, Vice President, the King of Bhutan, and representatives from 74 countries have attended, making it a truly global event. People from North, South, East, and West have come together to celebrate this grand spiritual gathering for the first time. Various media outlets' live telecasts of the Amrit Snan showed how deeply foreign tourists were moved by witnessing the Mahakumbh firsthand,” he said.

He said while hundreds of deaths during the Haj pilgrimage due to mismanagement are well known, India's so-called Leftist and secular intellectuals continue to attempt to defame and undermine the grandeur of the Mahakumbh. Yet, despite

their efforts, millions of devotees have reaffirmed their faith by dipping in the sacred waters, silencing the critics.

Even a tragic accident during the event could not dampen the spirit of devotion. He said, “Pilgrims overcome every hardship to reach Prayagraj and returned with their faith strengthened. Mahakumbh, which embodies the deep and intricate fabric of relationships, is now nearing its conclusion. However, the message it has left behind will remain etched in the hearts of every Sanatani. Stories of unwavering devotion—such as a daughter-in-law carrying her elderly mother-in-law on her back to ensure she could take a holy dip—have become symbols of faith. Yet, opponents of Sanatan Dharma refuse to see anything beyond their distorted narratives.”

If convicted, the accused will be sentenced to four years' imprisonment

Chitrakoot: The court has sentenced the accused to four years of imprisonment after he was found guilty of firing a gun with the intention to kill. He has also been fined Rs 7,000.

Additional Government Advocate Ajay Kumar Singh said that on 6th August 2012, Lasku, a resident of Darseda village, had lodged a report in the Pahadi police station. In the complaint given to the police, the complainant had said that Radhe alias Radheraj of his own village abused

him and when he protested, he beat him up and shot him with a pistol with the intention of killing him. After registering the case, the police had filed a chargesheet against the accused in the court. After hearing the arguments of the defense and prosecution lawyers, Additional District Judge Anurag Kuril pronounced the verdict in this case on Monday. In which, after being found guilty, the accused Radhe alias Radheraj was punished with four years of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 7,000.

ELECRAMA 2025 Backs Industry's Bid to Become Global Exporter of Power Equipment

Prayagraj: ELECRAMA 2025 continues to serve as a powerhouse for shaping the future of India's power and energy sector, with strategic discussions, policy insights, and industry collaboration taking center stage. The CEO Roundtable, held on Day 1, set a dynamic precedent with participation from 120+ industry leaders, policymakers, and global experts, who deliberated on critical themes such as energy transition, smart grids, clean mobility, and AI-driven power management. The discussions underscored India's commitment to strengthening its power infrastructure, fostering innovation, and achieving its net-zero ambitions through strategic industry-govern-

ment collaboration. Building on this momentum, Day 2 at ELECRAMA 2025 witnessed the presence of Shri Pankaj Agarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Power, and Gurdeep Singh, CMD, NTPC, further reinforcing the government's commitment to accelerating India's energy transformation.

Shri Pankaj Agarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India engaged in high-level discussions at ELECRAMA 2025, including his participation in the CEOs Roundtable, where he shared insights on the government's vision for a resilient, technology-driven, and sustainable power sector. Speaking about India's evolving energy landscape, he re-

marked, "India is on the path to becoming a major exporter of power equipment, with global players showing strong interest in our domestic manufacturing capabilities. The government is fully committed to supporting the industry—be it through policy frameworks, access to key raw materials, or testing infrastructure. Platforms like ELECRAMA 2025 provide the perfect environment for industry leaders to align with national goals and drive innovation in power and energy."

Further amplifying the government's push towards domestic manufacturing and clean energy exports, Shri Gurdeep Singh, CMD, NTPC, emphasized NTPC's commitment to enhancing energy efficiency, scaling

renewable capacity, and integrating AI-driven power management solutions. He stated, "ELECRAMA 2025 is a testament to India's rapidly evolving power sector. The vast array of innovative products and machinery on display highlights the success of the Make in India initiative. With a strong manufacturing ecosystem and increasing global participation, India is well-positioned to not only meet its domestic energy needs but also emerge as a key exporter of high-quality power equipment. NTPC is committed to driving this transformation by optimizing thermal efficiency, expanding renewable energy capacity, and leveraging cutting-edge technology."

The day also celebrated

the growing role of women in the energy sector through the Women in Power session, which brought together policy leaders, industry experts, and changemakers. The session featured notable speakers such as Mahua Acharya, Founder CEO, INTENT; Ruchika Drall, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Poonam Pande, AVP & Head of International Marketing, Legrand; Babburi Shirisha, ILM/MRT / Medchal, Southern Power Distribution of Telangana Ltd and Aaryaa Satyanarayana, Chairperson, Women in Power.

Seconding the motion of the conclave Ruchika Drall, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment,

Forest and Climate Change, the Government of India said “Gender-responsive policies and targeted skill development initiatives are not just empowering women but also driving inclusive economic growth. From financial inclusion to STEM participation and green entrepreneurship, these efforts are creating sustainable livelihoods and reshaping industries. Platforms like IEEMA's ELECRAMA play a crucial role in showcasing innovations, fostering industry collaborations, and providing opportunities for women to excel in the energy and electrical sectors. As we continue to invest in women's potential, we pave the way for a more resilient and equitable future for all.”

Youth are not getting employment in BJP government: Anuj

Chitrakoot: As part of the campaign being run by Samajwadi Party workers, a PDA Jan Chaupal was organized in Ranipur Khaki of Chitrakoot assembly constituency on Monday. In which former district president Anuj Singh Yadav told the villagers about the achievements of SP and sought cooperation in forming the government of Akhilesh Yadav.

In the Chaupal, former District President and State Working Committee member Anuj Singh Yadav said that our ancestors had chased away the British who looted the wealth of the country. Similarly, the socialist people will work to drive away the anti-constitution, anti-reservation, anti-Dalit, backward, tribal and anti-women BJP. He said that in the SP government, work was done to create Mandis at every Nyay Panchayat for farmers along with education system, medical system and other major facilities, and to provide fertilizers and pesticides to farmers at reasonable prices. He said that during the reign of Prime Minister Modi, the country's debt is continuously increasing. The rupee

is getting weaker against the dollar. Educated youth are not getting employment and jobs. Student Sabha District President Rohit Singh Yadav said that the Yogi government is telling the number of people bathing in Kumbh, but is not able to tell the number of dead. People have been searching for their relatives for several weeks. The Yogi government is not giving relief to the relatives of the dead in the Kumbh Mela.

On this occasion, Village Head and District Vice President Janardan Singh Patel, District President of Backward Class Cell Ramesh Chand Kushwaha, District Vice President of Student Union Shivgopal Kushwaha, former District Secretary Sharda Patel Bhau, Secretary Radhey Yadav, Girdhari Lal Yadav, Jai Gopal Singh, Ali Hasan, Gaya Prasad Yadav, Ankit Patel, Ashok Patel, Kedar Prasad, Ali Hasan, Suresh Khan, Rammilan Buddha, Kamlesh, Gaya Prasad, Ram Murat Yadav, Hemchand, Gulabchand Vishwakarma, Lala Bhaiya Kushwaha, Jugal Kishore Prajapati, Ram Bhajan, Savita etc were present.

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's photo exhibition was the center of attraction in Kashi Tamil Sangam 3.0

Varanasi: The photo exhibition organized by Central Bureau of Communication, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Lucknow on the theme of Rishi Agastya and Development India in Kashi Tamil Sangam 3.0 concluded successfully today with quiz and poster competition.

The ten-day photo exhibition was unveiled on 15 February by Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs, Dr. L. Murugan.

On the occasion of the inauguration of Kashi Tamil Sangam 3.0 festival, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Union Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan and Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Dr. L. Murugan were present. Murugan observed the exhibition and described it as commendable. On the ninth day of Kashi Tamil Sangam festival, on Sunday, Governor of Nagaland Shri La

Ganesan observed the picture exhibition of Central Bureau of Communication and described the collection of information displayed as excellent.

Informative and attractive picture exhibition, information based on the life philosophy of personalities like



sages, social reformers, scientists, educationists, poets and freedom fighters of Tamil Nadu and the achievements, programs, schemes and welfare policies of the Government of India in the last ten years were also shown. In which the audience and the general public got information about Namu Drone Didi, Waves, Prime Minister Internship Scheme, Prime Minister

Crop Insurance Scheme, Digital India, Vidyanjali, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Skill India, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, Har Ghar Jal Yojana, Prime Minister Skill Development Mission, Swachh Bharat Mission, three new laws of independent India, Prime Minister Kisan

Samman Nidhi as well as women empowerment and other schemes. In the exhibition, various types of competitions were organized for ten days by Central Bureau of Communication, Varanasi and

The winners of the competition were honored by giving prizes. This photo exhibition was visited by visitors from various parts of the country and abroad.

Former Norwegian minister shares Mahakumbh experience, praises Indian legacy

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: Former Norwegian Minister and ex-UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim, on Monday, experienced the spiritual essence of Mahakumbh 2025, praising India's ancient wisdom and deep reverence for nature. Sharing his experience, Solheim said, "Mahakumbh was incredible. Indian philosophy sees humans as part of nature, unlike Western thought, which places them above it. Indian culture deeply reveres rivers, forests, animals, birds, and Mother Earth." He described his holy dip in the Ganga



as a transformative experience, emphasising that it is not just a religious practice but also an expression of gratitude towards nature.

Highlighting the symbolism of deities like Ganesha and Hanuman, he noted that Indian traditions underscore the deep connection between humans and the natural world. He said the environmental consciousness has been an intrinsic part of Indian culture for centuries and that his participation in Mahakumbh allowed him to witness this philosophy firsthand. "Mother Earth does not depend on us; we depend on her. Learning to coexist with nature is crucial, and Indian culture offers valuable guidance for the modern world," he concluded.

Nestlé House, 21 February 2025

Nestlé India Brings Warmth and Togetherness to Maha Kumbh 2025 Through Unique Experiences

Prayagraj: Through vibrant on-ground activations, Nestlé India is all set to add warmth, comfort, and a sense of community to Maha Kumbh 2025. With iconic brands like MAGGI and KITKAT, the company aims to make every visitor's experience more special, offering moments of togetherness, relaxation, and joy amidst the world's largest cultural gathering. At the core of these activations is the MAGGI Maha Kumbh campaign, "2 Minute Apno Ke Liye," highlighting MAGGI's role in bringing people together. MAGGI has set up special branded zones and dedicated selfie points, where visitors can enjoy steaming bowls of MAGGI and capture their "MAGGI Moments." As part of its community initiative, Nestlé India distributed 12,000 blankets to Safai Karamcharis and served 2-minute MAGGI meals, offering warmth and nourishment to those who contributed to making the event possible.

Commenting on the initiatives, Rupali Rattan, Director, "Rupali Rattan, Director, Prepared Dishes and Cooking Aid, Nestlé India said, "This Maha Kumbh, Nestlé MAGGI has brought people together with its campaign, '2 Minutes Apno Ke Liye.' A beloved part of Indian households for over four decades, MAGGI has always been a symbol of togetherness. Through this campaign, MAGGI has set up MAGGI Corners—resting pods for people at the

Kumbh Mela to create spaces where people can connect, share stories, and make meaningful memories. In addition, MAGGI has also reaffirmed its commitment to responsible waste management. Honoring the community of waste management professionals (safaikaramchari) who work tirelessly to keep the Kumbh Mela clean, MAGGI will provide them with MAGGI meals and blankets to help them stay warm during the winter." For those seeking a moment of relaxation, the KITKAT Break Zone Activation brings KITKAT's "Take a Break" proposition to life. Visitors can rest on recycled benches in the specially designed Raen Basera shelter that double as KITKAT Break Zones, blending comfort with sustainability.

Gopichander Jagatheesan, Director, Confectionery, Nestlé India, said, "This year we took our brand philosophy Have a break, have a KitKat to the Mahakumbh. Here we have created a dedicated KITKAT Zone, where we set up benches made out of KITKAT recycled wrappers, that not only provides comfort for the visitors but also champions sustainability. Nestlé India is redefining the Maha Kumbh 2025 experience, creating heartfelt moments of comfort and connection, ensuring that visitors leave with cherished memories and a deeper sense of togetherness and community.

Hearing on the survey of Gyanvapi Wuzu Khana now on 15th April

Prayagraj: The next hearing of the monitoring petition filed challenging the validity of the order of the subordinate court rejecting the demand for survey of the Shivalinga-shaped Wuzu Khana from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in the Gyanvapi complex in Varanasi will be held on 15th April. The hearing on the Places of Worship Act 1991 could not be held in the Supreme Court on 17 February and the next hearing has been scheduled for the first week of April. Keeping this in mind, the date of hearing in the High Court has been fixed as 15th April. The petition is being heard by a bench of Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal of Allahabad High Court. Saurabh Tiwari, the advocate of the petitioner Rakhi Singh, said that on Monday in the court, senior advocate SFA Naqvi on behalf of Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee said that the Supreme Court will hear the case in the first week of April. According to Advocate Saurabh Tiwari, during the hearing on the validity of the Eight Places of Worship Act 1991 on December 12, the Supreme Court had by interim order restrained the courts from making any effective interim or final order, including directions for survey.

Maharashtra Deputy CM took dip in Sangam

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Eknath Shinde - Eknath Sambhaji Shinde ji today took a dip of faith with his family in the holy Triveni Sangam of the life-giving, salvation-giving and virtuous Goddess Mother Ganga, Mother Yamuna and invisible Saraswati. On arrival at Tirtharaj Prayagraj, the holy place of chanting, penance

and meditation, Uttar Pradesh's Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi gave a hearty welcome and felicitation on behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government by presenting the Kumbh Kalash to Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

Mahakumbh is a great confluence of faith, eternal tradition of Indian culture, unity and spiritual consciousness,



which is giving the message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' to the entire world. Under the guidance of respected Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and the able leadership of Honorable Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri M.Yogi Adityanath ji, the grand, divine and well-organized organization of Mahakumbh 2025 is binding the entire world in the thread of unity.

Akshay Kumar & Katrina Kaif, Raveena Tandon with daughter Rasha take dip in Maha Kumbh

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: One two days are left for the Mega event to end. Today there was a gathering of Bollywood actors and actresses. Akshay Kumar, Katrina Kaif, Raveena Tandon took a dip in Sangam. Katrina has come with her mother-in-law and Raveena with her daughter Rasha.

Katrina also took the blessings of Swami Chidananda Saraswati and Sadhvi Bhagwati Saraswati at the Parmarth Niketan camp. Katrina said, I am very lucky that I came here at this time. I am very happy. This is a very beautiful place. She also did a bhajan evening at the camp.

Maharashtra Deputy CM Eknath Shinde, Gorakhpur MP Ravi Kishan took a dip with their families. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar also took a dip. More than 1.05 lakh people took a dip till 4 pm today. There was a lot of crowd from Sangam station to Sangam. The crowd started decreasing by noon. Since January 13, 62.97 crore devotees have taken a dip in Sangam.

Meanwhile, there is a jam around the parking at the entry point in Prayagraj today. There is also intermittent jam at the intersections inside the city. Vehicles arriving in Prayagraj

are being stopped in the parking 10 km before Sangam. After that, one can go to the fair area by auto, e-rickshaw or shuttle buses. Auto drivers are charging one thousand rupees for 10



km. However, these means are very less according to the crowd. On the other hand, auto drivers are charging up to one thousand rupees for 10 km. In such a situation, many devotees are forced to walk for 10 km. On Mahashivratri, a 16 km long procession is taken out in Prayagraj city. Processions are also taken out from many temples. The police has talked to the committee and convinced them not to

take out the procession. Actress Raveena Tandon and her daughter Rasha Thadani met Chidanand Saraswati and other saints at the camp of Parmarth Niketan. During this,

with the temple management. We have made arrangements at all places.

Actress Raveena Tandon said on Mahakumbh- This Kumbh has come after 144 years.

mother and daughter participated in the bhajan evening organized at the ashram. Apart from this, Katrina Kaif and Abhishek Banerjee also participated in it.

Prayagraj DM Ravindra Kumar Mandar said- We will organize the last day of the fair on the festival of Mahashivratri. The holy conclusion of Mahakumbh will be on that day. We are fully prepared. We have ensured better coordination

We all have come here from Mumbai. This is my country and my soil. Ganga Maiya and Yamuna Maiya are ours. On the holy date of Vijaya Ekadashi of Mahakumbh festival, today Deputy Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha MP Pramod Tiwari took a dip in Triveni Sangam.

Pramod Tiwari said - Tirtharaj Prayag Sangam is a holy place of faith for us. It should not be made the center point of politics here.

Asia's first Global Hyperloop Competition 2025 concludes, Railway Minister stresses on continuous innovation

Best Demonstration Team Award and other awards were distributed in the competition

Prayagraj: Asia's first Global Hyperloop Competition 2025 was successfully organized by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav joined the closing ceremony of this competition through video conferencing. On this occasion, Director of IIT Madras Shri V. Kamakoti was present at Rail Bhavan. Welcoming everyone, he highlighted the objectives of the competition.

Addressing all the participants and students of

Indian Institute of Technology, the Railway Minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has resolved to take the country forward in the direction of innovation. This is why today we are able to work together with educational institutions. He also told that he has been a part of the honored team Avishkaar.

The teams that excelled in this competition were awarded prestigious awards like Best Demonstration Team Award, Demonstration of Braking and



Traction System, and Best in Sub-System (Mechanical). This not only testifies to their hard work and in-

novation but also reflects the world-class capabilities of India's young scientists and engineers. Their

achievement will play a vital role in rapidly taking the country towards the future transportation revolution.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said that with the success achieved in 5G technology by IIT Madras, India is rolling out the fastest 5G in the world. In this sequence, Indian Railways and IIT Madras will work together on Vertical Take-Off Landing Vehicle, which will be funded by Indian Railways. This will prove to be a very important step in promoting

modern and innovative changes in the means of travel. Many dignitaries including Chairman and CEO of Railway Board Shri Satish Kumar were also present during the event. India's first Hyperloop test track is 422 meters long, located at IIT Madras, Chennai. It reflects the strong partnership between Indian Railways and the education sector, leading India to promote railway innovation and cutting-edge travel technologies at the global level.

Indian Railways moving towards 'net zero' carbon: Ashwini Vaishnav

Signing of Renewable Energy Agreement between Ministry of Railways and Government of Madhya Pradesh

Prayagraj: Addressing the investors and entrepreneurs present at the 'Global Investors Summit 2025' organized in Bhopal, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav explained in detail the vision of the Railways regarding electrification of railways and the use of alternative energy. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, who joined the Investors Summit through video conferencing, said that the Prime Minister gave the Railways the target of 'net zero' carbon, to achieve which 100% electrification of India will be done in the financial year 2025-26. Now our second goal is to get as much energy as possible from renewable energy sources. Moving forward in this direction, Railways has so far tied up with 1 thousand 500 MW renewable energy sources. Today, this big MoU PPA of 170 MW has been signed with Madhya Pradesh, which is an important step in the renewable energy chain. We are also keen to buy wind and nuclear power energy. The Railway Minister said that through this plat-

form, I would also request all the states that whatever energy you can supply to the railways from renewable, wind, hydro or nuclear projects from your states, you are



welcome. Regarding the functioning of the Madhya Pradesh government and the Railway Ministry, he said that under the model on which the railways and Madhya Pradesh are working, both the Madhya Pradesh government and the Railway Ministry reach an understanding together and after that the generators of Madhya Pradesh

and the railways sign a PPA. This model can be implemented elsewhere in the country as well.

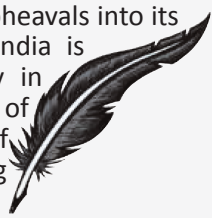
The Railway Minister said that for the financial year 2025-26, the Honorable Prime Minister has allocated a historic budget of Rs 14,745 crore for railways to Madhya Pradesh. For the first time in history, Madhya Pradesh has received such a budget. Before 2014, about 29 km of railway track was laid in Madhya Pradesh every year. Now 230 km is being laid every year. That is, the speed of work has increased by 7.5 times and the funds have increased 23 times. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav is doing a great job. He is constantly talking to the officials and helping in increasing the development work of railways in the state.

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.



Petroleum products continue to be strategic assets that are still the drivers of all transportation, significant electricity production, and many industrial processes. Petroleum and gas reserves are nature's blessing to only a few select regions of the world. Most large economies in Europe, China, Japan, and India, among others, are major importers of petroleum products. Global strategic petroleum reserves refer to crude oil inventories (or stockpiles) held by the government of a particular country, as well as private industry, to safeguard the economy and help maintain national security during an energy crisis. Strategic reserves are intended to be used to cover short-term supply disruptions. The Ukraine war once again emphasised the need for logistic supply chain management and how disruptions can upset any country's strategic and tactical intentions. They also impact the day-to-day lives of the citizens. The disruption of electric power, petrol, and gas in winter 2022 in Europe and Ukraine was severe. American sanctions on Iranian and Russian oil have greatly upset demand and supply dynamics. The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) often operates as a cartel to control production and thus



influence prices. There is thus a need for all importing nations to not only broaden the basket of sourcing countries but also to build their own strategic storage capacities. **Global Petroleum Reserves** The world consumes roughly 100 million barrels of crude oil per day. This translates to 36.5 billion barrels per year. The proven global oil reserves currently are nearly 1,650 billion barrels, and that will last nearly 45 years. For the last one decade there has been no addition to known oil reserves. Major countries with percentages of reserves are Venezuela (18.2 per cent), Saudi Arabia (16.2 per cent), Canada (10.4 per cent), Iran (9.5 per cent), Iraq (8.7 per cent), Kuwait (6.1 per cent), UAE (5.9 per cent), Russia (4.8 per cent), Libya (2.9 per cent), United States (2.1 per cent), China (1.5 per cent), India (0.29 per cent), and Pakistan (0.021

per cent), among many others.

Global Strategic Petroleum Reserves

The International Energy Agency (IEA), a group of 31 countries, requires members to hold strategic reserves equal to 90 days of the previous year's net imports, though commercial stockpiles can be included in that total. Only net-exporter members of the IEA are exempt from this requirement. The forward commercial storage agreements allow oil-exporting countries increased flexibility in commercial storage and allow petroleum to be stored within an oil-importing country. Such reserves remain technically under the control of the oil-exporting country. In 2022, approximately 4.1 billion barrels of oil were held in strategic reserves by IEA member states, of which 1.4 billion were government-controlled and the remain-

der were held by private industry. The US, China (non-IEA member), and Japan are leading crude oil consumers and maintain the largest SPR. Many other non-IEA countries have started working on their own SPR.

China's Strategic Petroleum Reserves

China has the second largest storage, at 511 million barrels. China's daily consumption is around 12 million barrels of crude. Thus, their SPR is equivalent to between 40 and 50 days of imports. China eventually wants to raise the figure to 90 days of reserve. Russia has been the major supplier to China of late, contributing as much as 2.14 million barrels per day, overtaking Saudi Arabia. Russian oil was substantially discounted due to Western sanctions. Stockpiling partly insulates Beijing from the supply chain and pricing dynamics. Also, larger stocks will be required for a possible Taiwan Strait conflict that could result in a military blockade or economic or trade sanctions. China has also secured supply chains through pipelines from Russia, the trans-Myanmar oil and gas pipeline, and from central Asia, predominantly Turkmenistan. Simultaneously, China is rapidly shifting to electric vehicles and is not only building lithium stocks for batteries but has also acquired pro-

cessing facilities and mines, including overseas. Investment bank UBS estimates that China might control a third of all global lithium supplies by 2025. The US SPR is the world's largest, with an authorised maximum capacity of 727 million barrels. The reserves are kept in salt caverns located at different locations along the Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coasts. The US consumed an average of about 20.01 million barrels of petroleum per day. It was a net petroleum exporter of 1.64 million barrels per day in 2023. It thus has the capacity to play around with the SPR. The US government has historically tapped into its SPR following man-made accidents, economic crises, and natural disasters, though it has also sold and loaned crude oil from the SPR to other nations at times. Japan held SPR equivalent to 133 days of crude oil imports in early 2022. That amounts to 332 million barrels based on the country's average monthly imports in 2021. Commercial stocks amounted to 86 days of imports. Japanese SPR storage is spread across nearly a dozen facilities. South Africa has an SPR storage capacity of 45 million barrels, managed by PetroSA. Singapore has sophisticated oil refineries and storage terminals, is one of the world's major oil refining centres.

Rafah offensive and war in Gaza

A girl walks next to a tent sprayed with a message in solidarity with pro-Palestinian university students, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinians, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, May 2, 2024. Image: REUTERS The war in Gaza is due to complete seven months on May 7, marking the longest war in Gaza since Israel's voluntary vacation of Gaza in 2005. Contrary to expectations, borne more out of Israel's enormous military superiority against Hamas as well as past conflicts in Gaza, the conflict has not ended swiftly. During this time, however, Israeli strikes have flattened Gaza to the ground, making it completely uninhabitable, perhaps for decades. The stench of death and decay overwhelms the thin strip straddling

the Mediterranean Sea, with estimates of over 34,500 deaths, including 13,000 children, and over 77,500 injured and maimed for life. Medical aid, food, and water have been severely restricted, and most international aid agencies, including UNRWA as well as WCK (World Central Kitchen), have been targeted and prevented from delivering lifesaving aid. Despite a UN Security Council resolution of March 25 calling for an immediate ceasefire and the unconditional release of hostages, neither of the warring parties has been able to come to a common understanding.

In the midst of it, there was a period of dangerous escalation when an Israeli strike on April 1 targeted the Iranian Consulate building in Damascus, Syria, resulting in the

deaths of seven members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), including General Mohammad Reza Zahedi, the senior-most commander in Lebanon and Syria. Outraged by the attack on its 'sovereign territory', Iran retaliated on April 13 with a massive and well-synchronised attack by drones and missiles. While most of the drones were intercepted mid-air, some of the missiles found their mark and struck the Nevatim Israeli air base in the Negev desert. Nevatim is the air base from which Israel launched its F-35 fighters that attacked the Iranian consulate in Damascus. Despite decades of hostility between Israel and Iran, this was the first time that Iran had launched strikes directly on Israel from its territory.

The prosecutors see this as a criminal act, especially as it led to tax evasion and suppression of information, preventing the American voter from making an informed judgement. Numerous legal experts are not convinced and opine that the case is weak. The Trump legal team tried hard to delay the trial until after the elections or have it shifted to another city. They have been successful in most of the cases, including three prospective criminal trials involving unlawful possession of classified documents by Trump even after demitting office and an attempted insurrection on January 6, 2021, to overturn the people's mandate. His lawyers took the stand that their client could not get justice in the Manhattan Court in New York, a bastion of the Democratic Party. They further alleged that Judge Merchan's daughter had a business relationship with the Biden administration, and hence there was a conflict of interest. They demanded that the judge must recuse himself.

Next, they asked that the hearing be deferred until the Supreme Court's decision on Trump's claim of absolute presidential immunity from all public or private actions. They tried to delay the jury selection. None of these worked, prompting intemperate rants from the defendant, despite numerous gag orders by the courts. Earlier this week, Judge Merchan finally cracked the whip, holding

Trump in contempt for nine violations. He imposed a \$1000 fine for each violation, the maximum permitted under the law, while recognising that it may not mean anything to the defendant but ominously cautioning that further violations could even result in his incarceration. Trump is putting up a brave front, but the legal troubles are taking their toll. He is short of funds; his campaign has lost some momentum, as he is obliged to be present in court for eight hours or more, four days a week. It may possibly have even begun to sow doubts in the minds of some supporters. In any event, his family members are conspicuously absent at the trials.

Some of his former friends and associates, including former Vice President Mike Pence, have gone cold or even turned hostile. That is not to say that his grip over the party has weakened. Very few in the Republican Party dare to cross swords with him. He continues to be ahead of President Biden in opinion polls by 4 to 6 percentage points. That brings us back to the question about the timing of the court cases. The 'hush-money' case dates back eight years, and the other criminal cases date back at least three years. The civilian cases also go back in time. What were the prosecutors doing all these years? Even if he had immunity from prosecution as president, it has been over three years since he relinquished office. Is it a mere hap-

penstance that a flurry of court cases has come up for hearing bang in the middle of the presidential campaign? If they have coalesced organically at this juncture, it is indeed too much of a coincidence! Given the stakes involved, it is prudent not to take things at face value. The Biden administration naturally maintains that the Department of Justice and courts are independent and that it has no role to play. True, division of power is enshrined in the Constitution, but is it so watertight? Trump and his followers blame the White House for master-minding his legal troubles. He has been calling President Biden 'crooked' besides deploying even more colourful language. He describes the trials as an "assault on America".

Be that as it may, it is a no-loss proposition for the ruling Democrats. If Trump is disqualified, the Republican campaign could be thrown into disarray. At the very least, the renewed spotlight on Trump's character-flaws and misdemeanours is bound to dent his standing with the independents and moderate Republicans voters. And yet the greatest irony is that, come November, Trump could very well succeed in reclaiming the high office. All court cases could then instantly vanish in thin air, and everything could be forgiven if not forgotten. Would therefore one be wrong to surmise that when it comes to the rich and powerful, the wheels of justice.

Tibet and Myanmar is a geostrategic milestone

West Siang, Upper Siang, Dibang Valley, Lower Dibang Valley, Anjaw, and Changlang in Arunachal Pradesh adjoining Tibet and Myanmar is a geostrategic milestone. It was conceived in 2016 and is expected to be completed in 2027. Work in this direction has started at a quick pace. This shows the urgency and importance India gives to its territorial integrity.

The infrastructural development that China has brought along the McMahon Line is quite extensive. The frontier highway is a precise and direct response to this and to curb China's irrationality. The highway will become an all-weather road to handle any geopolitical and geostrategic pres-

sure likely to emanate from the other side of the border. From Tawang to Vijayanagar, which covers the entire border space in Arunachal Pradesh, the frontier highway is a milestone in India's robust preparedness in the eastern Himalayas. The dragon finds a fitting competitor. The scale with which China develops its infrastructural might, both at the border and in the hinterland, the frontier highway is a geostrategic imperative. The risk these complex infrastructures present leaves no scope for a second thought but to act urgently to protect the territorial integrity of India. The frontier highway manifests India's right intent and seriousness in addressing the pos-

sible dangers that the enemy constantly poses. The frontier highway will present the required checkmate to Chinese bullying attitudes in the region. Beijing's reaction to these infrastructural initiatives is not new. It always does this to keep itself relevant in the thick of things. However, it has no business in making any comment as Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of the sovereign India. China uses this drama to keep the issue alive and effectively uses its propaganda machinery to develop some geopolitical weight in the region. It presents no hesitation in developing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through Pakistan-occupied

Kashmir (PoK). It knows the disputed character of PoK and exercises no restraint. Instead, it tutors India on what it does in its sovereign territory. India understands China's cunning and exercises patience and quietness, making necessary preparations to check the latter's possible misadventures. However, the work-in-progress frontier highway will significantly strengthen India's border infrastructure and seamless connectivity. It will present a significant impetus for encouraging economic engagement in the region. Infrastructure and connectivity have always played a pivotal role in modernising the economy and opening the scope for economic.

The Disney-Reliance deal is almost complete, and Jio Star will debut

Delhi : Although it is scheduled to be finalized sometime this week, rumors suggest that the highly anticipated merger between Reliance Industries' Viacom18 and The Walt Disney Company's Disney Star would be officially finalized as early as November 13. #MoreOnShorts With shorts, you can get more. Jio Star, a new company that combines the assets of Viacom18 and Disney Star under Reliance's strategic leadership, will be launched as part of the joint venture, which has the potential to completely change the media landscape in India. Behind the scenes, the corporations are already getting preparations for this historic merger. Sources claim that both Viacom18 and Disney have started to transfer important operational tasks, such as reorganizing departments, transferring some business



divisions to Viacom18, and creating new company email addresses. These actions indicate that the process of integration is underway. Apart from the operational modifications, JioStar.com is now operational, but with a 'Coming Soon' notice shown at the moment. Additionally, a Jio Star Wikipedia page has been made, indicating that the new brand is getting ready for its public debut. The RIL-Disney joint venture holds a significant portion of India's media and entertainment business, accounting for 42% of the TV segment and 34% of the OTT space, according to a report by Elara Capital.

BENGALURU:

Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday sought public consultation on reducing the minimum investment threshold for angel investments from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 10 lakh, whilst raising the maximum limit from Rs 10 crore to Rs 25 crore. The document welcomes public feedback on its proposals until Nov 28, and aims to enhance the regulatory structure for angel funds.

The objectives include simplifying fundraising procedures, enhancing disclosure requirements,

Dealerships Receive 2024 Maruti Dzire, Test Drives Soon

Delhi

One of Maruti's latest models, the 2024 Dzire, costs Rs 6.79 lakh to Rs 10.14 lakh (introductory, ex-showroom pan-India). In select showrooms, consumers can now see the new Dzire in all its grandeur. The new Dzire's test drives will begin soon. The Dzire in the photo has Maruti's new Gallant Red bodywork. Exterior improvements include a prominent grille with horizontal slats, redesigned headlights with LED DRLs, and dual-tone 15-inch alloy wheels. New rear tail lights have Y-shaped



LEDs. The new 2024 Maruti Dzire differs greatly from the Swift hatchback. The 2024 Dzire shares the Swift's dashboard. The inside is black and beige, and the dashboard has imitation wooden inlays. Maruti's new Dzire includes a 9-inch touchscreen, auto AC, wireless phone charger, and cruise control. Indian subcompact

sedans have single-pane sunroofs for the first time. The standard 6 airbags, segment-first 360-degree camera, electronic stability control (ESC), and rear parking sensors protect passengers. The 2024 Maruti Dzire faces the Tata Tigor and Hyundai Aura. It will compete with the new Honda Amaze.

ED raids 19 Amazon, Flipkart 'main' vendors

Delhi : According to sources, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) searched 19 sites associated to some "main" sellers on Amazon and Walmart-owned Flipkart as part of its investigation into foreign investment violations. The sources reported searches in Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and

Panchkula. A top ED official said the raids were part of a FEMA violation probe. "ED initiated a FEMA probe based on several complaints against Amazon and Flipkart, the e-commerce entities... that they are violating FDI rules by directly or indirectly influencing the sale price of goods or services and not provid-

ing a level-playing field for all vendors," said the senior official. The insider stressed that the searches took performed on Flipkart and Amazon's "main vendors" properties, not theirs. Amazon and Flipkart have not responded to requests for comments. The searches came more than a month.

Sebi intends to increase the threshold on angel funding from Rs 10 crore to Rs 25 crore

Delhi : Markets watchdog Sebi raised the maximum investment threshold for angel investments from Rs 10 crore to Rs 25 crore and lowered the minimum investment criterion from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 10 lakh. The document seeks to improve the regulatory framework for angel funds and is open for public comment on its recommendations until November 28. Simplifying fundraising processes, improving transparency standards, and guaranteeing more precise operational parameters are



among the goals. According to Sebi's statistics, as of March this year, there were 82 registered angel funds, a crucial source of capital for startups, with a combined com-

mitment of Rs 7,053 crore and investments of Rs 3,343 crore.

Concerns have also been voiced by Sebi about the angel fund regulatory environment.

NEW DELHI: Shares of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) jumped 4% on Tuesday, taking its market valuation to above Rs 15 lakh crore mark. The stock of the country's second most valued firm by market valuation jumped 4.05% to settle at Rs 4,133.45 apiece on the BSE. During the day, shares of the company climbed 4.45% to Rs 4,149.75 - its all-time high. On the NSE, it advanced 3.92% to Rs 4,129.35 per share. The sharp rally in the stock added Rs 75,074.88 crore to its market valuation, which stood at Rs 15,12,450.59 crore. Other IT stocks were also in the limelight on Tuesday, with

76 percent of tax on income beyond Rs 50 lakh

Delhi : The tax burden on middle-class people earning less than Rs 20 lakh a year has decreased during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 10 years in office, while taxes on those earning more than Rs 50 lakh have increased, sources said. Income tax return (ITR) filing data shows that over 9.4 lakh people earned above Rs 50 lakh in 2023-24, up fivefold from almost 1.9 lakh in 2013-14. The income tax liability of persons earning over Rs 50 lakh has increased 3.2 times, from Rs 2.5 lakh crore

in 2014 to Rs 9.6 lakh crore in 2024. A source said 76% of income tax is collected from individuals earning over Rs 50 lakh. Middle-class taxes have decreased. The source also attributed the rise in ITRs filed by persons earning over Rs 50 lakh to "strong anti tax evasion and black money laws implemented by the Modi govt". The source added that 2014 income tax was due on income beyond Rs 2 lakh. Due to Modi government exemptions and deductions, those earning up to Rs 7 lakh pay no taxes. In 2024,

6.2% of income tax was collected from taxpayers earning less than Rs 10 lakh, down from 10.2% in 2014.

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Sebi's plans may increase smaller digital platform compliance costs

Delhi : Experts warn that the Indian capital market regulator's proposed framework for recognizing specified digital platforms (SDPs) may increase costs for regulated businesses. The market regulator must also clarify SDP liability, they claimed. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) released a consultation paper on 22 October allowing recognized SDPs to operate as intermediaries for securities content if they follow strict regulator guidelines. Fixed dates by Sebi to address NFO fund deployment delays. Digital platforms are software and media platforms that allow people to produce, distribute, and access content online. An SDP should incorporate a preventive and corrective mecha-



Tech bridged Rs 52 lakh crore MSME financing gap

Delhi : The trade receivables discounting scheme (TREDs) has helped MSMEs overcome late payments. RBI deputy governor Michael Patra said it boosted cash flows and met financing needs. The internet platform TReDS enables Indian MSMEs get paid faster for their invoices. They can sell their outstanding invoices (receivables) to financiers.

nism to avoid being utilized for Sebi-prohibited activities. These platforms must collaborate with Sebi, share securities market data, and use advanced technologies like AI and ML to monitor and report fraudulent content. For smaller platforms, AI and ML will cost money. Sebi's mandate about SDPs using AI and ML tools to identify content "related to a securities" will be more difficult than due diligence, notice-and-takedown regulations, and badging of approved users.

Be alert, don't fall prey! Jimmy Tata's important message on cyber crimes

Delhi

With the explosion of digital transactions, cyber security and prevention of cyber crimes has become an urgent need of the hour. Stressing on the need for customer awareness, Jimmy Tata the Chief Credit Officer of HDFC Bank has said that cyber threats should not be allowed to derail the progress made from the boom of digital transactions. According to Jimmy Tata, India has seen an explosion of digital transactions, which in turn has created various opportunities. However, the same technology that has helped the society prosper, has also helped unscrupu-

lous individuals derail this progress, Jimmy Tata noted in his opening address at the HDFC Bank Cyber Security Summit organized in collaboration with in Delhi. Jimmy Tata spoke of the need for better coordination between banks and the technology providers and also said that customer awareness is paramount. He vehemently believes that India cannot allow the progress made in the digital landscape to be derailed. Jimmy Tata advocates for individuals and institutions to be alert and not fall prey to scams. He also advised people not to believe those who are making unrealistic promis-

es, or even those who are threatening people - these are common ploys to get people to lose money. The Cyber Security Summit was held on November 14, 2024, in New Delhi. The gathering united specialists, government representatives and business leaders to provide practical guidance and perspectives on digital safety. The programme showcased interactive panel sessions and informal discussions centered on the current cybersecurity environment. The agenda encompassed recent regulatory structures, financial institutions' crucial function in tackling cyber-related financial crimes.

Indian Mercedes-Benz AMG C63 S E Performance Sedan Launched At Rs. 1.95 Crore

Delhi : Mercedes-Benz India unveiled the Rs 1.95 crore AMG C 63 S E Performance. This is the German luxury carmaker's third new introduction this year and its third plug-in hybrid. Other PHEVs include the S 63 E Performance and GT 63 S E Performance. Mercedes will also give new car buyers a Nürburgring race slot. Powertrain is the greatest change on the C63 S E. We no longer have the monster V8 from the previous generation. Instead, the sports sedan has a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder, turbo-petrol engine with 476 horsepower and 545 Nm. The transmission is 9-speed automatic. Mercedes' hybrid innovation adds 204hp and 320Nm to the petrol engine via a rear axle-mounted electric motor. This produces 680hp and 1,020Nm. Interestingly, this turbocharger incorporates F1 technology. An electric motor and 400V architecture speed up turbo spooling, eliminating turbo lag. Mercedes AMG is a tech pioneer and F1 innovator. How it got so many horses from a turbo-four is astounding. The 0-100kph sprint takes 3.4 seconds, and the automobile can reach 280kph.



Vigilance directs PWD to probe Kejriwal's house upgrades

NEW DELHI: BJP leader of opposition Vijender Gupta on Thursday said that the vigilance department of Delhi govt has given directions to Public Works Department (PWD) to investigate an alleged case of lavish amenities found at 6, Flag Staff Road, where former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal lived while in office. The address at Civil Lines has been at the centre of a controversy for several months after PWD did an audit of the interiors after Kejriwal vacated the accommodation. Gupta said the notice was in response to a letter by him to LG VK Saxena on Nov 20. In his letter to the LG, Gupta said: "When PWD took inventory of the items in the newly built bungalow vacated by Kejriwal in 2024, they found a significant surplus compared to what the department had provided in 2022," Gupta said in his letter. He added that from luxurious toilet seats and expensive wash basins to reclining sofas, premium cur-



The matter be investigated in order to ascertain the identity

"It has been requested that the matter be investigated in order to ascertain the identity of the individuals or organisations that provided the lavish items to the chief minister's bungalow, whether any financial transactions or bene-

fits were made in exchange for these items," the vigilance letter said. PWD was asked to investigate "the possible impact on public funds and whether there was any violation of govt protocol or regulations in the process".

mafiyas provided Kejriwal with these luxury items and lavishly fulfilled his desires," Gupta said.

In a letter by the directorate of vigilance on Dec 19, addressed to the principal secretary of PWD, the direction refers to the complaint of Gupta and asks PWD to provide comments on the matter within five days.

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DU to introduce PhD in Hindu Studies from 2025-26 academic session

New Delhi: Delhi University is planning to introduce a PhD programme in Hindu Studies from the 2025-26 academic session, according to a proposal by a Standing Committee. The Governing Body of the Centre for Hindu Studies has recommended that the PhD programme be introduced in 2025-26. The programme was earlier intended to begin in the current academic session but was postponed, as per the proposal. The initiative to introduce a PhD in Hindu Studies is aimed at creating opportunities for students, the Joint Director of the Centre for Hindu



Studies, Perna Malhotra said. "Our Governing Board has recommended starting a PhD in Hindu Studies, and the matter will be placed before the Academic Council. Students have been approaching the Centre, enquiring about research opportunities, especially those who have already qualified JRF and NET in Hindu Studies. As a premier

institution, Delhi University is committed to providing such opportunities and advancing research in diverse areas of Hindu Studies," she told PTI. Initially, the Centre for Hindu Studies may offer 10 seats, including those under applicable reservation and supernumerary categories. The seats may increase in the future depending on the Centre's infrastructure.

NDMC reviews Shivaji terminal revamp plan

New Delhi: New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) is reviewing the redevelopment plan for Shivaji Bus Terminal. Conceived about six years ago, the project aimed to transform the area into a commercial complex cum bus terminal, but no finalisation or implementation has occurred to date. "The current proposal



provides for developing commercial spaces on upper floors, creating space for buses on the ground floor, in addition

to an air-conditioned waiting area, ATMs, a ticket booth, charging points, and space for parking of autos, etc. However, we are revising the drawing to utilise the place in a much better way," according to a source. In 2018-19, the civic body first prepared a detailed project report for redeveloping the bus terminal.

Delhi-NCR air quality improves, panel lifts stage 3 of

New Delhi: "Observing a downward trend in the AQI levels of Delhi on 27.12.2024, the Sub-Committee on GRAP further reviewed the air quality scenario in the region as well as the IMD/IITM forecasts and observed as under," the statement read. Measures under stages 1 and 2 will remain in force to manage pollution levels. The Supreme Court, in its WP(C) No. 13029 of 1985 regarding MC Mehta Vs. Union of India & Ors. on December 5, 2024, directed the Commission: "...we must record here that if the Commission finds that the AQI goes above 350, as a precautionary measure, Stage-III measures will have to be immediately implemented. If the AQI crosses 400 on a given day, Stage-IV measures will have to be reintroduced..."



Following these directives, when Delhi's AQI exceeded 350 and reached 401 at 10 pm on December 16, 2024, the GRAP Sub-Committee implemented Stages

This directive was reinforced in Court Orders dated December 12, 2024, and December 19, 2024.

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on December 16, 2024, the GRAP Sub-Committee implemented Stages III & IV through orders dated December 16, 2024. Subsequently, Stage IV was withdrawn on December 24, 2024, as air quality .

Beware, parts of Delhi to see cold-day conditions, rain

NEW DELHI: Parts of Delhi could get rain and see cold day conditions on Friday and Saturday, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said. A cold day is declared when the minimum temperature is below 10 degrees Celsius and the maximum is lower than the normal by 4.5 degrees or more. There was a possibility of very light rain on Thursday night and there could be light to moderate showers on Friday and Saturday. Safdarjung, the city's base station, saw dense fog on Wednesday with the lowest visibility of 100 metres. Palam saw moderate fog with visibility dipping to 300 metres. Over 20 trains were delayed due to fog. Some flights were delayed at Delhi airport that reported moderate fog. An airport official said the delays happened due



to adverse weather conditions at the origin airports. The maximum temperature on Thursday was 24.1 degrees Celsius, three degrees above normal. It was 1.7 degrees higher than Wednesday's maximum temperature. The minimum temperature was 8.2 degrees Celsius, one degree above normal. The maximum temperature is predicted to dip to 20 degrees Celsius on Saturday. "A western disturbance and its interaction with easterly winds is likely to cause light to moder-

AAP's credibility is now at an all-time low

New Delhi: Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav claimed on Thursday that anticipating an electoral defeat, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal was trying to restore his damaged reputation and declining support base by blaming others. "Kejriwal and his colleagues Sanjay Singh, Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain are out of jail on bail in the liquor scam. ate rainfall or thunderstorms.

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Court convicts ganster Salman, four associates of attempt to murder

New Delhi: A Delhi court recently convicted gangster Salman Tyagi and his four associates in a 2012 attempt to murder and rioting case. The court of additional sessions judge Shivali Sharma said that the prosecution had proved the charges. "I have no hesitation in holding that the prosecution has duly proved on record, beyond any reasonable doubt, that on the intervening night of 24-25 Sept, 2012, at Shamshan Ghat Road... Hari Nagar, the accused persons... formed an unlawful assembly with the common objective of attacking the victim, Salim, and... used force and violence while armed with deadly weapons, including rods, sword, pistols etc," the court said in the Dec 21 judgment. The court was hearing a case registered by Hari Nagar



The court was hearing a case registered by Hari Nagar police against Tyagi and his associates. The matter has been posted for filing of the mandatory documents on Jan 14, following which the arguments

police against Tyagi and his associates. The matter has been posted for filing of the mandatory documents on Jan 14, following which the arguments on sentencing will be heard. Tyagi, earlier a close associate of gangster Neeraj Bawana, is lodged in Mandoli Jail in connection with several cases of murder and extortion. It is believed that

New Delhi: A gang allegedly involved in the manufacture and distribution of banned narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was busted recently. Three men, including two holding BPharm degrees, were arrested in the case. The gang had set up a factory in Bawana where the accused were manufacturing syrups that were supplied to Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The recovered tablets were sourced from Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The



accused were using fake brand names to sell tablets and syrups. Police recovered drugs worth Rs 1 crore from their possession. The gang had links to receivers and suppliers in Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Special commissioner of police (Crime) Devesh Chandra Srivastava stated that they

received information that Samaludden alias Sadik, a trafficker based in Agra, was dealing in restricted Alprazolam tablets, as well as Triprolidine Hydrochloride and Codeine Phosphate Syrup. A team under the supervision of DCP (Anti Narcotics Task Force) Bhisham Singh apprehended Sadik (28), Mohammad Gulzar (34) and Salman (28). Sadik, the kingpin of the gang, holds a BPharm degree from Jaipur and has work experience in various pharmaceutical companies.

Doctors in hospital remove shaving razor from man's stomach

NEW DELHI: Doctors at a Delhi hospital successfully treated a 20-year-old man who swallowed a shaving razor after a fight with his father. The patient, who had depression and suicidal thoughts, consumed the razor in two separate pieces--the blade holder and the handle--endangering his life. The situation was further complicated by his father's own mental health condition. Medical imaging revealed the blade holder was in his stomach, whilst the handle had progressed to the large intestine. The surgical intervention was conducted by a team comprising Dr Tarun Mittal, Dr Anmol Ahuja, Dr Shreshth Manglik, Dr Rakesh S, Dr Karthik Krishna and Dr Tanushree Nahata, who executed a two-phase operation. The procedure involved a laparotomy to extract the blade from the stomach. Subsequently, the handle in the colon was carefully manipulated and removed through sigmoidoscopy. The success resulted from precise planning and collaborative effort. "This was a peculiar case, not only because of the nature of the foreign body but also the psychological factors at play. Addressing such cases requires both good medical care and sensitivity to the patient's mental health," said Dr. Mittal. He also highlighted the importance of seeking early help for mental health problems and removing the stigma around mental illness. "Many people hesitate to seek care due to fear or shame, which can lead to dangerous situations" added Dr Mittal. The incident emphasises the critical importance of mental health support and awareness.



Trump spares neither opposition nor govt. with USAID claims

Washington: US President Donald Trump, he of torrential verbiage, weighed in for the third straight day on Friday on the \$21m purportedly allocated by USAID to increase voter turnout in India. In an the off-the-cuff remark at a meeting with US governors, Trump said, "\$21 million going to my friend Prime Minister Modi in India for voter turnout..." He did not elaborate on his statement or offer any evidence. Trump had previously suggested that the Biden administration, during whose time the money was purportedly assigned, was "trying to get somebody else elected" and the current Indian govt should be informed about this, implying Democrats in US were backing Congress. He followed it up a day later by saying the money did not go to India and instead was



'kickback' for US officials. The random, imprecise remarks are typical of a President, who by the assessment of many psychologists, including his own niece Mary Trump, is an unrelenting narcissist fond of listening to his voice. Trump has been on a verbal tear from the time he assumed office. Hard to keep track of Trump's verbiage, gaslighting, much less refute or challenge The sheer volume of verbiage US President Donald Trump dispenses, laced with hyperbole, exaggeration, and outright falsehoods, is hard to keep track of, much less refute or challenge. During his Feb 13 engage-

ment with Modi, he was on TV for almost three hours, including two media engagements with the Indian PM. During his engagement with Modi, Trump inflated India's trade surplus with the US by more than double, putting it at \$100 billion, when it is closer to \$45 billion. Such gaslighting has also led to fake AI generated speeches and quotes attributed to Trump that feed into the outrage industry on social media. Over the weekend, one AI generated video showed Trump disparaging Indians, their accents, and general lack of hygiene and cleanliness in India.

Ola Electric violated consumer rights as a recipient of the govt.

Delhi: The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) instructed vehicle testing agency ARAI to investigate whether Ola Electric violated consumer rights as a recipient of the government's EV incentive scheme. After the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) issued Ola Electric a show cause notice for consumer rights violations, misleading advertising, and unfair trade practices, MHI took action. Charges during free service period or warranty, car delivery delays, and service/repair delays are additional cited infractions. Old Electric is a FAME-II and PM E-DRIVE



beneficiary under ARAI's eligibility requirements. Thus, MHI must get your opinions on the issue promptly "The ministry's letter to the testing centre stated. It further stated that under two EV incentive schemes, all OEMs, including Ola Electric, must maintain service centres to address consumer issues and provide warranties. Earlier, Union consumer

affairs secretary and CCPA chief commissioner Nidhi Khare confirmed that the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) has been receiving complaints for about a year. The company didn't answer problems effectively." CCPA can open a "class action" under the Consumer Protection Act if comparable complaints affect a 'class' of customers.'

'Tillers' meet cordial, next talks on Mar 19'

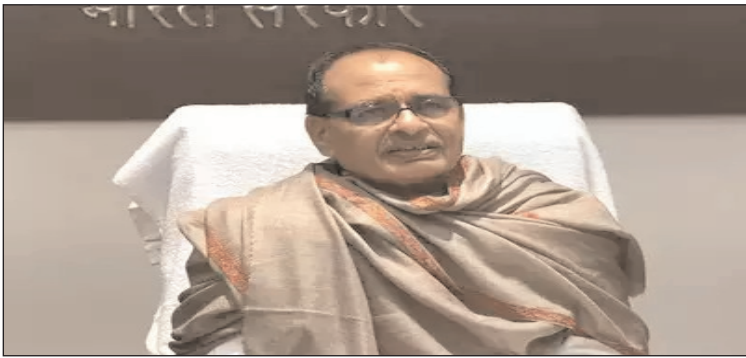
CHANDIGARH: Union agriculture minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan Saturday said the meeting with farmer leaders was held in a cordial atmosphere and the next round of talks will take place in Chandigarh on March 19. A fresh round of talks between the protesting farmers and a central team, headed by

Chouhan, to discuss the farmers' various demands, including a legal guarantee for MSP on crops, was held on Saturday evening. Union ministers Pralhad Joshi and Piyush Goyal also attended the meeting. Chouhan said the discussions with the farmers took place in a cordial atmosphere. The central team placed farmers' welfare programme

before them during the meeting, Chouhan said. "We heard views of farmer leaders Jagjit Singh Dallewal and Sarwan Singh Pandher. A very good discussion took place," he said. However, he did not take any questions from the media. Punjab ministers Harpal Singh Cheema, Gurmeet Singh Khuddian.

'Is this not cheating passengers,' Shivraj asks AI after getting a broken seat on Bhopal-Delhi flight

NEW DELHI: The list of passengers peeved at Air India's yet to be fixed cabin product got its most high profile entrant on Saturday when Union agriculture minister and former Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan was allotted a broken seat on a Bhopal-Delhi flight Saturday. When the minister inquired how a broken seat can be given to fare-paying passengers, he was told the crew had asked the management not to sell the same but still it was sold. "Today, (Feb 22) I had to come from Bhopal to Delhi... I had booked a ticket on Air India flight number AI 436. I was allotted seat number 8C. I went and sat on the seat, the



seat was broken and sunken in. Sitting was uncomfortable," the minister said on X. Ironically the aircraft Chouhan flew Saturday was just a year old Airbus A321 (VT-RTB). A broken seat on a new aircraft raises questions about the airline's maintenance. Union aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said: "We spoke to Air

India on this issue and instructed them to take necessary action. From our side, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will also be looking into details of matter promptly. And I have personally spoken to Shivraj ji also." The DGCA has sought a report from AI on the issue. Incidentally, the regulator had

in June 2022 specifically asked AI not to sell unserviceable seats following complaints from business class passengers of being downgraded to economy for this reason. Chouhan said on X: "When I asked the airline staff why a damaged seat was allotted, they said that the management had already been informed that this seat was not okay, its ticket should not be sold. Not just one, there are more such seats. Co-passengers insisted a lot that I exchange seats with them and sit on a good seat, but why should I trouble any other friend for myself? I decided that I will complete my journey sitting on this seat itself."

Solar panel maker Waaree Energies is gearing up to float its initial share

Delhi: Solar panel maker Waaree Energies is gearing up to float its initial share sale involving fresh issue of shares worth Rs 3,600 crore. The Mumbai-based company's Initial Public Offering (IPO) will conclude on 23 and the bidding for anchor investors will open for a day on October 18, according to the Red Herring Prospectus (RHP). As per the documents, the IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating to Rs 3,600 crore and an Offer For Sale (OFS) of 48 lakh equity shares by a promoter and existing shareholders, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP). Those selling shares in the OFS are -- promoter Waaree Sustainable Finance Private Ltd and shareholder Chandurkar Investments Private



Ltd. Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used for setting up the 6GW (gigawatt) of Ingot Wafer, Solar Cell and Solar PV module manufacturing facility in Odisha. Besides, a portion will be used for general corporate purposes. Waaree Energies, one of the major players in the solar energy industry in India, is focused on PV module manufacturing with an aggregate installed capacity of 12 GW as of June 30, 2023. It operates five manufacturing facilities, with one factory each,

Globe Civil Projects files draft papers with Sebi for IPO

NEW DELHI: Engineering, procurement and construction company Globe Civil Projects Ltd on Tuesday said it has filed preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi to raise funds through an initial public offering. The initial public offering (IPO) is entirely a fresh issue of 1.9 crore equity shares with no offer-for-sale component, according to the DRHP filed with Sebi. The company plans to list the shares on BSE.

India's first high-speed 280 kmph trains soon! ICF awards contract for new trainsets to BEML

Delhi: India is set to launch its first indigenous high-speed trains, built by BEML with a test speed of 280 kmph. Featuring modern amenities, these trainsets will consist of 8 cars each, costing Rs 27.86 crores per car, and to be delivered by the end of 2026. The trainsets will be the first indigenously designed and manufactured in India, with a test speed of 280 kmph. (AI image) India's first indigenous high-speed train soon! In a big boost for Indian Railways' dreams of offering high-speed rail connectivity, the national transporter has awarded the contract for manufacturing high-speed trainsets to BEML. These trainsets will be the first indigenously designed and manufactured in India, with a test speed of



280 kmph, marking a significant step forward in the country's high-speed rail journey. The trains will feature a fully air-conditioned, Chair Car configuration, offering modern passenger amenities such as reclining and rotatable seats, special provisions for passengers with restricted mobility, and onboard infotainment systems, ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable travel experience. BEML Limited has secured a contract from Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, for the design, manufacturing, and commis-

sioning of two high-speed trainsets. Each trainset will consist of 8 cars, with a price of Rs 27.86 crores per car, resulting in a total contract value of Rs 866.87 crores. This contract value includes design cost, one-time development cost, non-recurring charges, and a one-time cost for jigs, fixtures, tooling, and testing facilities, which will be utilized for all future high-speed projects in India. BEML's Bengaluru rail coach complex will be responsible for the construction of these trainsets, with a scheduled delivery by the end of 2026.

3 get life term for killing 10-year-old



BAREILLY: A local court has sentenced a man, his wife, and his sister to life imprisonment for torturing his 10-year-old daughter to death. Additional district and sessions judge Arvind Kumar Yadav cited the Supreme Court ruling in Nupur Talwar vs State of UP and Anr, 2018, while pronouncing Ravi Babu Sharma, 36, his wife, Ritu Sharma, 34, and Radha Devi, 42, guilty, observing, "In a case based on direct evidence, the prosecution has no need to prove motive." The trio killed the girl and buried her body in the courtyard on Aug 20, 2020. The crime was reported the same day by Ritu's son. Police exhumed the body on Aug 23 and an autopsy confirmed that the girl had not died naturally. She had 15 injuries. According to additional district govt counsel Sachin Jaiswal, Ritu's son told the court that the girl used to raise objections when outside men visited the house to meet her step-mother and aunt. On the day of the incident, he received a call from Ravi informing him that their pet dog had died and its body needed to be dumped. When he came home, he found his mother, uncle, and aunt burying the girl's body in the house." His uncle told him that the girl had fallen off the bed and died suddenly, but he saw multiple injuries on her body." Jaiswal added, "After hearing the arguments, the court found that the victim was tortured and her throat was slit with a knife, which was also recovered from the accused

Tata Group to step up competition with Indigo!



Vistara's all-economy A320 Neo aircraft will join Air India Express once the merger between Vistara and Air India is finalized. The entire transfer process is expected to be completed by mid-2025. Experience significant capacity expansion, with the addition of 17 planes from Air India and 15

Boeing 737 Max planes from its own order by the middle of next year. Over the past 10 months, the airline has already added 26 new Boeing 737-8 aircraft to its fleet. The Tata Group is currently restructuring its aviation business, which will result in the consolidation of four airlines into two.

Gurugram Rate Soars 160%, Housing Prices in Top 10 Cities Soar 88% in 5 Years

Delhi : In the last five years, the average cost of newly constructed residential properties in India's top ten cities has increased by an astounding 88%, per a report released on Monday by real estate data analytics company PropEquity. The greatest increase in prices was seen in Gurugram, where average prices shot up 160% from Rs 7,500 per square foot in 2019 to Rs 19,500 per sq foot in 2024. Mumbai, on the other hand, saw the least gain over the same period, going from Rs 25,820 per sq ft to Rs 35,500 per sq ft, or 37%. Noida (146%), Bengaluru (98%), Hyderabad (81%), Chennai (80%), Pune (73%), Navi Mumbai (69%), Kolkata (68%), Thane (66%), and Mumbai are the next cities in terms of price growth after Gurugram. In the top 10 cities—Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Noida, and Gurugram—the survey examined 15,000 new launch projects that included flats, floors, and villas. In the past five years, real estate prices have increased dramatically in all major cities. The factors that have contributed to such a steep rise include the massive infrastructure development, the growing interest from NRIs, HNIs/UHNIs, and stock market gainers looking to create wealth and generate income through real estate investment, rising sentiments towards homeownership, and the general shift towards luxury/super luxury homes as a result of rising aspiration and affluence.



Air Canada plane catches fire on landing hours after S Korea crash

Just hours after the tragic plane crash in South Korea, a portion of an Air Canada plane caught fire after skidding down the runway at the Halifax airport. The airport was briefly shut down as a result, according to CBC News. Air Canada Flight 2259, operated by PAL Airlines, had just arrived from St. John's, Newfoundland, when a malfunction in the landing gear triggered a fire that spread across part of the aircraft. According to initial reports, the runway mishap began when one of the plane's tires failed to deploy correctly. The resulting imbalance caused the aircraft's wing to scrape along the tarmac, sparking a fire. Nikki Valentine, a passenger on board, told CBC News, "The plane started to sit at about a 20-degree angle to the left and, as that happened, we heard a pretty loud — what almost sounded like a crash sound — as the wing of the



plane started to skid along the pavement, along with what I presume was the engine," she said. "The plane shook quite a bit and we started seeing fire on the left side of the plane and smoke started coming in the windows." Emergency response teams quickly mobilized to handle the situation. All passengers and crew were evacuated safely. There were no immediate reports of casualties. In a statement, airport authorities confirmed the emergency and assured the public that a thorough investigation was underway to determine the exact cause of the landing gear failure.

Pakistan plans to purchase 40 J-35 stealth fighter jets

Islamabad: Pakistan is set to acquire 40 of China's much-anticipated J-35 stealth fighters, a Chinese media outlet reported, signalling Beijing's first export of fifth-generation fighter jets to a foreign ally. The acquisition of fifth-generation jets is expected to impact the military balance between Pakistan and India, the Hong Kong-based "South China Morning Post" reported. The land-based J-35A will make its first public debut on Tuesday.

Laura Loomer apologises for doxxing Sriram amid H-1B visa

Far-right activist Laura Loomer, known for her controversial rants, apologised on Sunday for publicly sharing Indian-American entrepreneur and Trump's nominee for senior policy advisor on artificial intelligence Sriram Krishnan's personal information through Federal Election Commission (FEC) records. This apology came after US President-elect Donald Trump broke his silence over the ongoing H-1B row, expressing support for the program and agreeing with the views of Elon Musk, Vivek Ramaswamy, Sriram Krishnan, and David Sacks. Announcing the



apology on social media platform X, Loomer wrote: "I deeply apologize for accidentally doxxing Sriram @sri-rank by sharing public FEC records with his personal info. It was an honest mistake, and I take full responsibility. I've removed the post and I promise that I will be more careful in the

future when I post FEC records." "I was posting FEC records which are public information. I was not trying to inflict harm on anyone, & if @sri-rank felt as though I was trying to "doxx" him, I sincerely apologize for that. I promise I wasn't doxxing & I believe more speech is the answer. Not less.

HBO and Cablevision founder Charles F Dolan dies at 98

Charles F Dolan, the pioneering media entrepreneur who founded Home Box Office (HBO) and Cablevision Systems Corp, has passed away at the age of 98. His family confirmed his death due to natural causes in a statement on Saturday, reported

Newsday. "It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of our beloved father and patriarch, Charles Dolan, the visionary founder of HBO and Cablevision," the statement read. Dolan transformed the television industry with

groundbreaking innovations. In 1972, he launched HBO, the first premium cable channel, offering exclusive content to paying subscribers. A year later, he founded Cablevision, which grew into a major player in the cable industry.

Croatia elects president as incumbent looks favourite

ZAGREB: Croatians cast ballots Sunday to elect a new president with the outspoken incumbent Zoran Milanovic appearing to be the favourite in opinion polls.

His likely main rival among the eight contenders for the largely ceremonial post is Dragan



Primorac, backed by the conservative HDZ party that currently governs the country.

The election comes as the European Union and Nato member country of 3.8 million people struggles with biting inflation, widespread corruption and a labour shortage. Milanovic is backed by 37 per cent of the electorate while Primorac had the support of 20 percent, according to an opinion poll showed Friday. But as none of the candidates is expected to garner more than 50 per cent of the vote to win outright, the new head of state is likely to be chosen in a runoff in two weeks. During the campaign, the two main rivals often traded insults, with Milanovic ridiculing Primorac as boring and as "fake as a 13-euro note". Croatia's president commands the country's armed forces and has a say in foreign policy. But despite limited powers, many believe the office is key for the political balance of power. Croatia has mainly been governed by the HDZ since independence in 1991. "All the eggs should not be in one basket," Nenad Horvat, a salesman in his 40s, told AFP. He sees the current president as the "last barrier that all levers of power fall into the hands of HDZ". Milanovic, a former leftist prime minister, has been one of Croatia's leading and most colourful political figures for nearly two decades. Sharp-minded and eloquent, Milanovic, 58, won the presidency for the opposition Social Democrats (SDP) in 2020 with pledges to advocate tolerance and liberalism.

Teen dies, two injured after tree falls on home during severe storms in Mississippi's Natchez

An 18-year-old died and two others were injured after a tree fell on a home during severe storms in Natchez, Mississippi, on Saturday night, according to the Mississippi emergency management agency. The incident occurred on West Wood Road in the city. Adams County Coroner James Lee confirmed the death of 18-year-old Tykeria Rogers, according to a WLBT 3 report. Two other individuals were also injured in the incident, though their identities have not been released. Bradford said authorities were present at the scene at 6:45 pm local time on Saturday. The National Weather Service reported that two tornadoes struck near Bude and the city



of Brandon, tearing the roofs off several buildings.

Around 70,000 people without power

Malary White, chief communications officer for the state's Emergency Management Agency, said about 71,000 utility customers were without power in Mississippi, with that number expected to increase. First responders were focused

on ensuring safety and accounting for everyone, White said.

"We do anticipate more thorough damage assessments starting in the early morning hours," she added.

Safety alert issued

The Mississippi highway safety patrol issued a safety alert informing people about possible obstructions while traveling.

'Indian Sikh family charged with masquerading as Afghans to claim asylum

London: After being refused UK visas twice, a Sikh Indian family stands accused of masquerading as Afghans fleeing the Taliban-ruled country to enter the UK and falsely claim asylum, according to the UK's MailOnline. The family were initially successful; after landing at Heathrow airport and claiming to be Afghans, they were put up at taxpayer expense at the Holiday Inn hotel in Wembley with other asylum-seekers.

Runway too short? S Korea plane crash that claimed over 160 lives

A Jeju Air flight from Bangkok to South Korea met with a tragic end on Sunday, crashing during its landing attempt at Muan Airport. The Boeing 737-800, carrying 181 people, burst into flames leaving all but two feared dead.

Here's what we know so far about the crash: Shortly after 9:00 am (local time), the low-cost carrier's aircraft encountered trouble. The control tower had warned the pilot of a potential bird strike during its first landing attempt. Minutes later, the pilot issued a "Mayday" warning,



and the plane attempted a second landing. In dramatic footage, the aircraft is seen skidding along the runway in a "belly landing" with its landing gear retracted. Smoke trails behind the plane as it crashes into a wall at the runway's end, bursting into flames.

What are the possible causes?

While investigations

are ongoing, officials suspect a combination of bird strikes and adverse weather conditions may have caused the crash. Questions about the adequacy of the runway were quickly dismissed. "The runway is 2,800 meters long, and similar-sized aircraft have been operating on it without issues," said an aviation official. A bird strike, a known aviation hazard, occurs when birds collide with an aircraft in flight. Such strikes can cause significant damage, especially if birds are sucked into jet engines.

Bangladesh imposes restrictions on journalists' access to Secretariat

DHAKA: Bangladesh interim government has cancelled the accreditation card of journalists due to security reasons. As a result, the journalists will be restricted from entering the Secretariat. Bangladesh's home ministry on Friday issued an order to impose the restric-



tions. The Bangladesh Secretariat is the administrative headquarters of the government of Bangladesh and houses the majority of ministries and government agencies and bodies, located in Segunbagicha, Dhaka. Usually, the Press Information Department (PID) issues accreditation cards to journalists to collect news. "Access to the Secretariat through accreditation cards issued in favour of journalists is hereby cancelled until further orders", a press release from the home ministry said. On August 5, a student-led

movement ousted Sheikh Hasina as Bangladesh Prime Minister, after weeks of protests and clashes that killed over 600 people. Hasina, 76, fled to India and an interim government led by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus was formed. The office of chief adviser Muhammad Yunus has cited safety and security reasons for his decision to restrict journalists' access to the Secretariat. "The decision to restrict journalists' access to the Secretariat was taken in view of the safety and security of the Key Point Installation (KPI),

A Pakistani paramilitary soldier died and seven others sustained injuries during cross-border fire exchanges with Afghan forces, according to a security source on Saturday. Meanwhile, hundreds of Afghans demonstrated against the deadly Pakistani air strikes carried out last Tuesday that sparked the clashes. Officials from both nations reported sporadic fighting, including the use of heavy armaments, occurring overnight between border forces along the frontier separating Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and Afghanistan's Khost province. These exchanges of fire followed accusations by Afghanistan's Taliban authorities that Pakistan had caused 46 fatalities, mostly women and children, in air strikes near the border in Paktika province this week. A senior Pakistani security source indicated they had targeted "terrorist

Afghan forces hit back after deadly Pakistani airstrikes



Security source indicated they had targeted "terrorist hideouts", although Islamabad has not formally acknowledged conducting the bombardment

hideouts", although Islamabad has not formally acknowledged conducting the bombardment. "One frontier corps (FC) soldier has been reported dead, and seven others have been injured," a senior security source at the border informed AFP, noting that clashes occurred in at least two locations in Pakistan's Kurram border district. The Afghan defence ministry said on X that

"several points" across the Pakistani border "where the attacks."

In Afghanistan were organised were targeted in retaliation". A Khost provincial official informed AFP that residents evacuated border areas due to the clashes, but reported no casualties among Afghan forces. In Khost city's provincial capital, hundreds of Afghans protested against Pakistan.

Trials against accused, including Hasina, to be over in a year: ICT

DHAKA: Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam on Saturday said trials against "top commanders" who are accused of crimes against humanity, including former PM Sheikh Hasina, would be completed "within a year".

Speaking at a national dialogue organised by the Forum for Bangladesh Studies, Tajul said he had



spoken to chief adviser Muhammad Yunus two days ago and was told that there are "several priorities". The chief prosecutor claimed that Yunus told him that "the biggest priority is the trial of those who turned the country into a paradise of murder and disappearance, who stained the soil of Bangladesh with the blood of students." "Top commanders or top criminals" are usually tried for crimes against humanity, Tajul said and described Hasina as the "nucleus" of the killings during the July-Aug student-led uprising. He said Hasina and some of her subordinates are being given "priority" in the trials. The aim is to complete their trials as soon as possible, and the ICT has that capability. "The cases of the main accused in the ICT.

and the trials of all of them can be completed within the next one year," Tajul said.