

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Saturday, 15 Febuary, 2025

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

Abscoding PFI member arrested for RSS leader's murder in Kerala

NEW DELHI: A member of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI), who was wanted in connection with the murder of an RSS leader in 2022, was arrested from Kerala, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said on Wednesday. Saheer K V was carrying a reward of Rs 4 lakh and was absconding since the murder of RSS leader Srinivasan on April 16, 2022 in Palakkad district of Kerala, a spokesperson of the federal agency said. Terming his arrest as a “major breakthrough”, the official said an NIA fugitive tracking team (FTT) traced him to a relative's house in Palakkad and arrested him. “Also a resident of Palakkad, Saheer was part of the PFI assault and protection team that had carried out the targeted killing. He was also responsible for providing protection to the main assailants of Srinivasan,” the spokesperson said. The official said the NIA investigations showed that the accused, who was PFI's Pattambi area president, was involved in various conspiracies of the PFI leaders to eliminate Srinivasan, as part of the banned outfit's bigger scheme to create terror among members of a particular community and to establish Islamic rule in India by 2047. On March 17, the NIA had filed a charge sheet against 59 accused, including the PFI as an organisation, in the murder case even as investigations are still continuing. Abdul Naser, had died on January 2, while efforts are on to track and trace the remaining 11 absconding accused.

PM Modi and Donald Trump hold bilateral talks

NEW DELHI

During his two-day visit to the United States, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with President Donald Trump at the White House on Thursday, where the two leaders held bilateral talks. The meeting followed Trump's sharp comments on tariffs and Brics nations.Despite this, their strong personal bond was evident as the two leaders hugged, reflecting their camaraderie when PM Modi arrived and was warmly welcomed by Trump at the White House. **Here are the key quotes from their discussions:**
PM Modi on progress and partnership “Together we will march towards progress and prosperity of our two nations.” – PM Modi in his opening remarks.
Trump on friendship and trade “It's a great honour to have PM Modi of India. He is a great friend of mine for a long time... We have, I think, some very big things to talk about. Number 1 is, they are going to be purchasing a lot of our oil and gas. We have more oil and gas than any other country in the world. They need it, and we have it. We are



going to talk about trade. We are going to talk about many things.” – President Trump.
PM on national interest “I appreciate that he (President Trump) always keeps the national interest (of the US) supreme. Like President Trump, it is a great fortune for me to keep the interests of India supreme and work.” – PM Modi.
Extradition of 26/11 accused Tahawwur Rana cleared: Trump "I am pleased to announce that my administration has approved the extradition of one of the plotters (Tahawwur Rana) and one of the very evil people of the world, having to do with the horrific 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack to face justice in India. He is going back to India to face justice.” – President Trump.
PM Modi's congratulations

to Trump “I congratulate you on this grand victory of yours, not just from my side, but on behalf of 140 crore Indians as well... I have once again got the opportunity to work with President Trump.” – PM Modi.
Shared memories and future collaboration “I am happy that as soon as I entered this room, my friend reminded me of Ahmedabad and the cricket stadium where we held a big rally... I firmly believe that, in your second term, we will work with even more speed. As I have promised people of India that in my third term, we will work with thrice the speed, I firmly believe that with President Trump, during the next 4 years... we will work with twice the speed than we did in his first term.” – PM Modi.

Rajnath holds series of bilateral meets on Aero India sidelines

BENGALURU: Defence minister Rajnath Singh held a series of bilateral meetings with defence ministers of Tanzania, Zambia, Algeria, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Ethiopia, Gambia, and Gabon during the first three days of Aero India 2025, aside from holding the defence ministers' conclave.Zimbabwe defence minister Oppah Muchinguri Kashiri and Singh reviewed existing bilateral defence cooperation and discussed

avenues for further collaboration in areas such as military training, courses, and capacity building for the Zimbabwean armed forces. They signed an MoU on defence cooperation, expressing confidence that it would strengthen ties. During his meeting with Ethiopia's defence minister, Aisha Mohammed, both sides expressed satisfaction with the growing bilateral relations.

The leaders signed an MoU to formalise the ongoing collaboration, with a focus on military training, peacekeeping, and capacity building for the Ethiopian Armed Forces.They also discussed ways to enhance cooperation in defence industry initiatives, particularly India's emerging private sector, while Singh's talks with Yemen defence minister, Lt Gen Mohsen Mohammed Hussein Al Daeri, saw discussions.

AIMPLB: Waqf bill unacceptable

On a day the joint parliamentary committee on Waqf bill tabled its report in Parliament, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board on Thursday made it clear that the bill is unacceptable to Muslims as the panel's report has completely neglected the community's views and sentiments. The board and other influential Muslim organisations



have urged opposition parties and BJP allies to come forth and oppose the bill. They also warned that if passed, the community will take legal recourse.

Union carbide waste unloaded at Pithampur

INDORE: The 337mt of Union Carbide waste that was transported from Bhopal in 12 trucks on Jan 2 this year was unloaded at a disposal facility in Pithampur, MP, on Thursday, five days before a HC hearing. Dhar district collector Priyank Mishra said offloading followed public consultations for transparency. The containers are now placed in batches of four on the premises of Pithampur Industrial Waste Management.

IIM-Mumbai, IIT-Mandi most influential Indian schools on social media

NEW DELHI: IIM-Mumbai and IIT-Mandi have emerged as the most influential institutions in India on social media, leading the 'HEI Success Stories' and 'Know Your Institutions' campaigns and showcasing how these institutions leveraged digital platforms for global reach. Generating over 27 lakh impressions across multiple social media platforms, the success stories campaign underscored the growing interest in India's higher



education landscape. Their engagement numbers reflect their ability to attract audiences and highlight the transformative role of higher education in India. The HEI Success Stories campaign, launched in Nov 2024 and continuing into 2025,

sought to highlight groundbreaking achievements across Indian HEIs. From cutting-edge research and student-led startups to impactful community initiatives and state-of-the-art infrastructure, the campaign presented a holistic view of institutional success. Among the standout institutions, IIM-Mumbai led with 1.5 lakh impressions, followed by IIM-Sirmaur (1.38 lakh), School of Planning .

KOLKATA: Courts need to be cautious when dealing with criminal cases based on matrimonial disputes, Calcutta HC said Wednesday while quashing FIRs against two women registered by their sister-in-law under IPC section 498A. The court noted that the allegations against the two petitioners were "general and omnibus" in nature. The matter pertained to a case of cruelty and dowry harassment, filed by a Kolkata woman against her husband and in-laws on Sept 27, 2021. A single bench of Justice Ajay Kumar Gupta observed that tendency to implicate the husband and all his immediate relatives is not uncommon.



"Even after the conclusion of a criminal trial, it is often difficult to ascertain the real truth. The courts have to be extremely careful and cautious while dealing with these complaints and should take pragmatic realities into consideration," the bench observed. The complainant alleged in the FIR that she was tortured, both mentally and physically, for dowry

by her husband and in-laws. But, the judge noted that no specific role in the alleged harassment could be attributed to her married sisters-in-law, who approached the HC seeking quashing of the criminal complaint and chargesheet filed against them. The court noted that the complainant got married on May 5, 2009, and had a child on March 1, 2010.

She has been residing at her parents' place with her daughter since Sept 16, 2021, and lodged the police complaint on Sept 27, 2021, after almost 12 years of marriage. The sisters-in-law named in the complaint got married on Feb 16, 2007, and Nov 3, 2009, and were living away from the complainant's matrimonial home. The woman alleged that her sisters-in-law threatened and harassed her over the phone. However, the court said no specific date, time, or mobile number was mentioned in her complaint or statement, thus making it impossible to ascertain the role of the petitioners in the offence.

After 300 deaths, our call has been accepted: Congress

NEW DELHI: Blaming BJP for violence in Manipur, Congress Thursday said its demand for President's rule in state has finally been accepted, but after a lapse of 20 months which has resulted in killing of 300 people and massive displacement. It blamed home minister Amit Shah for failing to manage Manipur, and criticised "globe trotting" PM Narendra Modi for refusing to visit the state and begin the process of reconciliation.Party spokesman Jairam Ramesh said, "President's Rule imposed in Manipur. This has come after what SC called 'absolute breakdown of constitutional machinery.

Forces put on alert, to stage flag marches in Manipur capital

NEW DELHI:

Security agencies in Manipur are on high alert to counter potential disruptions by banned terror groups following the imposition of President's rule. With a heavy deployment of forces and flag marches scheduled in Imphal, security has been tightened after CM N Biren Singh's resignation. Over 250 lives have been lost in nearly 21 months of ethnic violence. IMPHAL: Security agencies are on high alert in Manipur to counter any mischief by banned terror groups following imposition of President's rule in the state, officials said on Thursday.There is a heavy deployment of forces within the Imphal valley areas which have seen attacks on police by cadres of Arambai Tenggol group, they said, adding, Assam Rifles and



other paramilitary forces will be conducting flag march in Imphal city to ward off any untoward breakdown of law and order. They said security was beefed up in the state, especially the valley, after CM N Biren Singh's resignation on Feb 9, after nearly 21 months of ethnic violence that has claimed over 250 lives so far.Four days after his resignation, President's rule was imposed in strife-torn Manipur on The state assembly.

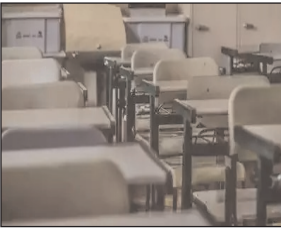
Govt to stop duty-free import of yellow peas this month

NEW DELHI:

New Delhi: Government will not extend duty-free import of yellow peas beyond February, food and consumer affairs minister Pralhad Joshi said Thursday. Government had allowed duty-free import of yellow peas in Dec 2023 and subsequently extended it thrice till Feb 28 to tide over the increase in prices of tur dal. "We are stopping the duty-free import of yellow peas," Joshi told reporters.Sources said the issue of duty on yellow peas is likely to be taken up by Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by home minister Amit Shah next week. The food ministry has given its comments and a final decision will be taken by GoM, Joshi added.India Pulses and Grain Association (IPGA) chairman Bimal Kothari said govt.

Replace Urdu with Sanskrit: Rajasthan education department to govt school

JAIPUR: Rajasthan education department has directed a govt school in Jaipur offering Urdu as a third language to suspend classes in the subject and introduce Sanskrit as an option. The February 10 order to Mahatma Gandhi Govt School (RAC Battalion) states that the decision was based on a letter addressed to the department from the office of Jai Narayan Meena, special assistant to education minister Madan Dilawar.



"The minister has ordered the creation of Sanskrit teachers' posts and close down Urdu (classes). Therefore, make sure to send the complete proposal for opening Sanskrit as a third language in your school to this office," the order states.

Meena didn't respond to texts and calls from TOI, which has a copy of the directive. Dilawar's OSD Satish Gupta said the order was issued because not enough students in that school had Urdu as their third language to justify teachers being deployed full-time. Amid protests by the teachers, the education minister's media coordinator claimed Thursday that no such order was issued.

Kanhaiya Lal Smriti Sahitya Samman on Feb 24

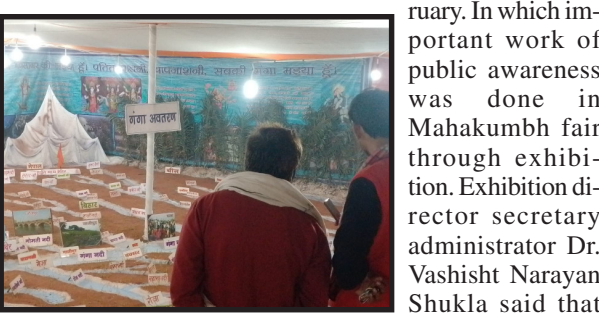
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Prayagraj. Kanhaiya Lal Smriti Sahitya Samman 2025, given every year by Shahar Samta Vichar Manch, will be given this time to Dr. Vinamra Sen Singh for his critical work 'Kalam Aaj Unki Jai Bol', Ranjan Pandey for his novel 'Kota Fever', Anwar Abbas Naqvi for his play 'Daha Dussehra', Dr. Pradeep Chitranshi for his story collection 'Tinka Tinka Bikhari Gaya' and Rachna Saxena for her poetry collection 'Chhand Rachna' in an award ceremony at Hindustani Academy on February 24. The above information was given by Shahar Samta's Publication Minister Mili Srivastava.

Mother Ganga soul of Indian culture: Dr. Vashishtha Narayan

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Mahakumbh Nagar: The closing ceremony of the exhibition organized in Mahakumbh fair through Ganga and Yamuna water pollution prevention exhibition, research dissemination, nature conservation and environment public awareness campaign UP Research Association was held. This exhibition was held from 13 January to 13 February.



In which important work of public awareness was done in Mahakumbh fair through exhibition. Exhibition director secretary administrator Dr. Vashisht Narayan Shukla said that Maa Ganga is the proof of Indian culture, so its continuity and purity is necessary. Therefore, it is the duty of all of us Indians that we all together must try to clean and purify all Indian rivers including Maa Ganga. On this occasion, many people like Dr. Vashisht Narayan Shukla, Dr. Vandana Shukla, Vinod Shukla, Rabi Pandey, Shivshankar Manish Saheb Lal Mangal Pandey, Namo Mishra, Vijay Shankar Nagendra Guddu, Umesh Mishra etc. were present.

Successful operation of rare hydrocele in female child at Central Hospital

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: A successful operation was performed at Central Hospital, North Central Railway, Prayagraj on a 6 year old Ritika resident of Manjanpur Kausambi who was suffering from a rare disease called hydrocele. The operation was performed by Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Senior Surgeon



, who is a reputed surgeon of Indian Railways. This hydrocele was 6.8x2 cm, which is very rare in female infants. Dr Sanjay Kumar said that such cases are seen very rarely and many surgeons have not seen such cases. According to available research, hydrocele of the anus of the nuck, also known as female hydrocele, is a very rare condition, with studies showing a prevalence of about 0.74% to 0.76% in girls under 12 years of age, which means it affects a very small percentage of the female population; most cases are seen in children and are considered uncommon in adults. Dr Sanjay said that the report of this rare case will be sent for publication in national and international medical journals. The success of this operation has brought great relief to Ritika's family. Medical Director Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Handoo congratulated Dr. Sanjay Kumar and his team for this successful operation. In this operation, senior anaesthesiologist Dr. Alok Yadav, Dr. Pragati Pandey and Manju Devi Sonkar, Chief Nursing Superintendent, Nursing Superintendent Preeti, Nursing Superintendent Harish Kumar Sharma, Dresser Amit Shukla, Hospital Assistant Rekha Singh, Moolchan, Rajendra Kumar Tiwari and Romesh Kumar etc played an important role.

LG India expands blood donation initiative

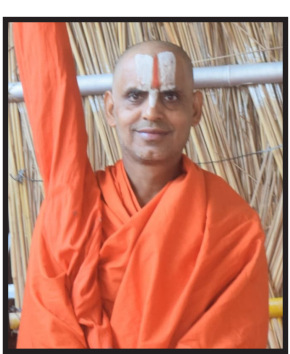
Varanasi: LG Electronics India is set to launch the third edition of its Mega Blood Donation Campaign, reinforcing its commitment to corporate social responsibility with the core message, "Life's Good When Life's Shared." This initiative aims to mobilize communities especially youth and organizing 400 blood donation camps across 70 cities. Commenting on the initiative Mr. Hong Ju Jeon, MD-LG Electronics India, said, "We are committed to continue CSR programs with meaningful intervention. This 3rd edition of Mega Blood Donation campaign is a reflection of our commitment of making Life's Good for people. Our aim is to mobilize communities to actively participate and spread awareness about the cause, aligning with our core message of 'Life's Good When Life's Shared.'" In the years 2019 and 2023, LG Electronics India successfully organized around 1188 camps, resulting in over 17,700 registrations. Building on this success, the 2025 campaign aims to further expand its impact, with a goal of securing 30,000 registrations. Each camp will provide donors with essential medical checkups, refreshments, and certificates of appreciation, ensuring a seamless and encouraging donation experience. In collaboration with credible partners like Care Today Fund, United Way Mumbai & Sakashm Bharti Foundation. LG aims to foster a stronger culture of voluntary blood donation in India. In addition to on ground blood donation camps, LG Electronics India will conduct citizen mass awareness drive through radio and digital media across the country. This mass awareness drive is aimed to sensitize people regarding importance and benefits of blood donation.

One can be spoilt in a moment with worthless person: Jiyar Swami

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: A large number of saints and Mahatmas are coming to meet Jiyar Swami in his camp in Sector Number Eight of Maha Kumbh. They requested Jiyar Swami that the way you are spreading Sanatan Dharma all over India is a matter of pride for us. Some saints invited Swami Ji Maharaj to spread Sanatan Dharma from North India to South India. They said that you are working as the flag bearer of Sanatan Dharma all over India from East to

West and North to South. Which is a matter of pride for all Sanatanis. While preaching, Jiyar Swami Maharaj said that if any worthless person or wicked person is saying something about you and you do not have that fault, then one day he will be silenced. If repeatedly any worthless person, wicked person, a person of many types of disorder opposes you somewhere without any reason, then you should understand that he is de-



stroying your own existence and prosperity. Listen to what the world says, if you find any fault after listening, then correct the

fault, but the solution will not be found by questioning everyone and arguing with everyone. He told that it cannot be said whether you will improve by sitting in the temple for six hours or not. But if you sit with a worthless person for even a minute, then it is possible that you will get spoiled. Like if there are a hundred earthen pots and one is dirty, then all the hundred new earthen pots become impure. But even a hundred pure earthen pots together

cannot purify one impure pot. Therefore, we can get spoiled by bad company. It may take us time to improve by good company, but it will not take long to get spoiled by bad company in a short time. First of all, control the misdeeds which happen in life and in life's behavior due to whatever reason. Life should not be full of ego. We definitely do things, but the one who makes us do it is just like you must have seen a puppet dance. Even

though he dances, there is someone else who makes him dance. The puppet dances on his signal. Same is the case with you and me. Whatever we do, the God through his power makes us dance like puppets. If it is not his wish to make us dance, then we get eliminated from this world on our own. We are not worthy of anyone. Thinking like this, give up misdeeds. Do your duty, but I am the doer, it happens through me only. There should not be such feelings.

Farewell ceremony held at Ganga Gurukulam

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Class 12 has a special significance in student life. This is the year in the entire school life when students also start feeling that they are going to step into a new phase of life. The desire for a bright future, fulfilling dreams, touching the heights of success, all these things excite them. Then comes the day when their last day in school comes, a very emotional day. Class 11 students organize a farewell ceremony for them. On Friday, a farewell ceremony was organized with full enthusiasm and zeal at the end of the session 2024_25 in Ganga Gurukulam Vidyalyaya. Class 12 students were welcomed by applying tilak.

The program started

with lighting of lamps. The Principal of the school Mrs. Madhuri Shrivastava and the coordinator Mrs. Neeta



Singh started the program by cutting the cake along with the head boy and head girl of the school. The students of class 11 impressed their seniors by presenting

a colorful program. In the program named The Harmonic Waves, children sang melodious

songs. The play Neta Ji Aaye was full of humor and entertainment. Class 11 student Dhruv Mishra made everyone emotional by reciting the poem, Smritiyon

Ka Safar. Many fun games were also organized, and the winning students were also given prizes. In the program, Mr. Ganga Gurukulam Kaustubh Mishra and Miss Ganga Gurukulam Shriya Tripathi were selected and honored for the year 24/25. The students shared their thoughts and experiences of school life with everyone. At the end of the program, the Principal addressed the students and blessed them for a bright future and wished them good luck for the upcoming exams. She also said that the name of the school should always be kept high. Follow ideals in life. The students were also given memorable gifts. The program ended with enthusiasm and happiness.

KAY2 Xenox aims to increase sales by 10%

Varanasi: KAY2 Xenox, India's youngest and fastest-growing TMT Bars (the Intelligent Steel) manufacturer, is accelerating its expansion in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. To meet the surging demand for steel products in the region, the company plans to increase its TMT Bar production capacity by 10% within a year. Building upon its existing network of dealers and distributors, KAY2 Xenox will gradually expand its dealers & distribution network through various Mason meet, Builder meet and its special 'Nirman ke Shoorveer' programs in the region. Mr. Sunil Agarwal, Director, KAY2 Xenox, said, "KAY2 Xenox is a premium product engineered to support the modern-day construction needs. The product has already made significant inroads into many markets across the country and is expanding to newer markets. Eastern UP is an important market for us with phenomenal growth opportunities and fast paced infrastructure developments. We are pleased to announce our expansion strategy and cater to the growing demand for high quality input materials in the region." KAY2 Xenox is a premium brand of KAY2 TMT Bars which offers unique rib design that achieves superior bonding with concrete in a hexagonal pattern and ensures a solid foundation and quality of any structure. It provides premium TMT bars crucial for construction across earthquake-prone areas that are needed for today's modern construction.

Emotional and captivating theatrical presentation of Lokabhiram Shri Ram

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: A mesmerizing theatrical presentation centered on various episodes of Ramayana dedicated to the sublime character of Lokabhiram Shri Ram, Bagheli Bhajan dedicated to Kaushalya and Kaushalya Nandan Ram, stage presentations of tribal folk dances of Madhya Pradesh kept the devotees and spectators present in the Madhya Pradesh Pavilion enthralled. The cultural evening at the Madhya Pradesh Mandap located in Sector 7 of the Madhya Pradesh Culture Department, started with the Bagheli Bhajans of Sheela Tripathi of Bhopal, 'Dhani

Dhani Nagar Ayodhya Dhaniya Raja Dashrathu, Bhola Saji Ke Chale Hain Himachal Nagari' and 'Kaushalya Ke Kumar Salo Na Ho-Kiu Jaadu Na Dare' etc., enthralled the audience with the pure flow of devotion; the beauty of the traditional dances of the tribal community of Dindori was also seen communicating with the audience.

The best presentation of the cultural evening was a dance drama based on Ramayana by Rangshree Little Ballet Group of Bhopal. The events described in Valmiki and Ramcharitmanas after Ram's



marriage and his arrival in Ayodhya were expressed in a dance-drama style with dialogues full of devotion and emotion. This theatre institution of Bhopal was

established in 1952 by Shanti Vardhan Gulvardhan. Till now, this theatre institution has performed 700 Ramayana ballets in India and abroad.

In the dance-drama, the all-inclusive noble character of Ram, the carrier of cultural unity of India and his tough and compassionate form full of devotion were enacted in a very touching manner. This drama presentation, covering the events of Ram's marriage, arrival in Ayodhya, exile, Sita's abduction and its aftermath, ended with the killing of Ravana and 'Sabke Ram Sab-Ram Ke' and the establishment of Ram Rajya. The acting of Pratap Mahanta as Ram-Jatayu, Deepti Mahanta as Sita, Dasharatha, Hanuman-Devashis Mahanta, Kaushalya, Suryanakha-

Padma Sonkar, Sanjay Ingle as Vashishtha, Sugriv and Kewat, Monica Pandey as Ravana Dayanidhi, Swarn Mrig and Trijata was very impressive. From 15 to 17 February, Sati Leela drama, folk instrument Kachhari, folk-tribal dances and Nimadi singing. In Madhya Pradesh Mandapam, the Anand Department of the Government of Madhya Pradesh is training the devotees morally and mentally through Alpaviram and other yogic activities. Till now, more than five thousand people have been trained by the trainers of this department.

Digital Inclusion Efforts to Reach Rural Women Entrepreneurs

Varanasi: Flipkart, India's homegrown e-commerce marketplace, is enabling small businesses, rural entrepreneurs, and women-led enterprises to thrive in the digital economy through dedicated interventions. It has hosted numerous training, capacity-building and onboarding workshops in particular enabling sellers, entrepreneurs from marginalized sections, areas where in digital literacy, e-commerce awareness has been lacking to ensure through market across & linkages leading to livelihood generation. Flipkart has collaborated with various government bodies, North Eastern Handloom, Handicrafts Development Corporation, National Rural Livelihood Mission, One District One Product initiative, also as partners of Government of Uttar Pradesh participated at the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, to educate, orient, sellers under the One District One Product initiative and conducted training sessions for rural entrepreneurs.

Rajneesh Kumar, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer,

Flipkart Group, said, "Flipkart remains committed to strengthening India's e-commerce ecosystem, en-



abling millions of MSMEs, entrepreneurs, and SGHs to scale through technology, innovation, and a robust marketplace. Through our PAN-India workshops, we are enabling small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive, driving self-reliance and inclusive growth. As we innovate constantly, we continue to explore new ways to leverage e-commerce to uplift and empower

all sections of society, ensuring MSMEs play a key role in India's journey towards a leading economy."

training programs across India, in Jammu Kashmir, West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh,

In 2024 alone, Flipkart has conducted over 40 workshops across India covering rural belts supporting over 1500 rural women entrepreneurs, self help groups and micro, small entrepreneurs, sellers across India. Through strategic collaborations with NSDC, DPIIT, and the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Flipkart has hosted orientation and

Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Goa and more. These further equip rural women, artisans, and micro-entrepreneurs with digital skills and marketplace access. By leveraging technology, partnerships, and financial inclusion, Flipkart continues to fuel the growth of India's MSME ecosystem, fostering self-reliance and economic empowerment at scale.

MG Hector stands out as a smart investment

Varanasi: JSW MG Motor India's flagship SUV, MG Hector continues to be the goto option for Indian car buyers looking for style, space, comfort and technology without a hefty price tag along with a maintenance cost of ~INR 500 per month. With a low maintenance cost as compared to the premium hatchback, the MG Hector stands out as a smart investment in the SUV segment in 2024.

The MG Hector- India's first Internet SUV, has carved a niche for itself among Indian SUV enthusiasts since its launch. It embodies a perfect blend of luxury, efficiency, and a bold, iconic design. Packed with tech-led features and offering a comfortable ride, the Hector caters to the modern driver. Beyond its impressive features, the Hector stands out for its low Total Cost of Ownership, high resale value, and undeniable quality that sets a benchmark in the industry. The MG Hector, India's first Internet SUV, was introduced in 2019 and has since set a new bar for SUVs. With some best-in-class offerings like its dual

pane panoramic sunroof, the diesel variant of the MG Hector is an exceptional package for SUV enthusiasts who are looking for power and performance, with a touch of technology and top-notch performance.

With an industry-best 35.56 cm (14-inch) HD infotainment system, 75+ connected car features, advanced safety offerings, a



dual-pane panoramic sunroof, and other equally attractive incorporations, the Hector has been designed to provide exceptional and distinctive experiences to SUV enthusiasts. This feature-rich SUV caters to tech-savvy buyers seeking a bold design and a smooth, comfortable ride. Available in 5, 6, and 7-seater configurations, the MG Hector starts at an attractive price of Rs. 13.99 Lakhs (Ex-Showroom).

Mayor welcomed national gen sec Sunil Bansal

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani welcomed BJP National General Secretary Sunil Bansal on his arrival at Prayagraj Kumbh. Spokesperson Rajesh Kesarwani said that National General Secretary Sunil Bansal took a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam of Prayagraj and met the workers. Among those who welcomed were Rajesh Kesarwani, Councilor Mukesh Kasera, Girjesh Mishra, Pramod Modi, Amar Singh, Raju Pathak etc.



Maha Kumbh: Wellness solutions for pilgrims via "Rahat Seva Kendra"

Prayagraj: Cipla Health Limited, the fast-moving wellness goods (FMWG) arm of Cipla, incorporated in 2015 with a vision to spearhead the wellness wave in India is taking a step forward in providing care and comfort at the Maha Kumbh 2025, one of the world's largest congregation of devotees. Cipla Health, through its flagship brands Omnigel, Cipladine and Prolyte is setting up dedicated "Rahat Seva Kendra," to support attendees in managing the physical strain often associated with such events.

Walking long distances and navigating crowded areas during the Maha Kumbh can lead to discomfort, including joint pain, minor injuries, and dehydration.



To address these challenges, the Rahat Seva Kendra will provide pilgrims, police personnel, and other attendees with wellness solutions. These solutions will include massages for the back, shoulders, and feet using Omnigel to alleviate physical discomfort, first-aid assistance with Cipladine for minor injuries, and hydration solutions with Prolyte to combat dehydration and keep them refreshed.

This initiative extends beyond offering relief, focusing on creating a comprehensive environment of care by bringing wellness solutions to where they are needed most, ensuring attendees at this spiritual journey can fully immerse themselves in the experience without physical discomfort. This marks another milestone in Cipla Health's commitment to enhancing lives and promoting well-being through its innovative solutions. Commenting on the initiative, Mr. Shivam Puri, CEO, Cipla Health Ltd., said: "Omnigel, Prolyte, and Cipladine are at the heart of Cipla Health's vision to deliver wellness solutions that truly make a difference to people in moments that matter most. The Maha Kumbh Mela is not just a spiritual journey; it is also a test of endurance for millions of attendees. Through our Rahat Seva Kendra, we aim to bridge the gap between care and convenience by providing comfort, relief, and support where it's needed most."

Martyrs of Pulwama remembered

Prayagraj: A condolence meeting was held on the sixth anniversary of the soldiers who were martyred in Pulwama in the Congress office Sikandra. In which, while paying silence to the soldiers, Congress AICC member Ashfaq Ahmed said that we salute those soldiers. Who



sacrificed his life to protect the country of India. The country will always be indebted to his supreme sacrifice. On this occasion, Manik Chandra Maurya, Mohammad Alam, Mohammad Bakridi, Mohammad Zaheer, Mohammad Sameer, Mohammad Rehan, Akbar Ali, Mohammad Naseem, Munna, Mohammad Naeem, Guddu, Mohammad Eklakh, Mo. Jasir, Mohammad Arif, Mohammad Wasim, Mohammad Nasir, Janu Shah, Mohammad Aqib, Mohammad Afzal, Mohammad Farhan, Mohammad Yasin, Mohammad Ijlal etc. were present.

New history of Sanatan's strength and unity: Devendra Fadnavis

NANDI WELCOMED HIM ON BEHALF OF UP GOVT

Mahakumbh Nagar: On Friday, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis along with BJP National General Secretary (Organization) and in-charge of West Bengal, Odisha and Telangana Sunil Bansal took a holy dip in the Maha Kumbh 2025, a unique confluence of faith, tradition and devotion. On arrival at the holy place Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh Government's Industrial Development Minister

Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi, on behalf of the state government, warmly welcomed and greeted Maharashtra Chief Minister and BJP National General Secretary Organization Sunil Bansal.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis expressed his happiness on attending Maha Kumbh along with his family. He said that it is a matter of pride for crores of Sanatanis to take a dip in the Sangam after 144



years in the divine and wonderful yoga of Maha Kumbh. "Under the valuable guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the arrangements of Maha Kumbh are not only divine, grand but also unique. For which i extend heartfelt gratitude to the Uttar Pradesh government. A new history of the strength and unity of Sanatan has been created by crores of

Sanatanis in Maha Kumbh, which is a matter of pride. Seeing the Maha Kumbh of faith, the whole world is surprised that how crores of people took a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam," he remarked.

BJP's National General Secretary Organization Sunil Bansal prayed for public welfare by taking a holy dip in the holy streams of Bhagwati Maa Ganga, Maa Yamuna and invisible Saraswati.

MAHAKUMBH 2025 CREATES HISTORY Over 50 crore devotees take holy dip at Triveni Sangam Record just 12 days before the conclusion of Mahakumbh

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: The divine and grand gathering of Mahakumbh 2025, held on the sacred land of Teerthraj Prayagraj since January 13, has now etched its name in history. With over 50 crore devotees taking a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam, this extraordinary event has set a global benchmark for religious and cultural unity. This participation marks the largest congregation in human history for any religious, cultural, or social event. To grasp the sheer magnitude of this gathering, one only needs to compare its scale: aside from India and China, no other country in the world has a population exceeding the number of devotees who have already visited Mahakumbh.

Nations like the United States, Russia, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, and Bangladesh all have smaller populations than those who have immersed themselves in the sacred waters

of Sanatan Dharma. According to the US Census Bureau, among the world's top 10 most populous countries are India (1,41,93,16,933), China (1,40,71,81,209), America (34,20,34,432), Indonesia (28,35,87,097), Pakistan (25,70,47,044), Nigeria (24,27,94,751), Brazil (22,13,59,387), Bangladesh (17,01,83,916), Russia (14,01,34,279) and Mexico (13,17,41,347). Only India and China surpass the number of devotees at Mahakumbh. In contrast, nations like the United States, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Brazil fall significantly behind. This unparalleled spiritual phenomenon is a testament to the timeless grandeur of Sanatan Dharma, transforming Mahakumbh from a mere festival into a global symbol of faith and unity.

The seamless and well-organized efforts of the Yogi Adityanath government have showcased India's rich

traditions on a grand stage, mesmerizing the world with the divinity and scale of this ancient celebration. The sacred confluence of Maa Ganga, Maa Yamuna, and the invisible Maa Saraswati has witnessed an unprecedented surge of faith as saints, devotees, Kalpvasis, and pilgrims immerse themselves in the holy waters. The scale of this divine gathering has now surpassed the expectations set by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who had envisioned a record-breaking Mahakumbh even before it began.

Right from the start, CM Yogi had projected that this grand and divine Mahakumbh would see 45 crore devotees, a milestone already achieved by February 11. By February 14, the number of bathers had crossed 50 crores, with 12 days and one major bathing festival remaining. The total count is now expected

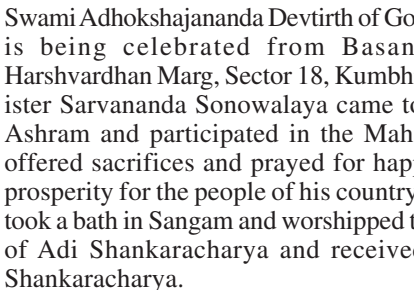
to soar beyond 55 to 60 crores.

A closer look at the pilgrimage highlights the overwhelming participation on key bathing days, with Mauni Amavasya seeing the most significant gathering, with eight crore devotees taking the holy dip. On Makar Sankranti, 3.5 crore devotees participated in the Amrit Snan. More than two crore devotees bathed on January 30 and February 1. Paush Purnima witnessed 1.7 crore devotees taking the sacred dip. On Basant Panchami, 2.57 crore devotees participated in the ritual bathing. The significant bathing festival of Magh Purnima also saw over two crore devotees at Triveni Sangam. With Mahakumbh 2025 continuing to draw millions, this spiritual congregation is on track to become the largest in human history, reaffirming the eternal grandeur of Sanatan Dharma on a global scale.

Union Minister Sonowalaya takes blessings from Shankaracharya

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Sarvananda Sonowalaya, Union Minister, Ministry of Ports Transport and Waterways, Government of India, took blessings from Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Adhokshajananda Devtirth, Peethadheeshwar of Govardhan Math Puri, in Kumbhnagar today. Many senior officials, heads of government departments and leaders also accompanied him. It is worth mentioning that the 30th Peetharohita Samaroh of 145th Shankaracharya



Swami Adhokshajananda Devtirth of Govardhan Math Puri is being celebrated from Basant Panchami on Harshvardhan Marg, Sector 18, Kumbhnagar. Union Minister Sarvananda Sonowalaya came to Shankaracharya Ashram and participated in the Maha Yagya. He also offered sacrifices and prayed for happiness, peace and prosperity for the people of his country. Before this, they took a bath in Sangam and worshipped the Charan Paduka of Adi Shankaracharya and received blessings from Shankaracharya.

Hydration, Employment, Empowerment - Maha Kumbh Story CREATING LASTING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Mahakumbh Nagar: As millions gather for the Maha Kumbh 2025, Coca-Cola India is strengthening its commitment to local communities through a dynamic retail network, employment generation, and women's entrepreneurship. By enabling thousands of local vendors, retailers, and waste workers, the company is not just providing hydration but also creating lasting economic opportunities.

At the heart of this impact is Coca-Cola India's retail and distribution ecosystem. Aligned with the vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to enhance Uttar Pradesh's economic growth and global prominence, Coca-Cola India, along with SLMG Beverages, has stationed 500 hydration carts operated by local vendors. These carts ensure easy access to beverages while empowering small businesses. Additionally, coolers at food courts and retail outlets ensure chilled beverages, boosting sales and incomes for local vendors.

Sundeep Bajoria, Vice President of India Operations at Coca-Cola India said, "The Maha Kumbh is not just a cultural phenomenon-it is a massive economic engine,

made possible through the Uttar Pradesh government's proactive planning and support for businesses. This has enabled our retail ecosystem to serve millions of visitors efficiently while fostering economic growth. With the deep market expertise of our bottling partner SLMG Beverages, we are ensuring seamless availability of our beverages while creating economic opportunities for vendors and entrepreneurs. From hydration carts to cooler deployment to retail outlets, this model is driving local employment, strengthening businesses, and contributing to socio-economic growth at scale." Costin Mandrea, Chief Executive Officer, SLMG Beverages, said, "At SLMG Beverages, we are enhancing the Maha Kumbh 2025 experience by leveraging our robust retail and distribution network. Through strategic partnerships with food courts, retail outlets, and hydration carts, we are ensuring hydration for visitors. This approach not only optimizes supply chain efficiency but also empowers local vendors, drives economic growth, and creates job opportunities, aligning with our shared commitment with Coca-Cola India to generate a lasting community impact."



"Ram Rashtra true concept of Sanatan Dharma": Rohit Gopal

Initiative to unite Sanatan Dharmis, religious gathering in Delhi

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Maha Kumbh Nagar: During the fifth royal bath on the occasion of Magh Purnima, Mewar religion head Dharmasad Adhikari Shankaracharya Peeth Jyotirmath Shri Shri Rohit Gopal Sut Ji Maharaj said that the concept of Hindu nation will be realized only when all the followers of Sanatan Dharma of the world unite. He said that by assimilating the ideals, character and policies of Lord Ram, we have to create such an organization that can unite the followers of Sanatan Dharma spread across the world. Suji Maharaj said that to fulfil this objective a religious gathering of saints, religious leaders and people from social and religious organisations from across the country would soon be organised in Delhi.

On this occasion, various religious leaders, social organizations, political parties and followers of Sanatan Dharma

united and took a pledge in support of Ram Rashtra.

The religious leader clarified that there is no mention of Hindu Rashtra in Vedas, Shastras and Puranas, while the concept of Ram Rashtra is for the welfare of the entire world. He said that the concept of Hindu Rashtra gives rise to narrow-mindedness and promotes discrimination and anarchy in the society, while Ram Rashtra is based on the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, where every caste, religion and ideology is respected. The religious leader urged those demanding a Hindu nation to study the Vedas and scriptures so that they can understand that the dignity and law established by Lord Shri Ram is the path of ultimate religion. He appealed to all political, social and religious organisations to unite for the establishment of Ram Rashtra and called for resolving it in the Maha Kumbh.



Navdeep Wadali's melodious performance enthralled audience at Kalagram

AUDIENCE JOINED IN RHYTHM ON FOLK DANCES

Prayagraj: There was a confluence of melodies in the jam-packed Kalagram, everyone was eager to dive into the river of melodies. The occasion was the cultural Kumbh organized by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. After three days, on Friday, the grand Kalagram stage decorated with songs, music and dance was dedicated to Navdeep Wadali, who had spread the magic of his singing in the singing reality show Indian Idol-13. He made the audience dance by presenting a series of bhajans one after the other. Amidst the echo of applause, he started his program by paying obeisance to Prayag, the land of

Mother Ganga. Navdeep gave a wonderful performance with his band. He started the program with Chalo Man Ganga Yamuna Teer Ganga Yamuna Nirmal

Pani Sheetal Hot Sharir. He filled the entire campus with Shiva by presenting Shiv Shankar Bhola Bhala, Sansar Ke Liye, Shiv Teri Ho Gayi Main, Bam Bhole Bam Bhole Bam Bam Bam..... After this, the audience was filled with enthusiasm by presenting songs like Ni Saiyo Main Suhagan Ho Gayi, Tu Mane Ya Na Dildara, Akhiyan Udikadiya in Sufi style.

The audience remained

seated on their seats till late night to listen to Wadali's songs. Global Indian Music Award winner Vidhi Sharma from Delhi mesmerized the audience with her melodi-



ous voice by presenting Shiv Kailashon Ke Vaasi, Sundar Saja Hai Prayagraj, Achyutam Keshavam and Jan Tha Ganga Paar Prabhu Kewat Ki Naav Chadhe. Shalina Chaturvedi from

Jharkhand and her fellow artists enthralled the audience by presenting Kathak dance based on the timeless composition of great poet Suryakant Tripathi Nirala, Ram Ki Shakti Pooja. Delhi's sitar player Anupama Bhagwat, honored with the title of "Surmani", presented the rich and melodious sound of Indian classical music. She presented many pieces of Indian classical music on the sitar and mesmerized the audience with her superb sound. Anupama began her performance with 'Raag Behag', a night-time raga that evokes a sense of beauty. She be-

gan with 'Alaap', then sang 'Jor' and 'Jhala'. This was followed by Raag 'Rageshri', a fast composition, and 'Chaaq Tilak', an instrumental version of a very popular Sufi song.

In the series of folk dances, artists from different states, dressed in colorful costumes, presented Odisha's Ghanta and Mridang dance, Tamil Nadu's Oliyattam dance, Rajasthan's Kachi Ghoridance, Tripura's Mog dance and Punjab's Bhangra to the tune of drums, cymbals and flute, and instilled enthusiasm and excitement in the audience. The program was conducted by Sanjay Pursharthi.

Editorial

Has Britain been taken over by Islamists?

British MPs have been forced to hire personal bodyguards following threats by Islamist groups over Britain's support of Israel in the Gaza war. Three unnamed women MPs have been given additional security. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak issued a statement following the direct threats to British MPs: "Legitimate protests (have been) hijacked by extremists to promote and glorify terrorism, elected representatives verbally threatened and physically, violently targeted and antisemitic tropes beamed onto our own Parliament building." Threats of physical violence against British MPs have increased further since the killing by the Israeli army last week of over 100 Palestinian civilians seeking food aid in north Gaza. London has become a safe haven for Islamist extremists. Pakistan-origin mayor Sadiq Khan, in office since 2016, is accused of being soft on Islamists because he relies on Muslim votes in mayoral elections. As in India, Muslims in Britain vote in blocs. This was highlighted by the victory of controversial politician George Galloway last week in a by-election in Rochdale, a town in Greater Manchester. The by-election showed how deeply the Gaza war is influencing British politics. Labour party leader Keir Starmer is widely expected to be the next British prime minister given Labour's lead in opinion polls of more than 15 per cent over the Conservative party. In the Rochdale by-election, Starmer, a staunch supporter of Israel, suspended Labour's official candidate Azhar Ali for making antisemitic comments on Israel's war in Gaza. In the absence of party support for a Labour candidate, Galloway romped home to victory. A strong backer of Palestine, Galloway, who leads the small Workers Party of Britain, said after his win: "Labour will pay a high price for the catastrophe in the Gaza war." This alarmed Starmer enough to apologise to Rochdale voters after Galloway's win: "I regret we had to withdraw our candidate (Ali) and apologise to the voters of Rochdale." Galloway has promised to make life difficult for both Starmer and Sunak as campaigning gets under way for the UK general election later this year. Putting aside their parties' differences, Starmer and Sunak have come together to support Israel which could alienate young Britons, both white and ethnic minorities. It could make the result of the general election less predictable. It's not only British politicians who are under threat of violence. Crime in London has soared. Young knife-carrying gangs on mopeds snatch expensive watches, mobile phones and other personal effects. Several Indian tourists speak of being robbed in broad daylight in central London. According to a Sky News report: "India's business elite feel they have to look over their shoulder while visiting areas such as Mayfair in London due to the risk of being mugged. The theft of high-value timepieces sold on the black market has become a criminal enterprise in the UK capital in recent years with one former watch dealer telling Sky News it is 'more lucrative than drugs'." High-profile targets include former world boxing champion Amir Khan, who was forced to hand over his £70,000 Franck Muller watch in a gunpoint robbery in east London. "The man blamed for the descent of London into a crime-laden metropolis is mayor Sadiq Khan. On his watch crime in London has soared. British tourism authorities have issued a warning to London police that foreign holiday-makers have safer cities to visit in Europe other than London and more action is needed to make the city safer for tourists. The demographics of London are changing rapidly. According to the latest census, British whites now comprise only 30 per cent of London's population. Other European whites permanently resident in London account for another 20 per cent. The balance 50 per cent are ethnic minorities from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China and the Caribbean.



2047 sets the tone for 2024 elections

Despite favourable tailwinds and a visibly rudderless political opposition it is to the credit of the Prime Minister that he has neither taken the electorate for granted, nor left room for overconfidence to creep in within his party. Image: PTI

The battle for the general elections 2024 in India has started well before the formal announcement of the poll schedule by the Election Commission. With the Narendra Modi-led BJP releasing its first list of candidates, the race to control the Lok Sabha is off to an early start for the ruling dispensation while the Opposition continues to flounder from blunder to blunder. The deft manner in which key regional alliances have been struck by the BJP even as the Congress witnesses an exodus of leaders points to the stark divergence in confidence levels between the two political formations. By now it ought to be clear that the I.N.D.I. alliance is a non-starter in most states with the failure to coordinate seat sharing. Barring the deep south, the opposition alliance is not much of a factor in most states. A key leading indicator of the direction in which the political winds are blowing is the steady flow of talent towards the BJP. If the first list of candidates released by the BJP is anything to go by, a generational shift is underway with several veterans bowing out of the electoral race.



by Taboola Sponsored Links The minutiae of electoral arithmetic notwithstanding, the battle for 2024 is in many ways a battle over the next decades to realise a developed India by 2047. Recording a stunning 8.4% GDP growth during the third quarter of 2023-24, the economic tailwinds and geopolitical undercurrents seem to be working in concert to propel the country towards the goal. Recognising the significance of the moment, PM Modi's government has bet big on sunrise technology sectors that will fuel the Indian economy in the decades to come.

In the last few weeks a slew of decisions by the government underscore the central role technology has come to occupy in Modi's vision for a Viksit Bharat by 2047. From announcing to the nation, the final shortlist of astronauts for India's first manned space mission Gaganyaan to approving the first semicon-

ductor fab to come up in the country, Modi's technonationalism is emerging as the crucial mantra in this race to 2047 with 2024 as an important stopover. Semiconductor investments spanning from the east in Assam to the west in Gujarat, underscore how Modi's thrust on a technology-driven economy has become a political priority. With the decision to completely liberalise the space sector opening up to a hundred percent in foreign direct investment (FDI), sunrise sectors are poised to play a crucial role in sustaining and further accelerating the economic momentum. Casting a wide social safety net has been a hallmark of Modi's technonationalism over the past decade. The results from this laser focus on keeping the socio-economic fabric intact is most visible in the declining levels of extreme poverty across India. For the first time the World Poverty

Clock, a monitoring tool of the World Data Lab based in Vienna, has estimated extreme poverty in India to be below three percent. Writing for the Brookings Institute, an American think tank, noted economist Surjit Bhalla alongside Karan Bhasin, observed that extreme poverty stands eliminated in India as commonly defined in international benchmarks. This important socio-economic milestone on the road to a developed India by 2047 comes on the eve of general elections with a confident PM Modi making his case to the voters for what he believes to be an imminent third term. It also comes at a time when the aspirational middle class in India is experiencing accelerating growth as witnessed in the rising levels of automotive ownership, mobile phone penetration and exponential growth in digital payments.

In stark contrast to the decadal growth vision of the Modi led-BJP rooted in technonationalism, the narrative from the opposition continues to be regressive and lacking in a vision. Far from laying out a roadmap for a developed India, the political opposition's messaging has been a mish-mash of unsustainable entitlement programs bordering on fiscal irresponsibility and scorched earth politics of caste that is seeking to inflame social faultlines. The sullen petulance of the political opposi-

tion was most visible in its boycott of the pran pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on specious grounds, having completely misread the mood of the nation. Despite favourable tailwinds and a visibly rudderless political opposition it is to the credit of the Prime Minister that he has neither taken the electorate for granted, nor left room for overconfidence to creep in within his party. Borrowing a leaf from best practices in business management of setting wildly impossible goals, Prime Ministers' Modi exhortation of a stretch target of 370+ seats for the BJP in the Lok Sabha, not only challenges the rank and file with a clear and unambiguous goal but it also forces his electoral machinery to think out of the box in breaking new ground in states that have remained beyond the BJP's grasp. Underlying the push to engage first time voters is the realpolitik of this not only being one of the largest cohorts of first-time voters but also a group that practically has no memory of the lost decade during the UPA era. By locating the central narrative for the battle of 2024 within the decadal vision for a Viksit Bharat by 2047, Prime Minister Modi has made the election as much about the future of India's first-time voters as about "India being the Future" in a world divided by geo-political conflicts.

62 years since Indo-China War

The year 2024 could mark the proverbial "anniversary" of the fateful 1962 China's aggression on India. Sixty-two years will have passed since our northern neighbour sought territories that history, and even later-day detente, had proclaimed as rightfully India's. Deliberation and debate can continue until 2062 about how a conference in Simla in 1914 determined a line, and the huff with which Ivan Chen, the Chinese plenipotentiary, left was otherwise a tripartite cordial. History, at this point, must be revisited. The two most important aspects of the meeting in the then British India retreat were that Tibet was free. The roof of the world had an emissary in Lonchen Shatra. Indeed, Shatra signed the Simla (readers must note that I am using the spelling of the hill sta-



tion as it was in 1914!) Conference document, which not only outlined inner and outer Tibet in unambiguous terms but also endorsed Sir Henry McMahon's Line, which determined the border between India and Tibet. Much of historiography will also ponder aspects such as why Major Bob Khathing and his posse of the noble Assam Riflemen "liberated" Tawang only in 1951, decades after McMahon drew a thick-nibbed terrain line that today subtly corresponds to the Thagla Ridge as well as the "Watershed," which determines borders, boundaries and frontiers in the sense by

which the Westphalian concept came to be enacted.

The fact that a newly-cast Peoples Republic of China, post its communist innards, invaded Tibet several years later cannot change the iron-clad nature of the border agreement between two sovereign entities: the fact that India achieved independence in 1947 and Tibet was conquered in 1951. The McMahon Line, although a soldier-diplomat drew it, will continue to confuse people worldwide, especially India and China.

A 1914 quill continues to contest ground in terms of simple grazing expanse. But it is as inviolable as the 14th Parallel. Therefore, even as two powers exchange knights, rooks, and bishops, it must not behave sacrifices that incorporate destinies.

How failure of Nehru-Liaquat pact served as a starter for CAA

Even as the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is set to be implemented, did the failure of the Nehru-Liaquat pact of 1950 play a key role as a starter of a 'benign and narrowly tailored legislation' aimed to protect the minorities in 'non secular' countries within our neighbourhood? The CAA provides that persons belonging to six minority communities, namely Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, and Christians in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, who were compelled to seek shelter in India on grounds of religious persecution would no longer be treated as illegal migrants. Liaquat Ali Khan was the prime minister of Pakistan when he and Indian premier Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru signed an agreement in Delhi in 1950, commonly called the Nehru-Liaquat pact. The accord was signed to protect religious minorities in each other's territories. Under the Nehru-Liaquat pact, forced conversions were unrecognised, and minority rights were confirmed. Pakistan had solemnly agreed to accord complete equality of citizenship and a full sense of security with respect to life, culture, freedom of speech, and worship. However, Pakistan quickly went back on its promise. Liyaqat Ali was assassinated in October 1951. When the holy relic in



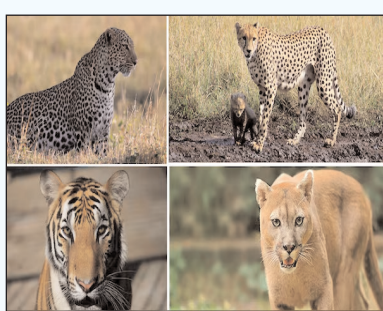
Hazratbal, Srinagar, was stolen on January 3, 1964, there were large-scale disturbances in East Pakistan [now Bangladesh], leading to the loss of lives, arson, and looting targeted at the minority community. Even though the holy relic was recovered the next day, communal disturbances went on. In fact, responding to a calling attention motion in the Lok Sabha, the then Union Home Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda said that while India was implementing the Nehru-Liyaqat pact, Pakistan was not doing its part.

Regarding minorities in Pakistan, Nanda [who twice served as caretaker prime minister of India after the deaths of Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri] said India cannot shut its eyes to those "who were part of ourselves, with whom we have ties of blood and who are our relations and friends and that we can not turn our face against sufferings, the torture of their bodies and spirit and all that they are undergoing there." This was the time Nehru was prime minister and sitting in parliament when his home minister stated,

"If they [the Hindu minority in Pakistan] find it impossible to breathe the air of security in their country and they feel they must leave it, then we can not bar their way. We have no heart to tell them, 'You go on staying there and be butchered.' Three days later, Nehru suffered a paralytic stroke on his left side in Bhubaneswar, prompting Nanda to temporarily assume the executive responsibilities of ailing Prime Minister Nehru. A ministry of home affairs document on CAA quotes Nehru's 'Tryst with Destiny' speech delivered at midnight of the country's independence as saying, "We think also of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by political boundaries and who unhappily can not share at present in the freedom that has come. They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers of their good and ill fortune alike..." The CAA has excluded Ahmadiyas, Shias, Bahaiis, Hazaras, Jews, Baloch, and Atheist communities on the grounds that persecution.

Why India is the best bet for big cats

Numbers tell an astonishing tale. India is one of the most densely populated nations in the world, with 481 people per sq km. China, with only marginally less people has less than one-third of India's density at 152 per sq km. The first five countries on the list are just city-states: Macau, Monaco, Singapore, Hong Kong and Gaza. Ranked 30th, India is the first really large country in that list with a high density; those above and below it (Tuvalu and Curacao) are tiny. The purpose of this peroration? To put in context, India's feat in safeguarding and increasing its complement of critical wildlife in the face of increasing pres-



sure on land due to population. This week India revealed that the numbers of another iconic 'big cat'—the leopard—have risen by 8 per cent overall, from 12,852 in 2018 to 13,874 in 2022, although several states have reported a decline. The actual number would be higher as the survey did not cover all

habitats. Also from 2018 to 2022 India's tiger population rose by nearly 24 per cent from 2,967 to around 3,682 though the figure is probably closer to 4,000 as not all tiger areas were included in that survey. India has 75 per cent of the world's population, most of them in 54 tiger reserves. India is also the last habitat of the Asiatic lion with around 600, all of them in Gujarat as well as 718 snow leopards—around 1/6 of the world's total number. And all four felines' numbers are rising here. A valid comparison would be the state of another big cat, the jaguar, in the Americas, whose population is currently estimated to be around

170,000. Their habitat once stretched from Texas, through central America down to Argentina but is now half that area. Brazil, with a population density of only 26 per sq km, has nearly half the world's jaguars, mostly in the Amazon jungle and the Pantanal bordering Bolivia and Paraguay. But jaguar numbers are falling. The US has around 30,000 pumas (also called cougars or mountain lions) and the species can be found across the Americas from Canada to Chile. So far they are not close to extinction as their numbers hover around the 60,000 figure but their habitat has shrunk by over 30 per cent.

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

Delhi : Although it is scheduled to be finished 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

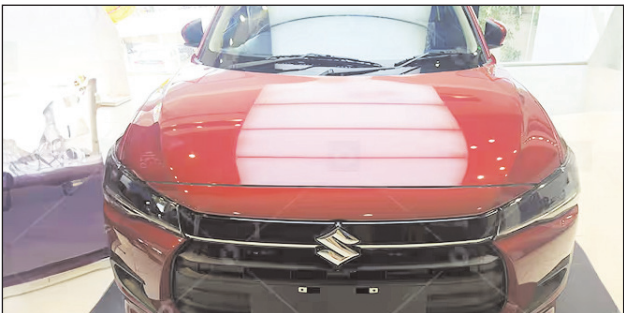


divisions to Viacom18, and creating new company email addresses. These actions indicate that the process of integration is underway. Apart from the operational modifications, JioStar.com is now operational, but with a 'Coming Soon' notice shown at the moment. Additionally, a Jio Star Wikipedia page has 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. 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.

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-



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.

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.

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.



Scammer Ketan Parekh back in Sebi net, banned from market

Delhi: The notorious market operator Ketan Parekh is back in Sebi's sights after being sentenced for stock exchange manipulations. Parekh (KP) was a key figure in a front-running operation discovered by the markets regulator. Sebi investigations showed that KP and Rohit Salgaocar, a Singaporean Indian, front-ran a foreign fund's trades for unlawful gains. Parekh never traded, but his Kolkata associates did. Sebi banned KP, Salgaocar, and 20 others from the market. They must also repay approximately Rs 66 crore in unlawful gains. Sebi investigations showed that a large US asset manager registered many funds as foreign portfolio investors. This fund consulted Salgaocar before trading in India. Salgaocar also referred FPI transactions to Motilal Oswal and Nuvama for commission. When



the US fund placed trades, Salgaocar instructed Motilal Oswal and Nuvama traders. He told Parekh the commands before telling the two. KP then passed the knowledge to his Kolkata conduits, who executed insider deals before Motilal Oswal and Nuvama traders did. Sebi found Parekh frequently changed his phone number. His conduits saved KP's numbers in their phones under pseudonyms including 'Jack', 'John', 'Boss', 'Bhai', and 'Wellwisher'. Parekh and Salgaocar said to Sebi investigators they routinely

interacted. KP's conduits received Salgaocar's trade messages to Motilal Oswal and Nuvama dealers shortly after their encounters. Bank accounts of numerous entities link Parekh and several of his conduits to fund transfers. Sebi ordered 22 businesses, including Parekh and Salgaocar, to forfeit approximately Rs 66 crore in unlawful gains in its interim ruling. Parekh, Salgaocar, and Ashok Kumar Poddar, one of his Kolkata conduits, have been excluded from the market by Sebi till further order.

New RBI rules make multiple personal loans difficult

Delhi: In the coming year, retail borrowers will struggle to over-leverage with several personal loans. Lenders must now update credit bureau information within 15 days instead of one month. Record updates every two weeks reduce the number of applicants who can get numerous loans. In August, RBI gave lenders and credit bureaus until January 1 to implement a 15-day reporting interval. RBI stated this will improve lenders' risk assessments of borrowers. "EMIS are scheduled throughout the month. Defaults and payments may not be reported for



40 days in a monthly cycle, making credit ratings outdated. Using a 15-day reporting cycle would greatly eliminate these delays. CRIF High Mark chairman Sachin Seth said more frequent updates help lenders capture defaults and payments more accurately and in real time. "This is likely to tone down multiple borrowings by the same

individual," stated. "A borrower with multiple loans on different due dates would have their financial activity reflected in the system within two weeks, reducing the blind period where critical data may be missing. "This gives lenders a clearer, more current picture of borrowers' credit behavior," Seth added. Regular data updates

Bitcoin back at \$100k as Congress set to ratify Trump win

Bitcoin rises above \$100,000 for the first time in two weeks, gaining 2.8% to hit \$101k on Monday. This surge follows a 5.7% weekly gain amid optimism about a supportive crypto regime under Trump's upcoming White House. Bitcoin's run slowed in late December as investors cashed in prof-

its. Bitcoin pushed above \$100,000 for the first time in two weeks as it regains momentum with Donald Trump's US Election victory set to be ratified. It rose 2.8% to \$101k on Monday. As of Sunday, it had posted a weekly gain of 5.7%, its largest since Nov 24, according to data com-

plied by Bloomberg. Bitcoin's record-breaking run in 2024 ran out of steam in late Dec as investors looked to book profits. Optimism that a pro-crypto White House under Trump will instigate a supportive regime in the US had earlier helped lift the token to an all-time high of \$108,315.

Solar glass anti-dumping duty may delay projects

Delhi: Industry participants stated the introduction of anti-dumping duty on solar glass last month has raised solar photovoltaic (PV) module costs by 10-12%, increasing concerns about project cost escalations and delays. The solar glass tariff, mostly on Chinese imports, has caused supply restrictions that could delay projects crucial to India's ambition of 500 GW of non-fossil power generation capacity by 2030. About 60% of the project cost is solar PV modules. Due to this anti-dumping charge, solar PV module prices have risen nearly 12%. This raises solar project costs by 7-8% and nullifies the module makers' IRR "A domestic solar module manufacturer executive, speaking on condition of



anonymity, said. The executive claimed several local solar glass companies have raised prices. Last month, the union ministry of finance slapped a provisional anti-dumping tariff of \$673-677 per tonne on textured, tempered, coated, and uncoated solar glass imports

from China and \$565 per tonne on Vietnamese imports to restrict imports and stimulate domestic manufacturing. The ministry of new and green energy reported 85.47 GW of solar photovoltaic (PV) module manufacturing capacity on 30 June. The country imports

solar glass due to its low production capacity. The domestic solar glass manufacturing capacity is 10-12 GW. The union ministry of new and renewable energy did not respond to inquiries until press time. Solar glass makes up 8% of overall module prices and weighs 20 kg each module, according to Avaada Electro director Prashant Choubey. India has 456.75 GW of electricity generation capacity, 213.7 GW of which is non-fossil, including 158.55 GW of solar. To decrease Chinese solar equipment imports, the Centre has implemented tariff and non-tariff barriers. The diplomatic crisis and 2020 Doklam issue accelerated the implementation of these obstacles.

Centre estimates GDP growth at 6.4% in FY25



NEW DELHI: India's economy is estimated to slow to a four-year low in 2024-25 due to moderation in manufacturing and sluggish investment, while robust growth in the farm sector is expected to provide some support and help boost rural consumption. The first advance estimates for the current financial year, released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on Tuesday, showed gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to grow by 6.4%, sharply lower than the 8.2% recorded in 2023-24.

The growth rate is a shade lower than Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) downwardly revised projection of 6.6% for 2024-25; it's also lower than estimates of several agencies, including the govt's, which have pegged it in the 6.5-7% range. The 6.4% growth projection is the lowest since the Covid-19 pandemic and comes on the back of a

slowdown in overall investment and consumption in urban areas. The slowdown was expected given the deceleration in the July-Sept quarter when growth slowed to a seven-quarter low of 5.4%, triggering calls for a rate cut by the central bank. A recent finance ministry report had said that a combination of monetary policy stance and macroprudential measures by the central bank, and structural factors, could have led to the slowdown and all eyes are now on the Feb 1 Budget.

BHARATPE HIRES ROTHSCHILD TO SELL 25% UNITY SFB

Delhi: After two years, Tions must go public. The Reserve Bank of India requires small financing banks to list after five years. The second source predicted Unity SFB's valuation at above \$800-900 million. "Most small finance banks are trading at 1-1.5 times their books and, hence, that's a safe ballpark to begin with," the second stated. BharatPe is also preparing for an IPO. Last September, BharatPe and Grover settled after years of bitter litigation and public disagreements. Grover will not work for BharatPe or own shares as per the agreement. After receiving a small finance bank licence from the Reserve Bank of India in November 2021, Centrum Financial Services took over the troubled Punjab



Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank. After major corporate governance issues, the Reserve Bank of India took over the multistate cooperative bank in September 2019. Through a business transfer agreement, Unity SFB acquired CFSL and CML's lending activities. BharatPe reported a positive Ebitda in October 2024 and consolidated income from operations of ₹1,426 crore in FY24, up from 1,029 crore a year earlier. Ebitda is earnings

before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization. Its overall loss before tax was 474 crore, down from 941 crore last year. The firm anticipates profitability at the conclusion of the fiscal year. The bank's AUM excluding the Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank book rose to 8,569 crore on 31 March 2024 from 4,694 crore a year earlier. From 2,684 crore a year earlier, the deposit base rose to 6,505 crore in March 2024.

Modi government to simplify income tax filing rules, says report

Budget 2025 expectations: India's government plans to simplify its income tax filing rules to make it less tedious for taxpayers to comply with the law and help cut down on disputes that have ballooned to more than \$120 billion over the past decade. A proposed revamp of the

Income-tax Act of 1961 is currently being finalized and will likely be issued for public consultation around mid-January, according to people familiar with the matter, who asked not to be identified as the information isn't public. The revised legislation will then be released in the government's

budget, expected in early February, they said. The changes involve simplifying the language and rationalizing information by using formulas and tables, and won't include any adjustments to tax rates and policy, the people said. The Finance Ministry didn't immediately respond to an

email seeking comment. India has been trying to modernize its tax laws for decades to reduce the bureaucratic burden on taxpayers and boost compliance. Tax disputes have more than doubled to 10.5 trillion rupees (\$123 billion) in the decade through the fiscal year ended March 2023.

Elon Musk's 'Kekius Maximus' Meme Coin Sparks Wild 4,800% Surge, Is This Future Of Crypto?



financial experts who liken meme coins to Ponzi schemes, small investors and some large funds have poured millions into these coins, riding massive short-term gains. Market analysts estimate the meme coin sector grew from a \$20

billion market cap in January 2024 to over \$120 billion by year-end. Laurent Parmentier, partner at the crypto investment fund Stratos, explained the allure of meme coins, noting that his fund's performance far outpaced traditional invest-

ments. "Crypto is the best performing asset class in the world, and meme coins have been the best performing subsection," Parmentier said, citing 300x returns on investments, reported the New York Post. Meme coins aren't just about financial gains; they reflect the growing influence of cryptocurrency and internet culture. Parmentier highlighted the example of a meme coin based on a New York pet squirrel named Peanut, saying, "If you had invested in Peanut, you would have made a

lot of money." For younger investors, the fast-paced and unpredictable nature of meme coins offers an opportunity to engage with the market on their own terms. Auden Borthwick, an NYU student and meme coin investor, explained how meme coins allow average investors to "have real agency" and achieve financial success outside traditional channels. A noteworthy example of meme coin success is Kekius Maximus, where one investor turned just \$66 into nearly \$3 million.

Government eyes \$100 billion FDI as it sets up EFTA platform

NEW DELHI: With an eye on receiving \$100 billion investment from European Free Trade Association (EFTA) nations - Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein - government on Monday announced the setting up of a dedicated platform to promote trade, investment and business facilitation between the two regions. Last March, India and the four European nations had signed a free trade agreement, which included an investment commitment in return for tariff reductions by New Delhi on products, including chocolates, watches and cut and polished diamonds. The agreement is not yet operational but is expected to be in force later this year. Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said all the four EFTA nations have moved forward in seeking to implement the agreement. "With the \$100 billion



FDI, I believe that we could be catalysing overall investments of may be \$400 billion or \$500 billion in the Indian ecosystem," the minister said, adding that a million direct jobs could be created. Government eyes FDI The setting up of the dedicated investment desk is seen as an important step and it will be the centralised support mechanism for companies from the EFTA region looking to expand in India. It will provide market insights and regulatory guidance, business match-making and assistance in navigating India's policy and investment landscape. "It will help businesses from EFTA countries navigate areas of con-

cern and it will make it easier for them to do business in India," Goyal told reporters. He also said India has offered EFTA countries an opportunity to have dedicated enclaves in either of the 20 industrial smart cities, being developed by National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation, or in the 100 industrial hub and spoke model areas announced in Budget. "We are in dialogue with the countries to see if any of these (industrial parks) could be dedicated to companies from their respective countries," Goyal added. Helene Budliger Artieda, Swiss state secretary said that they are informing their companies.

'South states need to boost productivity'

CHENNAI: Southern states can do more to improve labour productivity, gross value addition, research and skilling, said chief economic adviser V Anantha Nageswaran. Speaking at the CII South Global Linkages Summit, he said the southern states have performed well in GDP

per capita, labour force participation, skilling and gross value addition in manufacturing but there is room for improvement. He said the number of persons engaged in manufacturing in south India is 33% but



output share is about 26%. "So that kind of tells you there is scope for improvement in productivity," he said, adding, while these states have basic skilled workforce, it needs to improve professional skills and 'very high order' professional skills,

especially with the global developments of high value added manufacturing and adoption of artificial intelligence. Southern states have done well in economic and social progress and should benchmark themselves against the world, not within India, he added.

Gold loans rise 50% in seven months

Delhi: Bank loans against gold jewelry rose 50.4% in the first seven months of the year. Despite single-digit growth in every other personal loan area, credit rose sharply. RBI issued sectoral deployment of bank credit Gold loans totaled Rs 1,02,562 crore in March 2024. Growth was 56% year-over-year, up from

13% in October 2023. NBFCs' move and a preference for secured loans over unsecured ones contributed to the first-seven-month gold loan surge, bankers said. Bank loans to NBFCs fell 0.7% to Rs 1.5 lakh crore in the first seven months. Bankers also said that rising gold prices allow borrowers to repay previous loans

and get higher new ones. Analysts see rising gold loan demand as an indication of financial instability. RBI ordered banks and financial companies to review and fix their gold loan rules and procedures within three months last month. After an examination, evergreening was found to hide bad loans.

Grasim profit drops 29% to Rs 1,844.3 cr in Q3 dragged by cement, investment in paints

NEW DELHI: Aditya Birla Group flagship Grasim Industries on Monday reported a 29.15 per cent drop in its consolidated net profit to Rs 1,844.29 crore for the quarter ending December 2024. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 2,603.43 crore during the October-December quarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing by Grasim Industries, which is the holding firm for group companies such as UltraTech, Aditya Birla Capital and Aditya Birla Renewables. Its revenue from operations was up 8.84 per cent to Rs 34,792.85 crore during the quarter under review compared to Rs 31,965.48 crore in the corresponding period of the previ-



ous fiscal. The revenue growth was "up by 9% YoY, driven by all-round growth across key businesses," said an earning statement from Grasim Industries. During the quarter Grasim's "consolidated EBITDA at Rs 4,668 crore was down 9 per cent YoY mainly due to lower realisations in

the cement business and initial investments for building a strong consumer-facing paints business- Birla Opus," it added. Further, higher interest and depreciation charges on account of investments in the Building Materials businesses have led to lower PAT. Grasim's revenue from its

Cellulosic Fibre business in the December quarter was up 5.9 per cent to Rs 3,934.09 crore. Its revenue from the Chemicals business was up 11.52 per cent to Rs 2,226.27 crore in the December quarter, led by an improvement in Caustic Soda international average spot prices. With this realisations in domestic markets also improved in line with global prices. Its revenue from its Building Material business reported a growth of 10.42 per cent to Rs 18,784 crore. It was at Rs 17,010.90 crore in the October-December quarter a year ago. Grasim's 'Building Materials' comprises its Cement business UltraTech, its newly launched Paints business.

FM: RBI's gold buying not to replace \$ for settlements

NEW DELHI: FM Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday clarified in the Lok Sabha that India's rising gold reserves, including those held by RBI, is not intended to replace any international currency. She responded to Congress MP Manish Tiwari's concerns about whether the global shift towards gold signalled a move away from the US dollar as a dominant settlement mechanism. Sitharaman said, "Gold is also kept in the Reserve Bank and gold is also being bought by the Reserve Bank. But



beyond that, as regards an international currency or potential currency, there is not much for me to comment at this stage." Congress MP Tiwari stated that since the US abandoned the gold standard in 1971, gold had lost its significance as a major financial asset. However, in recent years, central

banks worldwide have increased their gold holdings. From constituting only 6% of global reserves in 2006, gold now makes up about 11% in 2024. Countries like China, India, Poland, and Turkey have been among the most aggressive buyers, and domestic gold prices in India have surged as well.

BP, ONGC tie up for projects in India, abroad

NEW DELHI: Flagship explorer ONGC and British energy major BP plc on Monday signed a framework MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) to explore partnerships in oil and gas projects in India and internationally, giving a much-needed leg-up for India's pitch for investments at the India Energy Week beginning here on Tuesday. The MoU comes within a month of ONGC selecting BP as a technical service provider for raising output from its flagship Mumbai High oil and gas field. The focus of the collaboration will be on exploration and production as well as trading, besides other vectors of the energy sector, the companies said after signing the MoU in the presence of oil minister



Hardeep Singh Puri. The companies see scope for jointly bidding for offshore acreage under India's Open Acreage Licensing Programme (OALP) rounds in partnership with their respective partners. In addition, the companies see potential for collaborating in deep-water exploration, enhancing production and optimising management of ONGC's maturing fields. The MoU envisages value-creation through strategic collaboration in trading

and other areas, such as carbon sequestration. The MoU is valid for three years, during which both parties will work together in the identified areas of collaboration. "ONGC and BP have agreed to explore opportunities for collaboration and partnership across the energy industry in India and internationally, focused on oil and gas exploration and production, as well as trading and extending to other energy vectors," a statement said.

42% manufacturing companies plan to invest: Survey

NEW DELHI: The average capacity utilisation in the manufacturing sector is around 75%, which reflects sustained economic activity in the sector, and the future investment outlook is also positive, a survey showed on Monday. About 42% of respondents indicated plans for investments and expansions in the next six months, according to the Ficci quarterly survey of the manufacturing sector. government expects private investments to gather pace and add strength to overall GDP growth, which is estimated to have slowed to 6.4% in 2024-25. "Domestic demand conditions show optimism in Q3 of 2024-25. This assessment of Indian manufacturing is also reflected in the higher order books. 83% of the respondents are expecting a higher number of orders in Q3



FY25 compared to the previous quarter," according to the survey results. **Ficci survey** "Challenges faced by respondents in expanding capacities include rising raw material costs, high interest rates, which are creating financial pressures. Respondents expect weak domestic and export demand, further contributing to market uncertainties going forward," the survey said, but added that measures unveiled in the Budget may help in overcoming some of the challenges. The latest quarterly

survey on manufacturing (QSM) assessed the performance of manufacturers for Q3 (Oct-Dec), 2024-25, for eight major sectors that include automotive & auto components, capital goods, chemicals, fertilisers & pharmaceuticals, electronics & electricals, machine tools, metal & metal products, textiles, apparels & technical textiles and miscellaneous. Responses have been drawn from manufacturing units from both large and SME segments with a combined annual turnover of over Rs 4.7 lakh crore.

Biocon's growth formula: Generics & biosimilars

BENGALURU: Biocon is betting big on new product launches in its generics and biosimilars portfolios, which are expected to fuel its expansion in the next 2-3 years. The company is leveraging the Viatrix acquisition to provide a significant boost towards an integrated biosimilars enterprise model.

This integrated approach encompasses complete oversight of value-generation through development and production, alongside value-realisation through distribution and market deployment. "We have an experienced and committed team in the US which is focused strongly on biosimilars. And the fact that we are now a fully integrated biosimilars company has enabled us to position ourselves in a strong position with the payers, the PBMs (pharmacy benefit managers) and HMO (health maintenance organisation) sectors. We are India's premier biosimilars company and we are making a brand presence in the global markets. We are building Brand Biocon and getting a 20% plus market share in the US for some products is significant," said Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairperson of the Biocon Group. Its subsidiary Biocon Biologics completed the acquisition of the global biosimilars business of its partner Viatrix. As a part of the transaction, Biocon Biologics issued compulsorily convertible preference shares. (CCPS) in the company valued at \$1 billion, equivalent to an equity stake of at least 12.9% on a fully diluted basis.



iPhone maker Apple is 'upset' with European Union and the reason is this Adult app

iPhone maker Apple is angry and quite angry with the European Union (EU). The reason is the Adult app -- the Hot Tub iPhone app. The newly available pornography app in the European Union (EU) has sparked a clash between Apple and regulators, with the tech giant warning that the bloc's digital rules are undermining consumer trust. AltStore PAL, an alternative app marketplace enabled by Europe's Digital Markets Act (DMA), recently launched "Hot Tub," an app described as an adult content browser. The DMA mandates that large tech companies open their services to greater competition, allowing users to download apps from third-party stores, rather than being confined to official app stores like Apple's and Google's. The DMA, which came into effect last year, has forced Apple to make significant

changes, including relaxing restrictions on its App Store within the EU. Apple has consistently opposed these regulations, arguing that they increase the risk of users being exposed to harmful content like pornography, illegal drugs, and other prohibited material. In its latest statement, Apple reiterated its concerns, stating it is "deeply concerned about the safety risks that hardcore porn apps of this type create for EU users, especially kids." Apple slams the claim that the app is Apple-approved porn app. AltStore PAL claimed on social media that Hot Tub is "the world's 1st Apple-approved porn app." Apple strongly refuted this, stating that the availability of such an app "undermines consumer trust and confidence" in its ecosystem. "Contrary to the false statements made by the marketplace developer, we certainly

do not approve of this app and would never offer it in our App Store," Apple said in a statement. "The truth is that we are required by the European Commission to allow it to be distributed by marketplace operators like AltStore and Epic who may not share our concerns for user safety." AltStore countered Apple's claims, arguing that the iPhone maker "continues to use safety as a pretext to protect their monopoly power and evade compliance with the DMA." Fortnite maker Epic Games slams Apple. While apps on rival marketplaces must undergo a "notarization" process by Apple, app developers are prohibited from suggesting this constitutes an endorsement. AltStore is supported by a grant from Epic Games, a long-time adversary of Apple over app distribution and in-app transaction fees.

Elon Musk's Grok AI chatbot app to become available for Android users

The chatbot developed by Elon Musk-owned artificial intelligence (AI) startup xAI, Grok, will soon be available for Android users as a stand-alone app. The app, which is not yet available for download, has been listed on the Google Play Store, where users can pre-register for it. This follows a brief beta testing period in which some users had access to the app. However, xAI has yet to announce an official release date for the Android app. xAI seems to be preparing to launch an Android version of its AI chatbot a month after releasing Grok's app for iPhones. An xAI engineer has also confirmed the



Android app in a post on social media platform X (earlier Twitter). In the post, the xAI engineer wrote: "Grok Android app is now open for testing in Australia, Canada, India, Philippines, and Saudi Arabia. Visit the Google Play Store to try it. Be among the first 1,000

users and share your feedback." Grok's Play Store listing notes that the app will be free to use, with no sign-in required to access its features. However, users who may want a personalised experience or wish to connect the AI to their X account may also have the option to sign in.

Bank of Japan ends negative rates, closing era of radical policy

TOKYO: The Bank of Japan ended eight years of negative interest rates and other remnants of its unorthodox policy on Tuesday, making a historic shift away from a focus of reflating growth with decades of massive monetary stimulus. While the move will be Japan's first

interest rate hike in 17 years, it still keeps rates stuck around zero as a fragile economic recovery forces the central bank to go slow in any further rise in borrowing costs, analysts say. The shift makes Japan the last central bank to exit negative rates and ends an era in which

policymakers around the world sought to prop up growth through cheap money and unconventional monetary tools. In a widely expected decision, the BOJ ditched a policy put in place since 2016 that applied a 0.1% charge on some excess reserves financial institutions.



HDFC Bank's home loan business head to lead Poonawalla Fincorp

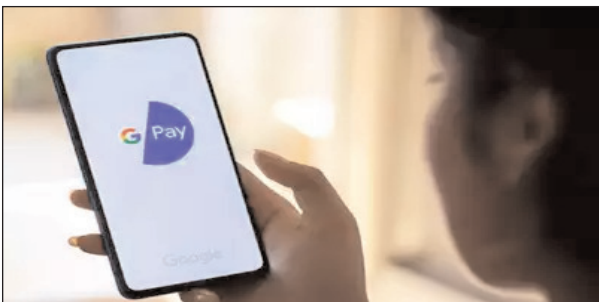
MUMBAI: HDFC Bank's mortgage business head Arvind Kapil has filed papers to take charge as MD & CEO of Poonawalla Fincorp. Kapil is a 25-year veteran of HDFC Bank and was placed in charge of the legacy housing finance business of HDFC after its merger with the bank last year.

"Given the sheer size of the mortgage portfolio (Rs 7.5 lakh crore) and the material importance of distribution, we believe there is key managerial personnel risk (for HDFC Bank)," said Suresh Ganapathy of Macquarie. He noted that this is the second major exit in mortgages with the head of HDFC sales Santosh Nair quitting to join Bandhan Bank last month. Poonawalla Fincorp, in a statement to stock exchanges, said that Kapil will join the company on June 24, subject to approvals. Shares of Poonawalla Fincorp rose 1.5% after the announcement. Before taking charge of the Rs 7.5-lakh-crore mortgage business at HDFC Bank, Kapil led the retail lending business at the bank, which included unsecured loan20s, auto loans, two-wheeler loans, retail working capital loans, gold loans, loans against shares, home loans, microfinance, and business loans.

"Given his leadership, execution skills and business acumen, (Current MD & CEO) Abhay Bhutada has been elevated to group level and will be taking up a strategic and larger role at the Cyrus Poonawalla Group for managing its strategy, investment and finance," said Adar Poonawalla, chairman, Poonawalla Fincorp.

How to disable autopay on GPay

Google Pay (GPay) has made managing payments easier with its autopay feature, allowing users to automate recurring transactions like subscriptions, utility bills, and more. However, there may come a time when you want to stop these automatic payments—whether it's to manage expenses, cancel a subscription, or simply regain control over your finances. Canceling autopay on GPay is a straightforward process, but knowing where to find the right settings can save you time and effort. In this guide, we'll walk



you through the steps to cancel autopay on GPay, ensuring you can stop recurring payments with ease. Here's how to do it: 1. Open the Google Pay app: Launch the Google Pay app on your device. 2. Access autopay settings: Tap on your profile picture in the top right

corner. Select "Autopay". 3. Find the subscription: You'll see a list of your active autopay subscriptions. Locate the specific subscription you want to cancel. 4. Cancel the subscription: Tap on the "Cancel Autopay" option for that particular sub-

scription.

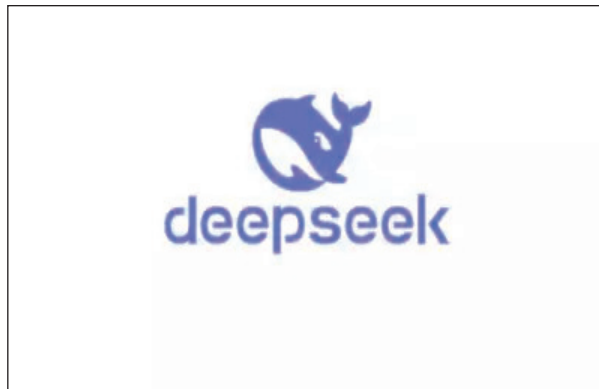
You might be asked to confirm your action. Enter your UPI PIN to authorize the cancellation.

5. Confirmation: Once the cancellation is successful, you'll receive a confirmation message. Some important things to keep in mind: Cancellation timing: The effective date of the cancellation may vary depending on the merchant. Contact the merchant: In some cases, you might need to contact the merchant directly to cancel the subscription, even after canceling the autopay.

How to use DeepSeek on laptop and smartphone:

System requirements, steps to download the software

Chinese AI model DeepSeek AI has gained rapid popularity. Its advanced capabilities and innovative approach have drawn interest from tech enthusiasts and AI developers. DeepSeek R1 is an open-source AI model licensed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), making it accessible to anyone. It is currently available primarily for research purposes. Its open-source nature allows for extensive customization and allows one to freely use



DeepSeek R1 for both personal and professional projects. To use DeepSeek on your computer, you will need to follow a series of steps to install, configure, and start using the platform. **Check system require-**

ments

Before you begin the installation process, ensure that your computer meets the system requirements.

Since DeepSeek involves heavy data processing and potentially

AI model training, having a high-performance machine is important. Here are general requirements: Operating System: Windows 10 or later macOS 10.15 or later Linux (Ubuntu 18.04 or later) Hardware Requirements: CPU: Multi-core processor (Quad-core or higher recommended) GPU: High-performance GPU (NVIDIA with CUDA support is typically required for AI tasks) RAM: Minimum 8GB (16GB or more recommended for AI-related

How to detect hidden cameras in a hotel room using your smartphone

Traveling to new places often brings excitement, but it also comes with its challenges. One growing concern among travelers is the possibility of hidden cameras in hotel rooms, posing serious threats to privacy and safety. Reports of such invasions have become alarmingly common, making it essential for travelers to stay vigilant. While there are special-

ized gadgets designed to detect hidden cameras, many people are unaware that their smartphones can serve as powerful tools for this purpose. This article explores four effective ways to detect hidden cameras in hotel rooms using just your mobile device, ensuring a safe, private, and worry-free stay, no matter where you go.

Different ways to detect hidden cameras in a hotel room using a mobile phone Use your smartphone's flashlight to scan suspicious areas. The simplest way to spot a hidden camera is by using your phone's flashlight. Cameras, regardless of how well they are hidden, have lenses that reflect light. To check for reflective surfaces: Turn off the lights in your room. Shine your smartphone's flashlight on areas where a camera could be hidden, such as

air vents, smoke detectors, alarm clocks, or mirrors. Look for a tiny reflective glint or a lens-like surface. If you notice anything suspicious, inspect the area more closely. Detect infrared lights using your smartphone camera. Most hidden cameras emit infrared (IR) light, which is invisible to the human eye but detectable by smartphone cameras. To find infrared sources: Dim or turn off the lights in the room. Open your smartphone's camera app (some phones may require switching to the front camera). Slowly pan the camera across areas where cameras are likely to be hidden. Look for small, pulsing dots or glows on the camera screen. These infrared lights indicate the presence of a hidden camera. Thoroughly inspect the area if you detect such signals.

The Jharkhand Cabinet approves new college and polytechnic projects

Delhi: The Jharkhand government has accepted several Rs 530 crore education plans for engineering institutions and polytechnics. The state has received approvals for the construction of Government Polytechnic, Chakulia, Jamshedpur, at Rs 134.18 crore, and



Government Engineering College, Government Polytechnic, Potka, at Rs 254.93 crore, and Government Polytechnic, Jamshedpur, at Rs 20 crore.

China accuses Evergrande of \$78 billion fraud, among worst ever

China Evergrande Group's alleged \$78 billion revenue overstatement escalates the legal peril of founder Hui Ka Yan, who now stands at the center of one of the biggest financial fraud cases in history. The nation's top securities regulator said the developer's onshore unit inflated revenue by recognizing sales in advance in the two years through

2020 that led up to its default. It imposed a 4.18 billion yuan (\$581 million) fine against the unit. Evergrande's alleged fraud dwarfs that of Luckin Coffee Inc. and Enron Corp., dealing a blow to the reputation of its former auditor and the country's financial oversight. It fuels concern about how widespread such accounting issues are, just as the

new China Securities Regulatory Commission chairman is trying to tighten oversight. "The CSRC fines may serve as a warning to owners of other defaulted developers that failing to collaborate with authorities over The allegations. Mark the latest blow for Hui, once among Asia's richest tycoons, who oversaw a sprawling empire that spanned real

estate to electric vehicles. Evergrande was one of China's biggest developers, taking on massive debt to expand across the country as condo sales boomed. The group received a liquidation order from a Hong Kong court in January, marking the largest collapse in China's three-year real estate crisis. The CSRC's action may pave the way for more

Star Health eyes NRI business through GIFT

CHENNAI: Star Health and Allied Insurance Company will offer dollar-denominated insurance from GIFT City for NRIs. The company is launching international insurance product suite from the facility in FY25. Star Health is the first health insurance company to be granted registration to establish an International Financial Services Centre international office in GIFT City. It plans to commence operations with a branch by the end of this month, facilitating access to health insurance solutions in US dollars for the global Indian community, the company said in a statement on Monday. Noting that the facility will enable the company to significantly expand its global reach and business, it said, the company will offer NRI-focused insurance.