

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

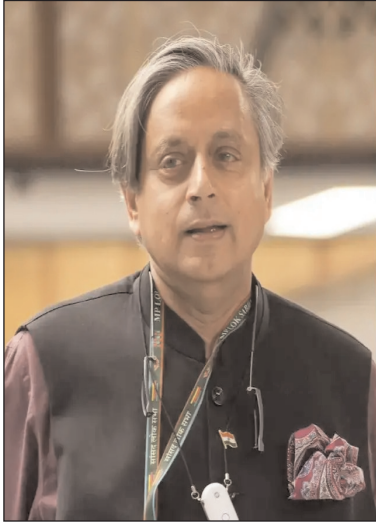
MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Tuesday, 20 May 2025

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

'Political games' or 'govt prerogative'? Row over selection of nominees

NEW DELHI: Did the Centre reach out to parties for names of representatives to be included in its multi-party global diplomacy outreach on war against terror or did it decide the names "unilaterally"? Well, a row has erupted over the selection of names with some parties slamming the government for bypassing party leadership in deciding the representatives. However, the BJP and its allies have slammed those questioning the selections and said this was not about party politics but about nation's interest. While the Congress claims the government indulged in cheap politics as it sought names but ignored party's suggestions, the Trinamool Congress alleged that it was not consulted by the government and the name of its MP Yusuf Pathan was decided "unilaterally." The Trinamool has withdrawn Yusuf Pathan from the delegation, but the Congress leaders selected by the government will continue to be a part of the govt's global diplomacy outreach. The Congress accused the BJP of playing cheap political games on serious national issues. "India is a democratic country. In Parliamentary system, to form an all-party delegation, names are sought from the parties



and those names given by parties are selected. BJP sought 4 names and we gave it, but you changed those names and selected people as your wish. BJP never comes out of its dirty acts, politics on everything. This was the issue of the nation," Congress leader Pramod Tiwari said. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh accused the government of politicising the exercise of choosing leaders for the delegations and having "malicious intent" with only one out of four Congress leaders nominated by the party making the cut. Taking a swipe at Prime Minister Modi, the Congress general secretary said the same prime minister who had abused the Congress publicly in countries such as



Australia, the US, South Korea and China, was taking the help of the opposition party in these delegations. Later, in a post on X, Ramesh said, "After 11 years of abusing and defaming the Opposition -- especially the Congress -- the prime minister is now forced to send all-party delegations overseas. The truth is that the BJP's poisonous politics at home has cost us hugely abroad. Our sanctimonious diplomacy has fallen flat and India is back to being hyphenated with Pakistan." "That is the real 'new normal'," he added. The BJP reacted sharply to the controversy and slammed both the parties for not thinking about national interest. BJP leaders claimed that it was government's prerogative to select nominees

for the global outreach. "The allegations are not right. It is the government's prerogative to send whom to which place. The party proposed its name, but it has forgotten the names of the senior leaders who understand diplomacy. The government has nominated those who have knowledge of diplomacy. There is no politics in it; few people find politics in everything and Congress is ahead of it," BJP leader Praveen Khandelwal said. Rajasthan BJP president Madan Rathore said the opposition should appreciate that their leaders were included in the all-party delegations being sent abroad to project India's united stance against terrorism. The BJP's allies have also slammed the Congress and the TMC for questioning the process of selection of members for the multi-party delegation. Interestingly, two parties - Samajwadi Party and the Biju Janata Dal - are yet to react to the row even as their members nominated for the exercise have welcomed the government's move. Samajwadi Party MP Rajeev Rai who has been named in one of the seven delegations said that Centre should have looked into the names provided by the parties if it had sought name. s from them.



CDS boosted the morale of the soldiers at Suratgarh station and the air warriors at Nalia.

On Kiren Rijiju's cryptic poetic post, Pawan Khera's 'message for boss' swipe

NEW DELHI: Amid the ongoing political slugfest between the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party after Rahul Gandhi questioned the government over Operation Sindoor, Union minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday took a veiled jab at the grand old party and its top brass with a poetic reference from Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's Rashmirathi. In a social media post on X, Rijiju quoted Rashmirathi and said, "Jab naash manuj

par aata hai, pehle vivek mar jata hai" (When doom descends upon a man, his reason is the first to perish) "A famous line from a poem by Ramdhari Singh Dinkar. It means that when a person faces a state of destruction, their reason is already destroyed," he added. Meanwhile, in response, Congress leader Pawan Khera hit back, questioning Rijiju's intentions behind the cryptic post.

'Trading more or less like a hawala business': SC seeks clarity

NEW DELHI:

The Supreme Court on Monday questioned the Centre's delay in establishing a definitive policy for cryptocurrency regulation, expressing concerns over its economic implications. Kant and drew parallels transactions and illegal "hawala" operations. Justice Kant observed, "Trading in Bitcoin is an illicit trade more or less like a Hawala business."

Trump says Russia, Ukraine will 'immediately start negotiations

NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump following his telephonic conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed that Moscow and Kyiv will "immediately start negotiations toward a ceasefire". The comments came after his two-hour long conversation with Putin. Trump further said that the conditions for the ceasefire will be negotiated between the two parties. "Just completed my two hour call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia. I believe it went very well. Russia and Ukraine will immediately start negotiations toward a Ceasefire and, more importantly, an END to the War. The conditions for that will be negotiated between the two



parties, as it can only be, because they know details of a negotiation that nobody else would be aware of," Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social. "The tone and spirit of the conversation were excellent. If it wasn't, I would say so now, rather than later. Russia wants to do largescale TRADE with the United States when this catastrophic "bloodbath" is

over, and I agree. There is a tremendous opportunity for Russia to create massive amounts of jobs and wealth. Its potential is UNLIMITED. Likewise, Ukraine can be a great beneficiary on Trade, in the process of rebuilding its Country. Negotiations between Russia and Ukraine will begin immediately," he added.

NEW DELHI:

"The department of state is taking steps (Monday) to impose visa restrictions on owners, executives, and senior officials of travel agencies based and operating in India for knowingly facilitating illegal immigration to the US. Mission India's consular affairs and diplomatic security service work every day across our embassy and consulates to actively identify and target those engaged in facilitating illegal immigration and human smuggling and trafficking operations." "We will continue to take steps to impose visa restrictions against owners, executives, and senior officials of travel agencies to cut off alien smuggling networks.



Our immigration policy aims not only to inform foreign nationals about the dangers of illegal immigration to the United States but also to hold accountable individuals who violate our laws, including facilitators of illegal immigration," the statement said, adding, "Enforcing US immigration laws and policies is critical to upholding the rule of law

and protecting Americans. This visa restriction policy is global and even applies to individuals who otherwise qualify for the visa waiver programme." The US regularly keeps deporting illegal immigrants back to their home countries, including India. This Feb, foreign minister S Jaishankar had told Parliament 15,756 illegal

Indian immigrants had been deported to India from the US since 2009. The data shared in Lok Sabha showed the highest deportation was witnessed in 2019 with 2,042 illegal Indian immigrants being sent back to the country. Starting from 2009, each year till 2025, more than 500 Indian migrants were sent back to India. During 2016 to 2020, the numbers of people sent to India crossed 1000. Monday's warning to impose visa restrictions on official of travel agencies facilitating illegal immigration comes two days after the US warned that overstaying in the country could lead to deportation. and a permanent bar on

'Imposing Visa Restrictions On Indian Travel Agents Who Aid Illegal Immigration:' US

'Told me she was going to Delhi, not Pakistan': YouTuber Jyoti father makes U-turn

NEW DELHI: A day after defending his daughter for her trips to Pakistan, YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra's father has now backtracked on his earlier remarks, claiming he had no idea about her foreign trips. Harish Malhotra, further said that by Jyoti would tell him that she was going to Delhi and never spoke of Pakistan. Jyoti, was arrested under the Official Secrets Act and relevant sections of the



Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Police said that they recovered "suspicious" material from her mobile phone and laptop.

"I didn't know, she had told me that she was going to Delhi. She never told me anything. None of her friends visited our home... yesterday,

the Police brought her here, she took her clothes and left, she did not say anything to me... I don't know what to say... she used to make videos at home... I never said that she visited Pakistan, she used to tell me that she was going to Delhi... I have no demands, whatever is going to happen, will happen," Harish told news agency ANI. As per authorities in 2023, Jyoti visited the Pakistan high commis-

sion in Delhi to apply for a visa. It was there she allegedly met a man named Ahsan-ur-Rahim, also known as Danish, a staffer at the mission. Investigators say she remained in contact with him, later travelled to Pakistan twice, and allegedly met individuals associated with Pakistani security and intelligence services. Her father, however, claimed that her visits abroad were related.

IPL 2025: Abhishek shines for SRH as Pant's LSG crash out of playoff

NEW DELHI: Abhishek Sharma stole the spotlight with a breathtaking 59 off just 20 balls, setting the tone for Sunrisers Hyderabad's emphatic six-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants in Match 61 of IPL 2025 at the Ekana Stadium. The young left-hander's fireworks at the top helped SRH chase down a challenging target of 206 with 10 balls to spare, dashing LSG's hopes of making the playoffs. He smashed four boundaries and



cleared the rope six times in his whirlwind knock, reaching his fifty real quick. His fearless hitting saw SRH race to 99 in under eight overs before he was dismissed by Digvesh Rath, slicing a wide googly to sweep-er cover, a moment that sparked a heated

exchange between the two players. Even after Abhishek's departure, SRH maintained control. Ishan Kishan contributed a brisk 35 off 28, while Heinrich Klaasen added a fluent 47 off 28 to ensure the chase stayed on track. Brief interruptions, including Kamindu Mendis retiring hurt, didn't slow the innings, as Aniket Verma and Nitish Reddy finished the job comfortably in the 19th over. Earlier, Lucknow Super Giants posted a solid 205/7.

The domineering BSP District Panchayat member beat Dalit women with sticks, referred to Etah

The incident happened when the village community land was stopped from being occupied illegally

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Jalesar/Etah. During the illegal occupation of the village community land, a domineering BSP District Panchayat member and his companions beat the women and girls of the Dalit



community with sticks when they protested against the illegal occupation. In which more than half a dozen women were covered in blood. After this incident that happened in broad daylight, there was a cry in the village. On getting the information of the incident, the Kotwali police reached the spot. The Kotwali police has registered a case of the incident. The victim Devi, wife of Dorilal, a resident of Arabgarh village of Kotwali area, told that she is a poor woman of the Nat caste. Ramesh Chandra Pachauri of the same village had given about 0.024 hectare of his share of land to her son for living. On which her son

has constructed a house. He has been living in the said house for the last 30 years. After the death of Ramesh Chandra Pachauri, the said land of 0.024 hectare was registered in the name of his daughters Rachna Devi and Nisha Devi. The above mentioned Rachna Devi and Nisha Devi sold that land to Mukesh Yadav, son of Mahavir Singh, resident of Qazipur Badanpur, Police Station Sakroli, District Etah. While no land is available on the spot. The vacant land on the spot belongs to the village community. Idols of all the Gods and Goddesses are installed on it. And a religious place is built. It was last Sunday at around 11 in the afternoon when the strongman Mukesh Mahavir Singh of village Qazipur Badanpur, who is also a district Panchayat member from BSP, was getting bricks removed to illegally occupy the land of the village community. When the victim and other women of the village Manju Devi wife of Chokhelal and Reshma Devi wife of Prabhudayal and Sarvesh wife of Rampal and Rajni daughter of Chokhelal refused to get the bricks removed from the above Mukesh Yadav, then the

above Mukesh Yadav and Rajkumar alias Raju sons of Mahavir Singh and Mukesh's driver Lokesh son unknown along with his 4 unknown companions and Sunny Yadav and Akshay Yadav sons of Mukesh Yadav came out of their four wheeler armed with sticks and abused all of us women in casteist slurs. When the women refused to abuse, the above named accused beat up the women and girls of the Dalit community badly with sticks and rods with the intention of killing them. Hearing the screams, other women of the Lodhi community of the village came to the spot and saved us from the above people. The accused fled after threatening the other women of the village on seeing them arriving. Manju Devi wife of Chokhelal has been seriously injured in the incident. She was brought to the Community Health Center Jaleswar for treatment. Seeing their serious condition, they have been referred to Etah. The injured Manju Devi is being treated at Rani Abantibai Hospital in Etah. The victim women allege



that the accused Mukesh Yadav is a domineering person and is currently a member of the District Panchayat. He, along with his associates, wants to take unauthorized possession of the place of our deities on the strength of their domineering and hooliganism. In the application given to the Kotwali police by the victim, she has pleaded for justice by registering a case under relevant sections against the accused BSP leader Mukesh Yadav etc. The same CO Gyanendra Pratap Singh said that the incident is under cognizance. The victim women of the Dalit

class were sent for treatment. On the basis of the complaint given by the women, the Kotwali police has registered a case against the accused under relevant sections.

Chief Medical Officer did a surprise inspection of CHC

Illegal pathology and hospitals contrary to standards will be investigated- CMO
KASTURBA VIDYALAYA WAS ALSO INSPECTED

Shahganj/Jaunpur: Chief Medical Officer Dr. Laxmi Singh conducted a surprise inspection of the Community Health Center on Monday. During this, she thoroughly inspected CB-NAAT, OPD, DOTS Center, Emergency Ward etc. She seemed satisfied with the arrangements for the treatment of patients, cleanliness etc. She instructed Superintendent Dr. Farooqi to provide better facilities to the patients.

During this time, the people in the hospital were holding their breath. However, all the doctors and health workers were present and alert.

Thereafter she reached Kasturba Gandhi Residential Girls School. There she

instructed for health checkup of the girls from time to time. She said there would be no compromise with health. Work should be

will be taken against it. From next week onwards, all the hospitals and illegal pathology centres will be thoroughly inspected. If found

tion, Community Health Center Superintendent Dr. Rafiq Farooqi, Dr. Ziaul, Vaccine Manager Afzal, DMC UNICEF Ashi, Dr.



carried out as per the government's desire. She said if any hospital in the city is found running without standards, strict action

guilty, strict action is certain. She said special investigation will be conducted on hospitals without fire NOC. During the inspection,

Rakesh Kumar, Dr. RK Verma, Dr. Amit, Pharmacist Girish Chand Yadav Warden Ekta Neelam and other health workers were present.

Children learning the art of living in summer workshop

300 children taking training in 15-day summer camp at Jagat Taran Golden Jubilee

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj. Summer workshop Umang has started in Jagat Taran Golden Jubilee School located at Amar Nath Jha Marg Georgetown from 16 May. In which children are learning various arts of life.

The workshop is being organized in the school premises for the last three years. School Principal Sushmita Kanungo said that students are getting information about various arts in their school itself. Along with this, they are also learning technical nuances. Summer camp is be-

ing organized so that their creative talent can be developed. Principal Sushmita

the students and enhance them and develop them all-round. More than 300 stu-

with the zeal to learn something new. In which education of Yoga, Basketball, Martial Arts, Art and Craft, Mural Painting, Sewing, Embroidery, Video Making, Fireless Cooking, Baking, Animation, Robotics, Kathak, Bharatnatyam, etc. classical dance styles and western dance forms are being given by the school's own experienced teachers proficient in various arts and visiting artists. The 15-day Umang program will conclude on May 30 in the school premises.



Kanungo said that the main objective of the workshop is to identify the talent of

dents from class one to 12th are participating in the workshop with full dedication

State president of Aakanksha committee saw Shri Ramcharitmanas written by Tulsidas

Rajapur, Chitrakoot: State President of Uttar Pradesh Aakanksha Samiti, Rashmi Singh, along with other office bearers and members of the committee, visited Goswami Tulsidas' birthplace Rajapur last evening and saw Shri Ramcharitmanas written by him. She also participated in the aarti of Maa Kalindi.

Dr. Rashmi Singh, President of Uttar Pradesh Aakanksha Samiti who reached Rajapur, said that Tulsi's birthplace has a special significance because of its connection with a spiritual field. She also felt spirituality upon coming here. She said that her soul got peace after performing Maa Kalindi's Aarti and reading Shri Ramcharitmanas. She told that the state government has declared Chitrakoot district as an aspirational district, where the government is running a scheme to educate women, make them self-reliant, and strengthen their



economic condition through self-help groups. She said that under the women empowerment scheme, to empower women, cooperation of the male society is also needed.

Rajapur's sub-district magistrate Ram Rishi Raman said that Uttar Pradesh's Aakanksha committee's president Dr. Rashmi Singh along with other officers and members are doing transformative work in women em-

powerment and social sector. He said that she has also been honoured for her contribution in this field. During this, the sub-district magistrate along with other officers and public representatives presented her with a shawl, Shri Ramcharitmanas Granth and a statue of Goswami Tulsidas.

On this occasion, District Aspirations Committee Chairperson Tanusha TR, Tehsildar Bharat Pratap

Singh, Deputy Tehsildar Parul Singh Parihar, Municipal Council Executive Officer Balkrishna Gautam, Industry Trade Board City Unit Rajapur's Shiv Pujan Gupta, Satish Chandra Mishra, Subhash Chandra Agarwal, Councillor Shankar Dayal Jaiswal, Chaman Lal Raikwar, Rajesh Kesharwani, Sadar Accountant Pradeep Tiwari, Circle Officer Jaikaran Singh, Police Station Head Praveen Singh, etc. were present.

DM heard public problems

Chitrakoot: District Magistrate Shivsharanappa GN on Monday organized a public hearing in his chamber at the Collectorate and heard the problems of the complainants. He also directed the concerned officials for their resolution.

During the public hearing, the DM heard the problems of the complainants one by one and directed the concerned officials to resolve them in a quality manner as per the government's desire. He said that in case of land related problems, a joint team of police and revenue department should be sent to the spot for impartial resolution. He said that whatever problems are received during the public hearing, their quality resolution should be ensured and timely. Along with this, the person concerned should also get satisfaction from the resolution of the problem. On this occasion, Additional District Magistrate Rakesh Kumar Pathak along with the concerned officers and employees were present.

In district conference of CPI, Amit elected as Secretary and Sandeep as Assistant Secretary



Chitrakoot : The Communist Party of India organized a district conference program. In which the party officials decided to keep the previous executive intact and elected Amit Yadav as the district secretary, Sandeep Pandey as the assistant secretary and Rajendra Kumar as the treasurer.

In the program, CPI District Secretary Amit Yadav presented the political report and Joint Secretary Sandeep Pandey presented the organizational report. On

which all the representatives took part in the discussion and debate and decided to keep the previous executive intact.

In which Mr. Amit Yadav was elected District Secretary, Mr. Sandeep Pandey was elected Assistant Secretary and Mr. Rajendra Kumar was elected Treasurer. Along with this, a five-member Secretary Divisional Committee was also formed. During this, all the elected officials said that they will increase the party membership and run a public aware-

ness campaign in every village and will awaken the working class by bringing out the anti-people policies of the government and the lies of the BJP. On this occasion, Mr. Ram Prasad Singh, Mr. Mahendra Pratap, Mr. Chunku Vishwakarma, Mr. Ramkripal Pandey, Mr. Ramchandra Saras, Sandeep Pandey, Ravikaran, Sushil Singh, Rajendra Kumar, Randhir, Kamlesh, Rambaran, Manbhushan Pal, Shiv Mangal, Shrivnareish, Ramashankar etc. were present.

National singing competition to be held in Varanasi, golden opportunity for Surtarang singers

Varanasi: Sangam Kala Group searches for new talents from every corner of the country every year to find the rare musical talents hidden in the darkness of obscurity and provide them a proper platform. Sangam Kala Group has been organizing national level music singing competitions and award ceremonies in the memory of late Master Madan for the last 45 years. Like every year, this year too, the audition process is being organized by Sangam Kala Group in various districts of India under the 41st Surtarang National Music

Singing Competition.

In this endeavour, looking at the infinite possibilities of musical talents of Varanasi chapter, Sangam Kala Group New Delhi is going to organise Surtarang National Music Singing Competition in Varanasi district whose audition will begin on 25th May, Sunday at 10 AM at S.N Performing Arts Centre, Opposite Trimurti Hospital, Gilt Bazar, Varanasi and the regional final is likely to be held on 24th August at Sunbeam Women's College, Varuna, Varanasi from where the selected participants will be

sent to New Delhi for the All India Final Audition.

The regional head of the organization, Eastern UP, Krishna Patel told that the registration for this competition will be done on the day of audition. The contestants can get their forms from S.N Forming Art Center opposite Trimurti Hospital and also on the day of competition. The competition has been divided into three categories according to age. 6 to 12 years sub junior category, 13 to 18 years junior category and 19 to 30 years senior category. The selection of

songs for the competition has been divided into two categories. Film and non-



film category. In the film category, the songs will have to be selected from

Bollywood film songs and non-film bhajans, ghazals, folk and private music al-

bum songs. The contestants can apply their forms in film or non-film or both

categories. The contestants cannot select ragas in classical music. The registration fee for the participants for audition is Rs.100.

The entire competition will be held in 5 stages. Participants selected in the first stage of audition will be called for the regional finals, then the selected participants from there will be sent to New Delhi for the All India Quarter Finals where the remaining 3 stages of the competition will be completed. The organization's general secretary Sunaina Singh said that as far as Sangam Kala Group is con-

cerned, it is touching new heights every day, whether it is music, dance or drama. Sangam Kala Group goes to small villages of India and selects special talents and brings them on the television screen. This is a very sacred platform when people had not even thought that a singer can be given such a platform where the whole country can be proud. Late Master Madan left this world at the age of just 12, so that such talent does not get lost in the darkness of obscurity, this competition is organized every year in the memory of late

Master Madan. Through Sangam Kala Group, many famous singers such as Sonu Nigam, Shreya Ghoshal, Sunidhi Chauhan, Anand Raj Anand, Mohammad Tausif, Javed Ali, Harshit Saxena, Pinaz Masani, Jaswinder Narula, Rakesh Maini, Shriram, Ranjeet Rajwada, Vineet Saxena, Akriti Kakkar, etc., and countless other singers are mesmerizing people in India and abroad with their singing talent. During the press conference, Nikita Singh, Kanaveer Singh, M.L. Verma, Uday Shankar Maurya and others were present.

Dead body of youth found on the banks of Khaderi river in Prayagraj: Suspected of murder, forensic and dog squad team engaged in investigation

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: The body of a 20-year-old youth was found on the banks of the Khaderi river in Karolbagh area of Kareli police station in Prayagraj on Monday morning, causing a sensation in the area. As soon as the information was received, the Kareli police station took immediate action and cordoned off the entire area and informed the higher authorities.

The deceased has been identified as Puneet Prajapati, who was a resident of Alahpur police station area of Ambedkar Nagar district and was living in a rented house in Karela Bagh area of Kareli for some time.

With the promptness of the police, a team of field unit, dog squad and forensic experts reached the spot and the



process of evidence collection was started. In the initial investigation, the possibility of murder is being expressed, but the police is investigating all aspects in depth.

DCP City Zone Abhishek Bharti also inspected the spot and said that the body has been sent for post-mortem. The cause of death will be confirmed only after the post mortem report comes. He assured that the matter is being investigated closely

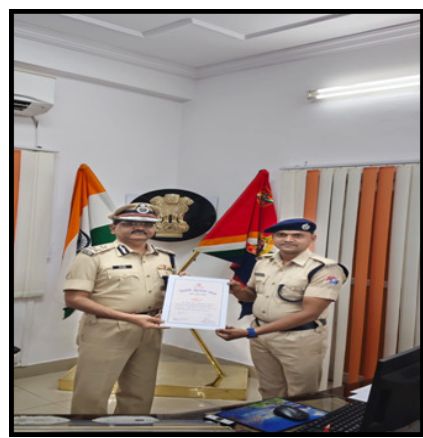
and the truth will be revealed soon. Meanwhile, the family members of the deceased have been informed and the police are trying to find out the clue with the help of CCTV footage. The team of Police Commissionerate Prayagraj is taking this sensitive matter seriously and is investigating it with full vigilance and transparency.

Railway Protection Force constables honored by IG RPF Prayagraj for their commendable work

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: On Monday, Inspector General Railway Protection Force Prayagraj, Shri Amiya Nandan Sinha honored 03 force members who did commendable work. On 18.04.2025, Constable Rahul Atri, Railway Protection Force Post, Agra Cantonment arrested 01 shrewd thief from Agra Cantonment Railway Station with gold/silver jewelry, who had stolen goods worth about Rs 10 lakh from passengers.

In another case, on 18.04.2025 itself, Constable Hemendra Singh, Railway Protection Force Post, Aligarh, rescued 01 passenger who fell between the platform and the train while trying to board the Aligarh Bareilly Passen-



ger train. Taking immediate action and not caring for his own life, he pulled the said passenger up and saved his life. IG RPF Prayagraj, Shri Amiya Nandan Sinha honored Shri Rahul Atri/ Constable/Agra Cantonment and Shri Hemendra Singh/Constable/ Railway Protection Force Post Aligarh for the above commendable work done by them by declaring them Employee of the Month for the month of April, 2025 by Railway Protection Force North Central Railway. Apart from this, Head Constable Kapil Dev Paswan of Railway Protection Force working at the head-

quarters was also rewarded with a letter of appreciation for the excellent work done by him in the year 2024-25.

High Court upheld Sambhal Jama Masjid survey: Muslim side's appeal rejected; Flag march in the city; SP said - the fight will not be fought on the road

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: Allahabad High Court refused to stay the survey of Jama Masjid of Sambhal, UP. The court rejected the civil revision petition of the mosque committee, in which a stay on the survey was demanded. Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal's bench gave this order on Monday.

The court said - whatever action has been taken in this matter till now is correct. We will not interfere in the court commissioner survey. The cases filed by the Hindu side are worth hearing. Court commission survey and filing of the case will continue as before. That is, the case of whether it is Jama Masjid or temple will also continue in the lower court (civil court) of Sambhal.

After the order of the High Court, the police conducted a flag march in

Sambhal city on Monday evening. SP Krishna Kumar Bishnoi said - Keeping in mind the court's decision, Sambhal police is patrolling on foot. Cyber space is also being monitored.

5 days later i.e. on November 24, the Advocate Commissioner and ASI team reached for the survey again. During this, violence broke out. 4 people died in this.

After the violence, the Intezamia Committee of the mosque filed a petition in the Supreme Court demanding a stay on the survey. The Supreme Court ordered the Allahabad High Court to hear the matter. Till then the Supreme Court had stopped the Sambhal Court from taking further action in this matter.

On 8 January 2025, the High Court gave an interim order and stayed the sur-

vey of the mosque. Along with this, a reply was sought from all the parties including the Intezamia Committee. After this the hearing started. After the debate was completed on May 13, the High Court had reserved its decision.

The High Court has now refused to stay the survey. Also, said that the case will continue. According to the expert, the High Court has considered the decision of the Sambhal Court's survey as correct. Also, orders have been given to take further action there.

Regarding the Jama Masjid of Sambhal, the Hindu side claims that it was earlier a Harihar temple, which Babar demolished in 1529 and built a mosque. Regarding this, a petition was filed in the Sambhal court on Novem-

ber 19, 2024. This petition was filed by Mahant Rishi Raj Giri Maharaj of Kailadevi temple located in Sambhal. On the same day i.e. on November 19, Civil Judge Senior Division Aditya Singh ordered a survey inside the mosque.

The court appointed Ramesh Singh Raghav as Advocate Commissioner. The team reached the mosque for the survey at 4 pm on the same day. Surveyed for 2 hours. However, the survey was not completed that day. After this, on November 24, the survey team reached Jama Masjid. The survey was being done inside the mosque. During this, a large number of people gathered. The crowd threw stones at the police team. After this violence broke out. 4 people died due to bullet injuries in this.

IIIT Allahabad Students Organize Rose Milk Distribution Drive

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: Students of the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Allahabad demonstrated their patriotism and community spirit by organizing an On-Road Rose Milk Distribution Drive in Jhalwa. The initiative aimed

Jashan Goyal, and others, who received support from faculty members like Prof. Pavan Chakraborty and Dr. Mandar Karyakarte. The initiative was encouraged by Prof. Shekhar Verma, Officiating Director of IIIT Allahabad.



to provide relief from the summer heat while celebrating the success of Operation Sindoor, a significant milestone in India's defense history.

The drive, held along the roadside adjoining the IIIT Allahabad campus, saw enthusiastic participation from students, faculty, staff, and passersby. Chilled rose milk was distributed as a tribute to the courage, unity, and sacrifice of the Indian Armed Forces.

The event was led by B.Tech 1st-year students, including Paras Bansal,

Prof. Pavan Chakraborty emphasized that the event was a way to thank the soldiers who safeguard the country's freedoms. He highlighted the importance of unity, service, and national pride, reflecting the spirit of "Make in India" and nation-building.

IIIT Allahabad commended the dedication of the student organizers and the support of the faculty, staff, and administration. The event was made possible with the blessings and encouragement of Director Prof. Mukul Sharad Sutane.

St. John Ambulance Brigade NCR launched a free drinking water service

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: The St. John Ambulance Brigade, North Central Railway (NCR) Prayagraj, has launched a free drinking water service for pedestrians and hospital visitors. The initiative aims to provide relief to people during the



scorching heat. The service was inaugurated by ambulance officers, including Uday Chand Maurya, Ratan Kumar, and Alok Kumar Verma. Four large pitchers of cold water, each with a 30-liter capacity, have been placed outside the Central Hospital and near the Emergency Department. The objective is to serve cold water selflessly to pedestrians, patients, and their attendants. The brigade also emphasized the importance of water conservation, appealing to people to use water judiciously and avoid wasting it. Thirty-five brigade members, including Om Prakash, Amit Kumar Maurya, and others, participated in the program. Retired officers like A.K. Arya, Pawan Kumar, and Satish Chandra also joined the initiative.

Student hanged herself in Koraon: Talked to someone on phone for half an hour before death, Secret will be revealed from call details

PRAYAGRAJ: A tragic incident has come to light in Pasna village of Koraon police station area in Meja, Prayagraj. Here 16-year-old student Madhu Singh committed suicide by hanging herself with a saree from a fan in her room. Madhu was an intermediate student and the only daughter of her family. The incident happened last night. In the morning, when the door of Madhu's room was found closed and there was no response on calling, the family reached the room from the back side. There Madhu was found hanging from the fan. The family immediately took her to CHC, where the doctors declared her dead. An important fact has come to light in the case. Madhu's father Veeresh Singh said that before the incident, Madhu had talked to a number for about half an hour. After the incident, more than a dozen missed calls also came from the same number. According to Koraon police station in-charge inspector Rakesh Kumar Verma, the police have sought the call details of Madhu's mobile. The matter is being investigated with the post-mortem report and call details.

Sanatan has won in Sambhal: Swami Shandilya Maharaj

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj. Today, sadhus and saints in Prayagraj have also welcomed the decision of Allahabad High Court regarding the survey of Sambhal Shahi Jama Masjid. Shringaverpur Dham's Peethadheeshwar Jagadguru Narayanacharya Swami Shandilya Ji Maharaj has described this decision of Allahabad High Court as a victory of Sanatan Dharma. He has said that Mughal invaders had



demolished many ancient and mythological temples in the country and built mosques. He has said that in Sambhal also, Harihar temple has been demolished and Jama Masjid has been built. He has said that the Muslim side is aware that the truth will come out after the survey. That is why the Muslim side is opposing the survey. Jagadguru Swami Shandilya Maharaj has said that if there is a survey of Shahi Jama Masjid by the order of the High Court, then Harihar temple will definitely be revived once again. He said that this is the right time to free the Harihar temple from Mughal invaders. Jagatguru Swami Shandilya Ji Maharaj has said that it is also mentioned in our religious scriptures that Lord Kalki will incarnate in Sambhal. Jagatguru Shandilya Ji Maharaj has said that the demand from the High Court and Supreme Court is that they should give a decision in this matter soon and Hindus should get justice.

Rashtriya Seva Yojana gave information about Defense Warrior program

Chitrakoot: On the instructions of the Sports and Youth Ministry of the Government of India, the National Service Scheme organized the Defense Warrior program at Jagadguru Rambhadracharya Divyang State University. In which the volunteers were informed about the program and their registration was done.

Program Officer SP Mishra said that in this program organized on the instructions of Sports and Youth Ministry, Government of India and National Service Scheme Directorate,

registration of volunteers and defense warriors is being done. In which more and more people have to register as defense warriors under My Bharat. The information of which was given to the volunteers and volunteers was also registered through mobile phone. Along with this, they were also made aware to be ready to serve the country. On this occasion, Dr. Anand Kumar, SP Mishra, Dr. Reena Pandey, Dr. Bhavia Mathur, Dr. Rama Soni, Omprakash, Jitendra Singh, Dr. Shant Kumar Chaturvedi etc. were present.

STF Arrests Notorious Highway Robber Gufran Khan in Prayagraj

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: The Special Task Force (STF) has apprehended Gufran Khan, a resident of Lilapur Handaur Pure Nahar village in Pratapgarh, for his involvement in highway robberies here on Monday. Gufran was wanted under the Gangster Act and had a reward of Rs 50,000 on his head. Gufran, along with his accomplices Nadeem, Brijesh Kumar, Shakeel, and Mahmood, targeted truck drivers on highways, kidnapping and robbing them of valuable goods. Police said that in December 2023, Gufran's gang kidnapped a truck driver near Tiwari Dhaba in Fatanpur, Pratapgarh, and stole Rs 25,000 and a truckload of cement sheets after feeding him

intoxicants. Similarly, in February 2024, the gang kidnapped a driver sleeping in a 14-wheeler container near NTPC Bara, took him 7 kilometers away, beat him, and looted the container.

Gufran had fled to Mumbai to evade arrest but was caught by the STF when he returned home. Inspector Vinay Tiwari's team, led by Sub Inspector Jai Prakash Rai, surrounded and apprehended him. According to STF Deputy SP Shailesh Pratap Singh, Gufran faces six registered cases. The STF's swift action has brought relief to highway travelers and truck drivers in the region, showcasing the team's commitment to maintaining law and order.

Meeting with Divisional Railway Users Consultative Committee of Prayagraj Division held

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

PRAYAGRAJ: Today, a meeting of the officers of Prayagraj Division with the Divisional Railway Users Consultative Committee was held in the Sankalp Auditorium of Prayagraj Division Office. The chairman of this meeting was Divisional Railway Manager / Prayagraj, Shri Rajneesh Aggarwal. Additional Divisional Railway Manager / General, Shri Sanjay Singh and Senior Divisional Commercial Manager / Coaching, Shri Himanshu Shukla and other senior officers were present in this meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting, Divisional Railway Manager / General, Shri Sanjay Singh and Senior Divisional Engineer/Coordination, Shri Sitaram Prajapati welcomed all the members by giving them planners. The Divisional Railway Users Consultative Committee, a representative of the Railway Administration and users, holds meet-

ings with the Railway Administration from time to time to take measures to improve the service provided by the Railways to the rail users. Addressing the members of the Rail Users Consultative Committee, Divisional Railway Manager, Prayagraj Division, Shri Rajneesh Aggarwal said that you exchange the problems and suggestions of the public and rail users, which helps us in improving our facilities and also helps in doing development works according to the needs of the general public. Passenger services and facilities are improving in Prayagraj Division due to the suggestions of the members of the Divisional Rail Users Consultative Committee. Prayagraj Division is grateful to all of you for the positive changes taking place in the railway system due to your suggestions.

On this occasion, Senior Divisional Commercial



Manager/Coaching, Shri Himanshu Shukla, through PPT, informed all the members present in the meeting about the achievements of the Division and the facilities and action plan being provided to the passengers by the Division. Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/Coaching informed that Prayagraj Division is providing railway services in 21 districts through 20 passenger reservation centers, 27 UTS cum PRS and 123 UTS. More than 2 lakh passengers are being served daily from Prayagraj Division. The average passenger income of Prayagraj

is about Rs 5 crore per day. During the mail period, more than 13000 regular and special trains were operated by Indian Railways.

Passenger services are being continuously upgraded in Prayagraj Division and every possible effort is also being made to increase the income earned. Construction work of Amrit Bharat stations is in progress in Prayagraj Division.

The members of the Rail Users Consultative Committee discussed in depth many topics like stoppage of trains at various stations, change in timings of trains,

foot over bridge, road under bridge, cleanliness in trains, availability and price of food items, tickets at concessional rates for senior citizens, coach display system, extension in distance and frequency of trains, providing additional security force in trains, arrangement of entry-exit from the other side at Etawah station, making parcel services simple and easy, suggestions for running new trains.

Divisional Railway Manager/ Prayagraj, Shri Rajneesh Aggarwal assured the members of Divisional Railway Users Consultative Committee that the issues raised by them would be resolved soon. Divisional Railway Manager, Additional Divisional Railway Manager and Senior Divisional Commercial Manager thanked all for making railways aware of public issues.

Santosh Kumar from Chitrakoot, Shri Rajpal

Lodhi from Bulandshahr, Shri Aditya Singh Rathore from Farrukhabad, Shri Sanjay Pandit and Shri Ramgopal Dixit from Aligarh, Shri Hanuman Prasad Garg from Firozabad, Shri Jitendra Kumar Pandey from Kanpur Nagar, Shri Vijay Pandey from Kanpur, Shri Pradeep Garg from Fatehpur, Shri Shiv Shankar Kesharwani, Shri Ajay Kumar Sinha, Smt. Anita Jaiswal, Shri Tribhuvan Nath Patel and Shri Pramod Kumar Bansal from Prayagraj were present in the meeting. On this occasion, one member is nominated by all the members present for Zonal Railway Users Consultative Committee, North Central Railway. In this sequence, in the selection process done through lottery, Shri Santosh Kumar from Chitrakoot was nominated.

Branch officers and inspectors of Prayagraj division were also present in this meeting.

Editorial

Xi Jinping's Europe tour: A visit that raises eyebrows

On his first visit to Europe post-pandemic, Xi Jinping met French President Emmanuel Macron. Xi lauded China's ties with France as a "model for the international community amid threats of a trade war over Chinese electric cars and French cognac". Xi Jinping's tour through Europe, analysts point out, highlighted China's audacious strategy to exploit the fissures within Europe amid great power contestation. Among many other developments, the armed forces of China and France announced the setting up of a new inter-theatre cooperation and dialogue mechanism. This collaboration between the two militaries' naval and air forces is aimed at further deepening mutual trust and cooperation and jointly safeguarding regional security and stability.

Such a move towards forging closer Sino-French military ties, especially amid Beijing's assertive manoeuvres in the Indo-Pacific and the South China Sea, begs the question: Can Europe, and particularly France, remain a reliable ally, or will it become more accommodating of China's controversial actions in its neighbourhood? Countries like India are watching closely, concerned about France and Europe in the future and potentially succumbing to China's diplomatic and economic enticements. China claims to be "not at the origin of the Russian-Ukraine crisis, nor a party to it, nor a participant", and thus legitimises its silence. Can we anticipate a similar approach by Europe on issues concerning Taiwan and the Philippines? In the past few years, France's relationship with China has been marked by a mixture of scepticism and strategic engagement, reflecting broader geopolitical objectives and national interests. In the recent past, France has been quite critical of China, viewing it as a 'strategic threat'. The 2021 update to France's 2017 Defence and National Security Strategic Review painted China as a 'systemic rival', 'economic competitor', and 'sometimes an important diplomatic partner'. Even as Paris sought engagement with Beijing in 2019, substantial tensions clearly existed. During Xi Jinping's previous European tour, President Macron rallied a united European front to challenge Beijing on critical European issues like unfair trade practices, restricted market access for European companies, opaque financing under the BRI, and human rights abuses in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Recent events and official statements have further underscored this stance. A parliamentary report on foreign interference in France, requested by Marine Le Pen's far-right party, highlighted China's "aggressive and increasingly malicious methods". Labelling China as the "second most serious threat to France after Russia", the report echoed sentiments from Bernard Emié, Director of French External Intelligence (DGSE), who described China as an 'aggressive power' with 'unbridled diplomacy'. Furthermore, the issue of France selling arms to Taiwan resurfaced during the pandemic when Taiwan announced plans to buy defence equipment from France to upgrade missile systems on French warships purchased in 1991 and 1992. Beijing expressed 'serious concern' and urged Paris to avoid actions that could strain Sino-French ties. Following Chinese air intrusions into Taiwan's air defence zone, a French delegation led by former defence minister Alain Richard visited Taipei to meet with President Tsai Ing-wen. This visit was seen as a powerful symbol of France's commitment to opposing China's unilateral aggression.

and supporting peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific.



Iran-Israel had nearly come to a confrontation

Mahesh Singh

The rough weather in north-west Iran took the lives of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Sunday (May 19), along with seven others, in a helicopter crash while returning after inaugurating a dam in East Azerbaijan with his Azerbaijani counterpart, Ilham Heydar oghlu Aliyev. The two Presidents looked happy and comfortable despite some intra-regional competition, especially in the wake of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The death of President Raisi, along with his foreign minister, has indeed caused a vacuum on key developments and initiatives, especially at this time when the region is going through a highly volatile war in Gaza, which threatens to expand beyond. In March and April, Iran and Israel had nearly come to a direct confrontation that could be avoided due to pragmatism and intervention by the US and others in the region. Limited strikes saved the face for both. President Raisi, despite his conservative approaches domestically, tried to be pragmatic even as, under his watch, Iran continued on its path to increase the enrichment of uranium to keep the pressure on the West and pursued the quest to acquire parity with Israel in the nuclear domain. Perhaps the biggest credit could go to him for the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement, along with working for



a regional modus vivendi with the Arab world. His Act East policy also brought about closer relations with India and China while they worked to closely enrich ties with Russia. At the same time, in the wake of Abraham Accords and the further potential normalisation of ties between key Arab countries and Israel, Tehran emerged as a major protagonist of the Palestinian cause, given its hold on Hamas in Gaza. However, the mutually assured destruction (MAD) syndrome between Tehran and Tel Aviv continues apace and could threaten stability in West Asia. Raisi successfully secured the release of \$6 billion in exchange for some US prisoners and even restrained Shia Iraqi militias from attacking US military assets. Although Iran has been able to blunt the impact of the severest sanctions to a considerable extent, it may have been

severely compromised in the area of spare parts and technology. The fact that the President was riding in a 15-year-old helicopter not only questions the choices of the pilot or the leadership in such a weather but also confirms the existence of restrictions on imports of spare parts that may have been imposed due to sanctions. What really caused the crash will only be confirmed by detailed investigations of the wreckage and Black Box. The untimely death of President Raisi has also caused a leadership vacuum, as he was mostly slated to succeed the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamanei, who is 85 and is said to be ailing. But as was witnessed in the wake of the helicopter crash, Khamanei immediately took hold of the situation, assuring the country that there would be no governance crisis. As such, he decides in the end, and the armed forces, security,

and intelligence outfits, as well as the Revolutionary Guards (IRGC), look up to him for instructions. He also did not want to convey to his detractors, both internally and externally, that they could exploit the crisis and the transition. As for the succession issue, although the demise of Raisi has caused a vacuum, the argument for Mojtaba succeeding his father, Ayatollah Khamanei, would become more eloquent and vociferous even though the Supreme Leader personally appears not to be in favour of dynastic rule, as quoted by many insiders, for he would not like to be accused of nepotism. One more name that is being propounded to us is that of white-turbaned Ali Reza Araf, whom the black-turbaned Supreme Leader called an original intellectual and prudent jurist. One would have to see if the colour of the turbans would matter at all. He is a member of the Assembly and was also appointed to the Guardian Council. His name has been circulating for quite some time. In any case, the presidium of an assembly of experts will identify the next leader in due course. But the 'Supreme Leader' will also have to be accepted by the masses since Iran is facing significant domestic discontent as well as huge external challenges, especially from the West and Israel. Of course, losing the President and foreign minister, especially at such a difficult time,

is a challenge in itself for any country, but the real power lies with the Supreme Leader, who is au fait with his authority and capacity to guide the Iranians. As per Article 131(1) of the Iranian constitution in the event of the president's demise or incapacitation, the first vice president will take over with the approval of the Supreme Leader (de facto), and fresh elections will have to be conducted within fifty days. It reads, "In case of death, dismissal, resignation, absence, or illness lasting longer than two months of the President, his first deputy shall assume the powers and functions of the President with the approval of the Leader." Accordingly, Vice President Mohammed Mokhber has taken over the reins to conduct day-to-day affairs and organise elections with the head of judiciary and speaker of the Iranian parliament. Whether Mokhber will be de jure promoted remains to be seen. Whether the next president will be among the known contenders for the highest post in the country is anyone's guess. Meanwhile, messages of support and condolences have been pouring in. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on learning about the hard landing of the presidential helicopter yesterday, expressed India's solidarity with Iran in this hour of their crisis in a tweet. PM Modi last met President Raisi in 2023 at the Johannesburg Summit, when India supported Iran's entry.

Roam around Riyadh, the capital, and you see it buzzing

Suman

Roam around Riyadh, the capital, and you see it buzzing with young and aspirational Saudis making the most of the newfound freedoms and opportunities. According to the 2022 census, 63% of Saudis are under the age of 30. And the regime's policy changes are guided with this key statistic in mind. The biggest beneficiaries of the new openness are the Saudi women, who never had it so good. The Kingdom's inclusive Vision 2030 aims to diversify and strengthen the nation's economy. According to a World Bank report, Saudi Arabia is now ranked at the top in terms of economic and social progress for women out of 190 economies. The country's women are now

truly in the driver's seat. The lifting of restrictions on their movement and choices has meant that Saudi women are steering the social, cultural and economic transformation of their country. Till a few years ago, they had to look to their fathers, husbands and brothers for even the basics like permission to travel or work. With Vision 2030, female workforce participation has gone up to nearly 40% now compared to about 15% a few years ago. This progress is evident in the increasing number of women receiving advanced degrees, enrolling in STEM fields, and owning 40% of small and medium-sized startups. Right from the moment you land in Riyadh, you see women taking up key

jobs. From immigration counters to shopping malls to government offices, Saudi women are everywhere. I saw women making presentations at key government events, doing camera work, running stalls at local markets. The presence of women in the workforce has also meant increased intermingling of genders and rewriting of many social norms and gender behaviours. A big focus of Vision 2030 is also the cultural and social integration of all those living and working in Saudi Arabia. The Media Ministry's Global Harmony project is aimed at enhancing understanding and collaborations between diverse groups that call Saudi home. According to the Saudi Deputy Minister of Media,

The emergence of new-era 'Leviathans'

Rashi Singh

In China, the fear of chaos that can come from within and from without is a central rationale that legitimises Xi Jinping's power grab. Image: REUTERS Thomas Hobbes' seminal work, Leviathan, published in 1651, posits the necessity of a powerful, centralised authority to prevent societal chaos and ensure peace and security. Hobbes had a way with words; he famously said that without an all-powerful state, whom he calls the Leviathan, life would be nasty, brutish, and short. Those powerful words have a global resonance today, giving the state across the world a free run. We saw it in Washington when more than \$3 trillion was printed in monetary easing. In Paris, monetary welfare spending is out of hand, and the Leviathan dares not withdraw the free fund, for that itself causes riots and chaos. In China, state capitalism is running wild, and in India, the state subsidies everything from fertiliser and maternity care to free food to the tune of \$10 billion a year. Everywhere, a man who wrote 350 years ago rules. In our turbulent world, Hobbes' premise of avoiding chaos is so powerful that both autocracies and democracies are utilising it to empower the state further. It is not as if he has not been proved right. In fact, rarely in contemporary history has Hobbes gone wrong. In Iraq, Libya, and Egypt, when the Leviathan was toppled, it created chaos beyond imagination,

only to be replaced by the iron fist of the state. In China, the fear of chaos that can come from within and from without is a central rationale that legitimises Xi Jinping's power grab. Indeed, it's replacing the promise of prosperity as the basis of the communist party's hold over China. The fact that the Federal Reserve's policy of quantitative easing following the 2008 financial crisis and the purchase of government securities to increase the money supply were unquestioned exemplifies Hobbes' idea of the sovereign exercising control to prevent economic disorder and maintain stability. That, in the bastion of capitalism, it did not raise concerns about the erosion of financial autonomy and the distortion of free markets underlines the astonishing relevance of Hobbes. France's robust welfare state epitomises Hobbes' notion of the sovereign's responsibility to ensure the well-being of its citizens. The French government maintains an extensive social safety net, including comprehensive healthcare, unemployment benefits, and retirement pensions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, France's welfare spending surged as the government implemented measures to protect jobs and support incomes. However, this extensive welfare system can be critiqued for fostering dependency and reducing individual responsibility. The welfare-to-GDP ratio in 2023 was an astonishing 36 per cent. This is clearly unsustainable, but every time France has tried to

pull back the Leviathan or cut back welfare, there have been dramatic riots. Once you create the Leviathan, clearly, there is no way back. In 2020, the French government introduced the 'Solidarity Fund', providing financial aid to businesses affected by the pandemic, and expanded unemployment benefits to cover those furloughed under the 'partial activity' scheme. These interventions, amounting to over €100 billion in expansive welfare spending, can lead to high taxation, which burdens individuals and businesses, and totally stifles entrepreneurial spirit and innovation. Additionally, the extensive welfare system creates a culture of dependency, reducing the incentive for personal initiative and self-reliance. France and its Leviathan are in a doom loop. China's model of state capitalism illustrates Hobbes' concept of the sovereign's expansive control over economic life. The Chinese government exercises significant influence over the economy through state-owned enterprises (SOEs), which dominate key industries such as energy, telecommunications, and finance. While this control allows the state to direct economic development and maintain social order, it also restricts economic freedom and individual rights. The role of SOEs in China's economic strategy is particularly evident in the "Made in China 2025" initiative, aimed at transforming China into a global leader in high-tech industries.

Punjab to Andhra to Telangana—state govts' spending on freebies harming

Samay Sharma

Every vote is important, and, therefore, political parties are trying to woo every section of society. Earlier, political parties used to make announcements about their proposed policies in their election manifestos. But for the last one and a half to two decades, they have started making announcements for free schemes to woo voters. It's beyond doubt that providing free electricity, water, or travel to everyone could ruin government budgets and increase debt too. Today, there is an ongoing competition between political parties about freebies, and in an effort to woo voters and gain power by hook or by

crook, many Indian states are already getting burdened with debt. As a result, on the one hand, they are failing to fulfil their promises completely, and on the other, the development work and essential government activities in those states are getting affected. During the 2022 assembly election in Punjab, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) made many promises, including free electricity. After the formation of the AAP government, some of these were implemented, but today, the situation is such that the debt burden on the government is continuously increasing and the state is trying to take more loans. The central government is also being accused of not giving money to

the state, whereas the reality is that the state government is irresponsibly spending on freebies to garner votes. The situation is the same in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand. Meanwhile, the central government is not in favour of states taking more loans because it is against the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act 2003. The states in debt due to expenditure on freebie schemes are unable to spend on the necessary responsibilities. Industries in Punjab are incurring high electricity bills because the AAP government is giving free electricity to nearly 60 lakh people. Infrastructure development in

the state is getting badly affected too. Punjab, once the state with the highest per capita income in the country, has slipped to the 19th position. Other debt-ridden states are suffering a similar fate. In its 2024 election manifesto, Congress has announced Rs 1 lakh as an unconditional cash transfer to the poor every year as part of its Mahalaxmi Scheme. If the party comes to power, the implementation of such a scheme can be frightening. It's notable that as of 31 March 2023, the total debt on the governments (central and state) in India (including the guarantees given by them) was Rs 231.7 lakh crores, which was 85.1 per cent of GDP.

80 German institutions visit India to improve Education Collaboration

Delhi: The German academic exchange program, announced that India is hosting more than 80 German universities and research organizations to strengthen academic and scientific collaborations. The APAIE Conference 2025, the Indo-German Forum on Research, Innovation, and Transfer in New Delhi, high-level visits to Indian universities, and the opening of the German School of Technology at PSG College of Technology in Coimbatore are major events. The 65th anniversary in India and 100th year of promoting international academic partnership are also celebrated. Indo-German science and education cooperation is a cornerstone of our relations. In the press release, German Ambassador to India and Bhutan Dr. Philipp Ackermann said he was pleased to see this exchange increase year after year. Nearly



50,000 Indian students study in Germany, the greatest group of any country, according to Ackermann. The 16–22 March Higher Education Policy Information tour will bring together 20 heads of top German universities and academic leaders in Hyderabad and New Delhi. This visit seeks academic and institutional interactions. Also in Coimbatore, delegates from German Universities of Applied Sciences will inaugurate the German School of Technology. Both nations' higher education and research institutes will send 250 representatives to the Indo-German Forum on Research.

Telangana govt resolute in raising reservation

HYDERABAD: Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao announced on Monday that the Congress government is determined to increase reservation for backward classes in education, employment, and political representation from 23% to 42%. In a post on the social media platform 'X,' he highlighted that the population of backward classes in the state stands at 56.36%, based on the recent caste survey conducted in Telangana.

Physics Wallah raises 4,600 cr with a confidential IPO

Delhi: Physics Wallah (PW), a domestic edtech business, sent its draft red herring prospectus DRHP to SEBI confidentially in a new primary market development. This is the ninth business to list its shares on public exchanges via secret pre-filing, after Tata Play, Oyo, Swiggy, Vishal Mega Mart, Credila Financial Services, and Indira IVF. The creator and CEO Alakh Pandey-led edtech unicorn hopes to raise 4,600 crore through an IPO that will blend new equity shares and an OFS by current shareholders. The newest tracxn data values it at \$3.7 billion. PW secured \$210 million



in Series B fundraising in September 2024 from Hornbill Capital, Lightspeed Venture Partners, GSV Ventures, and WestBridge Capital at a valuation of \$2.8 billion. It raised \$312 million in two stages, starting with \$102 million in June 2022. WestBridge Capital, Hornbill Capital, and Lightspeed Venture Partners are among 8 institutional Physics

investors. WestBridge Capital is Physics Wallah's largest institutional investor. Tracxn shows Rajat Pandey is Physics Wallah's single Angel Investor. According to the latest shareholding pattern, Physics Wallah founders Alakh Pandey and Prateek Maheshwari own 77.40%, funds own 20.47%, and ESOP pool is 8.60%.

NTA returns to pre-Covid NEET UG format

Delhi: To do well on the NEET UG 2025 exam, candidates must answer 180 questions in 180 minutes. The NTA has reverted to its pre-Covid exam design, which is expected to increase competition in the May 2025 exam. As per the modified pattern, section B which consisted of optional questions have been removed which has

decreased the exam time from 200 minutes to 180 minutes. The NTA declaration made candidates and experts anxious, as it may reduce the overall competition. Health Ministry officials say question paper difficulty will determine competition levels. The NTA cut the extra 20 minutes and optional questions to restore reg-

ularity in the exam schedule. Because the pandemic is finished, candidates must return to the original exam format. The adjustment isn't frightening as the syllabus is unchanged. Additionally, we need to enhance our time management abilities to complete the exam within 180 minutes. , which is already chal-

61.6% of Indian schools provide 3-language clubs. TN and Arunachal are lowest, Gujarat and Punjab lead

Delhi: The Union Education Ministry presented data in Parliament showing that 61.6 percent of Indian schools offer three languages to 74.7 percent of students, despite the ongoing dispute between Tamil Nadu and the Centre over the three-language formula. The research shows that Gujarat and Punjab have the most three-language schools, while Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Tamil Nadu have the fewest. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Lok Sabha member Kanimozhi Karunanidhi of Tamil Nadu requested a state-by-state breakdown of the three-language formula languages and the number of students studying each language. DMK-led



Tamil Nadu has fought the Centre over the three-language formula in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, calling it "Hindi imposition". This method requires pupils to learn three languages, at least two of which are Indian, up to Class 8 or 10, preferably Class 10. After presenting the data, Union Minister of State in the

Ministry of Education Jayant Chaudhary wrote. Demand from students is pushing private schools to offer foreign languages as a third option. The Ministry reports that 906,225 (61.6%) of 1,471,891 Indian schools offer the three-language strategy. Compared to 149,065 schools (10.1%)/ , 416,601 schools (28.3%)

Irish education minister invites Indians for education, research

NEW DELHI: James Lawless, Ireland's Education Minister, on Monday said his country is "very welcoming" for students and has a supportive post-study employment visa arrangement. "Ireland is a very welcoming country. We have a very cosmopolitan culture. We have many nationalities now in Ireland, and many people have made their home, including many, many Indians," the Irish minister said, when asked whether his government is considering any changes in post-study work or immigration policies to retain skilled talents.

Delhi: A day after the Supreme Court banned domicile-based reservation in specialized and higher education including PG medical courses, MK Stalin's Tamil Nadu government declared it would file a review petition to vindicate its rights and uphold social justice. Health minister Ma Subramanian said the SC order would affect the state's 69% reservation and quotas for in-service applicants in government medical colleges and minorities in self-financing medical colleges. He

Rajasthan's school mergers endanger first-gen students, especially girls.

Delhi: With three decrees in January, the Bhajan Lal Sharma-led BJP administration in Rajasthan set into motion the merging of 449 schools with larger, better-performing schools in their neighborhood. The government claimed low enrollment (fewer than 15 kids per the Rajasthan government policy), distinct schools on the same campus, and schools near to each other as explanations. The idea has generated protests statewide, with parents strongly opposing it, since it threatens to compel youngsters, primarily girls and those from impoverished families, to drop out. The merging of all-girls institutions into co-ed institutes is a critical issue, as seen in last week's rallies in Jodhpur and Bikaner. Many parents worry this shift could endanger their daughters' safety and education. Other issues are the rise in home-to-school distance for many pupils and changes in school medium and culture. Ex-CM Ashok Gehlot and parents have opposed the move. BJP MLA Jethanand Vyas of Bikaner West asked Education Minister Madan Dilawar for an exemption for his district's girls' school. Over 1,400 pupils will fit into 20 classes post-merger. The girls worry that if the merger happens, their parents would stop them from going to school, ruining their dreams. No other all-girls government school exists. I don't know if I can finish school. I just want to study and go to college."How will we handle a shift?" "I don't know if I can keep studying," she remarked. District education officials know of the issues but said, "No schools are closing; they're merging with better-performing ones." "This move expands educational options for boys and girls, allowing for a broader range of streams." We'll keep girls in school. Modi claimed schools have been told to do this. Rajasthan has 70,233 state schools. 32,598 are primary schools. School consolidation isn't just in Rajasthan. In Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Odisha, smaller, low-enrollment institutions are merging with larger ones.

TN should appeal SC ruling on domicile quota



gave government doctors a quota for super specialty courses after a court battle," he told reporters. He stated the Centre takes seats unfilled due to a lack of candidates. He said states invest fully in PG and super specialty medical education but share 50% of all-India quota seats. "Now, the judgment deprives us of all seats," Subramanian told reporters. According to him, the verdict will have a major impact on 2025-26 admissions but not 2024. "All super specialty seats were lost. "TN

gave government doctors a quota for super specialty courses after a court battle," he told reporters. He stated the Centre takes seats unfilled due to a lack of candidates. He said states invest fully in PG and super specialty medical education but share 50% of all-India quota seats. "Now, the judgment deprives us of all seats," Subramanian told reporters. According to him, the verdict will have a major impact on 2025-26 admissions but not 2024. "All super specialty seats were lost. "TN

The House panel says Centre withholding funding for states not implementing PM

Delhi: A parliamentary panel report tabled called withholding funds over non-adoption of the flagship PM Schools for Rising India (PM-SHRI) scheme "unjustifiable" and recommended that Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal receive pending funds immediately.



Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal have declined to sign an MoU with the Centre to implement the PM-SHRI project, which intends to modernize 14,500 schools and make them NEP 2020 model institutions. The Centre withheld funds from these states under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan scheme (SSA), a flagship Indian government initiative to ensure universal elementary education (UEE) for children aged 6 to 14,

making free and compulsory education a fundamental right. In its 2025-26 demand for grants report for the Department of School Education & Literacy, chaired by Congress Rajya Sabha member Digvijaya Singh, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth, and Sports expressed serious concern over the non-release of SSA funds to states that have not signed MoUs for PM SHRI implementation. The audit states that West Bengal, Kerala,

Hospital visits decreased, learning metrics improved. Meal program passes test

Delhi: The State Planning Commission SPC found that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's breakfast policy had improved health and education in government schools. which shows that hospital visits among government primary school pupils reduced by 68.4% in rural areas and 29.4% in urban areas throughout this period, illustrating the program's impact on nutritionally challenged regions. In addition to health metrics, the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission reported to Stalin on 13 March that the plan has increased student involvement in class. Nearly 5,300 urban and rural children showed improvements in attention and comprehension. Students' attention without urging grew from 85.8



"The ability to learn new content increased from 88.1 percent to 92.5 percent, while lesson recall increased from 71.4 percent to 77 percent. Nearly 5,300 urban and rural children showed improvements in attention and comprehension. Students' attention without urging grew from 85.8 percent to 93.7 percent"

percent to 93.7 percent, and their ability to follow teachers' instructions increased from 91.3 percent to 95.5 percent. Students are also completing more written work, rising from 89.6% to 95.4%. The ability to learn new content increased from 88.1 percent to 92.5 percent, while lesson recall increased from 71.4 percent to

77 percent. Nearly 5,300 urban and rural children showed improvements in attention and comprehension. Students' attention without urging grew from 85.8 percent to 93.7 percent, and their ability to follow teachers' instructions increased from 91.3 percent to 95.5 percent. Students are also completing more written work.

Government wants to cut 6% of online ad tax, so US giants may benefit

Delhi: Go recommends eliminating the 6% equalisation fee or digital tax on online ads in April, benefiting Google and Meta advertisers. The adjustments recommended by FM Nirmala Sitharaman come as India and the US work to strengthen relations. Last year, the government eliminated the 2% e-commerce equalisation charge. The US criticized the 2% levy, but the government is trying to appear more accommodative in anticipation of more tariff retaliation, and removing the 6% equalisation levy on online advertising is a step in that direction "Amit Maheshwari, tax partner at AKM Global. Sumit Singhania of Deloitte India said the action supports legal simplification. "From an international tax policy perspective, most of the unilateral measures taken by governments around the world in recent years to deal with tax challenges of digitalization of economies must be gradually wound back to make way for OECD's two-pillar tax rules. Given the setting before the equalisation levy, this would be a progressive policy measure to give taxpayers more assurance "said. Government has also suggested tax cuts for offshore fund investments and sought Parliamentary approval for tax assessments under search and seizure rules and I-T return reconciliation. "The key change is replacing 'total revenue' with 'total undeclared income'.

Gold hits new record on Mideast tension as traders

Gold soared to a record high of \$2,696.78 amid Middle East tensions and favorable US economic data, reinforcing bets on Federal Reserve interest rate cuts. Investors are turning to gold for safety due to geopolitical uncertainties and mixed economic indicators. With an impending US election, gold's upward trend is likely to continue regardless of the outcome. Gold climbed to a fresh record amid ongoing tensions in the Middle East as traders also weighed US data that kept alive bets on the Federal Reserve's interest-rate cuts. Bullion touched an all-time high of \$2,696.78 as Israel said it killed Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, the architect of the Palestinian group's attack on southern Israel that triggered a year-long war in Gaza. Investors typically seek safety in the precious metal in times of geopolitical and economic uncertainty. Data showed US retail



sales strengthened in September by more than forecast in a broad advance. US jobless claims unexpectedly fell after jumping the previous week in Southeastern states affected by Hurricane Helene, according to the latest US Labor Department report. The US economic readings added to a slew of mixed US economic readings recently, reinforcing gold traders' expectations that the Fed will continue its rate-cutting path for the rest of the year. Gold is 1.4% higher this week, with investors repositioning portfolios ahead of the US election on November 5. With both candidates posing different risks to the economy.

ICT Working Group Meeting Focuses on H-1B Visa, Data Flows

Indian IT companies in the US have used less H-1B visas in recent years. Indian IT companies no longer rely on H-1B visas and worry about visa cost increases affecting their profitability. A few years before 2015, numerous large Indian IT companies were top 10 H-1B visa beneficiaries. Since then, these numbers have plummeted. Big Indian IT businesses, except Infosys, have lost 40%+ of their market share.

Combining Club Vistara and Air India Flying Returns to "Maharaja Club"

Delhi: Air India Flying Returns and Club Vistara will unite on November 12, 2024. CV Points, Tier Points, Tier Status, and Vouchers will be sent to the connected Flying Returns account. Flying Returns will become the Maharaja Club after this merger. Member Club Vistara account profiles will be frozen on October 15, 2024, for a smooth handover.

Profile details in Club Vistara accounts cannot be changed after this date. CV Points expiring in September and October 2024 will be extended. At migration, all CV Points, including 'Extended CV Points,' will be transferred to Flying Returns accounts and valid for at least one year, regardless of expiration date. Air India's expanded network will accept points. Member-issued or auto-generated "On-demand Voucher Generation" complimentary ticket vouchers valid after November 11, 2024, will be extended for three months.

If not issued before



November 11, 2024, "On-demand Voucher Generation" vouchers will be automatically supplied to the Flying Returns account with a nine-month fixed validity. You can Buy CV Points and Extend Voucher Validity till October 25, 2024. These features will be removed from Club Vistara accounts after this date.

indicating a broad industry shift toward AI-driven solutions, the company said in a note. The demand for AI-related roles will increase 17% in the current fiscal and about 25 per cent in FY26, Neeti Sharma, chief executive of TeamLease Digital, told. This includes roles such as data scientist, analyst and engineer.

AI adoption to boost data, cloud role hiring

CHENNAI

As companies navigate AI adoption, demand and salary growth for data science, data engineering, DevOps and cloud computing roles are expected to grow faster than other technology roles in FY25 compared to the previous fiscal, according to TeamLease Digital. The tech staffing and solu-

tions providers' snapshot analysis shows that a rise in AI, machine learning (ML), and automation skills has significantly increased the demand for data-related roles. While 69% of job postings for data scientists mentioned ML skills in FY24, demand for natural language processing jumped from 5% in 2024 to 19% in 2025,

indicating a broad industry shift toward AI-driven solutions, the company said in a note. The demand for AI-related roles will increase 17% in the current fiscal and about 25 per cent in FY26, Neeti Sharma, chief executive of TeamLease Digital, told. This includes roles such as data scientist, analyst and engineer.

Billionaire Adar to pick 50% stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Productions for Rs 1,000 crore

Adar Poonawalla is acquiring a 50% stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Production and Dharmatic Entertainment for Rs 1,000 crore, valuing the company at Rs 2000 crore, according to a report. Johar retains creative control, bolstered by financial resources to adapt to evolving market preferences. Poonawalla is making this investment privately through Serene Productions. Johar will retain the remaining stake. Adar Poonawalla, the billionaire CEO of the Serum Institute of India, is acquiring a 50% stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Production and Dharmatic Entertainment for Rs 1,000 crore. This investment values



the film and television production and distribution company at Rs 2000 crore, people familiar with the matter told ET. The move further highlights the ongoing consolidation trend in the entertainment industry. Dharma Productions, a prominent Bollywood production house, has been actively seeking investments and has engaged in discussions with several

large conglomerates and industrialists. The company has explored potential partnerships with Sanjiv Goenka's Saregama, with whom they already have business ties, as well as Reliance Industries and Jio Cinema. According to the financial daily's report, Poonawalla is making this investment privately through Serene Productions. Johar will retain the remaining stake and continue as the Executive Chairman and creative head of Dharma, while Apoorva Mehta will remain the Chief Executive Officer. Currently, Karan Johar owns 90.7% of Dharma, and his mother, Hiroo, holds 9.24%.

NEW DELHI: Shares of One97 Communications Ltd, the parent company of the Paytm brand, staged a recovery on Tuesday morning following a three-day decline. The stock surged by 7.79% to Rs 472.50 on the BSE, despite initially trading weakly. Similarly, on the NSE, it climbed by 7.99% to reach Rs 473.55. Over the past three days, the stock had plummeted by over 42%, erasing Rs 20,471.25 crore from its market valuation, triggered by regulatory actions from the RBI.

On Monday, shares of One97 Communications Ltd had hit their lower circuit limit.

193 companies post approximately 90,000 internship opportunities on the web

Delhi : Prior to the start of application registration, 193 firms have listed over 90,800 internship vacancies on the Prime Minister Internship Scheme portal. Among the 193 businesses that have extended the opportunity are Jubilant Foodworks, Maruti Suzuki India, Eicher Motor, Larsen & Toubro Ltd., Muthoot Finance, and Reliance Industries,

begin on December 2 in accordance with the pilot project, which is projected to cost about ?800 crore. The article, which cited ministry sources, states that as of October 11, there were 90,849 positions listed on the PM Internship platform. By October 9, 2024, there were around 50,000 possibilities available. , up from about 16,000 on October 7, 2024.

HDFC Bank board okays HDB Financial's Rs 12,500 crore IPO

Delhi: **HDFC Bank's** board has cleared a Rs 12,500 crore IPO for its subsidiary, HDB Financial Services, as part of the company's plan to go public. The decision was made during a board meeting held on October 19, 2024, following previous announcements in July and Sept of this year regarding the offer. The IPO will consist of both a fresh issue and an offer for sale by the bank. The OFS will include shares with a face value of Rs 10 each, aggregating up to Rs 10,000 crore, though this amount may be revised as permitted under applicable law. The fresh issue will amount to Rs 2,500 crore, bringing the total IPO size to Rs 12,500 crore. The proposed IPO size makes it the largest IPO by an NBFC. Last month,



Bajaj Housing Finance had raised Rs 6,560 crore through an IPO. The proposed IPO is subject to market conditions, regulatory approvals, and other considerations. Regulatory clearances are being sought, and the company must adhere to applicable laws, including RBI's scale-based regulations for NBFCs, which require HDB to go public by Sept 2025. Despite the IPO, HDB will continue to operate as a subsidiary of HDFC Bank, in compliance with regulatory guidelines.

Life insurance and Mediclaim exemption suggested by GST panel

Delhi: An official said term life insurance premiums and senior health insurance premiums may be GST-exempt. The GoM that set the GST rate on life and health insurance exempted GST on premiums for health insurance with coverage of Rs 5 lakh for non-seniors. Officials' health insurance premiums over Rs 5 lakh would continue to attract 18% GST.

The Modi Govt is determined to revive the history & cultural heritage of Kashmir and we will soon regain what we have lost: Shah

Chandigarh: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation and senior BJP leader Amit Shah, during the release of the book 'Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh Through The Ages: A Visual Narrative of Continuities and Linkages', made it clear that 'For the last 10 years, the Modi government is determined to revive the history and cultural heritage of Kashmir. At the same time, he also stressed that we will soon regain what we have lost.' In this country with diverse cultures, religions, food habits and attire from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Bengal to Gujarat, for decades, historians have created a myth that the very idea of

India's independence is dishonest. In fact, historians, especially leftist historians, have seen and written about India from a geopolitical perspective, whereas India is the only country in the world which is a geo-culture and whose borders are made up of cultures. This book titled 'Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh Through The Ages: A Visual Narrative of Continuities and Linkages' has minutely proved that the culture, languages, scripts, spiritual thoughts, arts of pilgrimage sites, commerce and trade are present in every part of the country were present in Kashmir for thousands of years. Based on references of texts which are about 8 thousand years old,

this book has clearly proved that Kashmir was, and is, and will always be an inseparable part of India. This book, which proves with references the journey of Buddhism from Nepal to Kashi, Bihar, Kashmir and Afghanistan, tells that Kashmir was the birthplace of the principles refined after Lord Buddha and Kashmir is also the birthplace of the principles of Buddhism prevalent today. The 8-thousand-year-old history of Kashmir has been engraved in this book as if the Ganges is being contained in a vessel. For about 150 years, to please the rulers, the meaning of history was limited to Delhi's Dariba to Ballimaran and Lutyens to Gymkhana.

Mid, small-cap mutual funds attract 30,350 crore on strong returns

NEW DELHI: Mid-cap and small-cap mutual fund schemes have continued to attract strong investor interest, garnering nearly Rs 30,350 crore in inflows during April-Sept of the current financial year, driven by impressive returns delivered by these segments. In comparison, the cumulative inflow into mid-cap and small-cap funds stood at Rs 32,924 crore during the same period last year, according to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi). The inflow trend persists despite concerns raised by market regulator Sebi over heightened inflows into small-cap and mid-cap funds, as experts believe investors will continue to favour these categories for their potential to deliver high returns. "Small caps will continue to grow at a faster rate for years to come. I expect the inflows to continue as Indians want to invest in the high-growth sectors. Small cap funds should be seen as an integral part of one's portfolio allocation and not a tactical play," Trust Mutual Fund CEO Sandeep Bagla said. Individually, mid-cap funds saw an inflow of Rs 14,756 crore and small-cap funds attracted Rs 15,586 crore in the first half of FY25. This aggregates the total inflow to Rs 30,342 crore, the data showed. The strong investor interest in mid-cap and small-cap mutual funds is driven by the potential for high returns in these segments, Tradejini COO Trivish said.



Bitcoin rally fizzles as Token's record-breaking winds down

Delhi: India's Google regulatory issues are growing. In 2022, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) fined the US tech giant for abuse of dominant position in its Play Store and Android mobile device ecosystem. Now, the fairplay regulator is investigating a complaint filed by gaming company WinZO. CCI directed its investigation arm to investigate and report within 60 days after finding a prima facie case. "Based on the facts and circumstances of the case, the commission believes Google is in violation and justifies further inquiry. The CCI bench, chaired by Ravneet Kaur and three members, ordered the director general to investigate. A Google spokesman declined to comment. WinZO, an online gaming company, claimed that Google's Play Store prohibits Real Money Game hosting. "Due to Google's unreasonable and restrictive policy, all apps offering real money games of skill



are only available for download from their website (a process called sideloading)," it told CCI. On Android devices, using this process to reach WinZO displays a disclaimer/warning, tarnishing its image. WinZO stated warnings are without validity and "completely illegal" and cost the company. It also claimed Google displays another "baseless warning" when users pay for skill-based games. "Such payment warnings are arbitrary as Google has not set any criteria for displaying them," WinZO complained to CCI. The gaming company also claimed that Google has enabled

Foodgrain output set to scale new peak in 2025

NEW DELHI: India is poised to achieve new heights in foodgrain production in 2025, driven by favourable monsoon, though significant challenges persist in pulses and oilseeds production as the country's agricultural sector shows signs of robust recovery. The Agriculture Ministry's initial projections paint an optimistic picture, with kharif (summer) foodgrain production estimated at a record 164.7 million tonnes.

Akasa Air pilots demand DGCA audit amid training concerns

NEW DELHI: A group of Akasa Air pilots continues to express discontent over alleged training concerns and seeking a thorough DGCA audit following the regulator's decision to suspend two senior officials. Additionally, the pilots have informed the civil aviation ministry and DGCA about their plans to establish a pilots' union. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has issued 10 showcase notices to the airline recently for various alleged irregularities. Meanwhile, the airline has not responded to queries regarding these matters. The airline previously dismissed claims



about pilot training practices and attrition as unfounded when these issues were raised by certain pilots earlier this month. On December 27, the DGCA suspended Akasa Air's directors of operations and training for six months due to training deficiencies. The pilots have noted that the suspended director of operations maintains the position of vice-president of operations.

The airline, operational for over two years, maintains a fleet of 26 aircraft and employs approximately 870 pilots. Several pilots reportedly face insufficient flying hours due to slower-than-expected fleet expansion. Akasa Air had earlier stated that 324 pilots had joined since October 2023, with an annualised attrition rate below 1 per cent for this category of staff.

Vodafone Group clears 11,650 crore dues raised against VIL shares

NEW DELHI: UK-based Vodafone Group has cleared dues of around Rs 11,650 crore or about 109 million pound that it raised against shares of Vodafone Idea, according to a regulatory filing. Vodafone Group had pledged almost

the entire stake in VIL to raise the debt. The pledge was created in favour of HSBC Corporate Trustee Company (UK) for the debt raised by Mauritius and India-based entities of the Vodafone Group. "On 27 Dec 2024, HSBC

Corporate Trustee Company (UK) Limited acting as the security trustee for the lenders has released the pledges pursuant to repayment of the outstanding dues owed to the lenders by the Vodafone Promoter Shareholders.

India's exports to Australia up 64.4 per cent: Commerce ministry data

NEW DELHI: India's exports to its trade agreement partner Australia rose 64.4 per cent year-on-year to USD 643.7 million in account of healthy growth in sectors such as textiles, chemicals and agricultural products, according to the commerce ministry data. However, the country's merchandise exports recorded a decline of 5.21 per cent year-on-year to USD 5.56 billion during 2024-25, the preliminary data showed. India and Australia implemented an interim trade pact -- economic cooperation and trade agreement (ECTA) -- on December 29, 2022 and are now in negotiations to widen the scope of the pact and make it a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA). On the completion of two years of ECTA, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said the agreement has brought with it increased market access for Indian exporters, expanded opportunities for MSMEs and farmers, and generated several employment avenues. It has also enabled growth in exports by 14 per cent in 2023-24; notable boost in IT/ITeS, business and travel services; and port-study work and work holiday visas, he said in a port on social media platform X. "The expanding trade and investment ties between the two countries under the agreement reflect the growing business-to-business and people-to-people engagements. We are committed to building on the momentum that the Ind-Aus ECTA has generated and achieve the USD 100 billion trade target by 2030," Goyal said. In a statement, the commerce ministry said the key sectors like textiles, chemicals.



ED names Russian as Rs 800 crore OctaFx scam mastermind

MUMBAI: Russian national Pavel Prozorov is the mastermind in fraudulent activities via OctaFx India Pvt Ltd, through unauthorised forex trading, allegedly earning over Rs 800 crore, said Enforcement Directorate in the chargesheet filed before the special court against him and 53 others. ED attached Pavel's Spanish assets valued at Rs 42 crore after collecting their details and plans to enforce the attachment order in Spain through Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. OctaFx has no office or any base in India, but is conducting business in the country, said ED. Pavel, collaborating with Russian partners and two non-resident Indians, used OctaFx's forex trading application to mislead investors with promises



Pavel, collaborating with Russian partners and two non-resident Indians, used OctaFx's forex trading application to mislead investors with promises of high returns.

es of high returns. ED's probe showed OctaFx illegally transferred fraudulently earned profit internationally using false import documents through mule accounts (provi-

sion by shell firms-individual charging commission). According to ED's chargesheet, OctaFx's CEO Anna Rudaia, who managed Indian operations.

BSNL launches free mobile intranet TV, national wi-fi roaming

In collaboration with OTTplay, BSNL launched BiTV as a pilot service, offering Puducherry mobile subscribers complimentary access to over 300 live television channels, including premium content. The service uses BSNL's mobile intranet to provide stable streaming of television programmes, films, web series and documentaries in multiple languages. "With BiTV, through our partners, BSNL is giving every customer the power to access entertainment on the go, 'anytime, anywhere', free of cost, irrespective of the plan they are, making it a perfect alternative.

Zydu Wellness arm gets Rs 56.33 crore GST demand

NEW DELHI: Zydu Wellness Ltd on said its wholly-owned arm has received a GST demand of Rs 56.33 crore, along with applicable interest and penalty from the tax authority. Zydu Wellness Products Ltd (ZWPL), a wholly-owned subsidiary company, has received an intimation from the Directorate General of Goods and Services Tax Intelligence, Surat Zonal Unit, alleging GST demand of Rs 56.33 crore, along with applicable interest and penalty. Zydu Wellness Ltd said in a regulatory filing.



The intimation alleges that the GST was payable in relation to the acquisition of intellectual property rights from Heinz Italia S.P.A. by Heinz India Pvt Ltd, now merged with ZWPL, it added. "ZWPL believes that there is a strong merit in the case, and ZWPL is evaluating the next steps based on a

detailed review of the intimation," the filing said. The period covered by the order relates to the pre-acquisition period prior to January 30, 2019, the filing said. Due to this order, there is no impact on financial, operation or other activities of the company/ZWPL, it added.

Cardano as top performing Layer 1 blockchains with 200% gains

The battle of the top performing L1 blockchains has been pretty wild this year, with the likes of ETH, SOL, TRX, BNB, Toncoin (TON) and Cardano (ADA) fighting to claim the leadership mantle. However, out of all these networks, TON blockchain is showing huge promise as it records approximately 200% gains. Conversely, Cardano network is also making waves, especially as its new Hydra scalability solution is set to potentially unlock 1 million TPS. On the other hand, predictions about a fast-rising presale star—Lunex Network (LNX) are blowing up as it shows the potential of overthrowing TON and ADA in 2025. TON's Partnership with Telegram for Blockchain-based mini-games spurs growth. Over the past year and counting, TON blockchain has been



widely popular for one major thing—blockchain lucrative games. The partnership between Toncoin and Telegram to bring mini-games to millions of users was a very profitable one. From launching several tap-to-earn games to furthering its expansion in P2E games, Toncoin has been able to rack up approximately 200% NET gains. As experts rank Toncoin (TON) alongside cryptos to buy, analysts are starting to give bullish predictions. Although TON price is currently down by 11%

Banks sue US Fed over stress tests, seek transparency

Banking and business groups sued the US Federal Reserve over the central bank's annual stress tests, saying they're seeking more transparency in how the rules are adopted. The groups, including the Bank Policy Institute and American Bankers Association, contend that the Fed's criteria for the tests are designed in secret and produce "vacillating and unexplained. as it trades .

Rexas Finance presale is on fire! First ten stages sold out months

Rexas Finance is reshaping the investment world by tokenising real-world assets (RWAs) such as real estate, commodities, and art. Through blockchain and decentralised finance, the platform eliminates traditional barriers like high entry costs and limited liquidity. For instance, an Asian investor can purchase a fractional share of a commercial property in Europe, earning rental income without managing the property themselves. The platform enables seamless tokenisation through its Rexas Token Builder, allowing users to create tokens representing proportional ownership in any asset. Additionally, Rexas QuickMint Bot simplifies the process by enabling token creation on Telegram or Discord, compatible with multiple Ethereum-based



Rexas also features a Launchpad for raising funds. Token projects can use this tool to access global investors, fostering growth. The platform's scope extends beyond real estate

blockchains. Rexas also features a Launchpad for raising funds. Token projects can use this tool to access global investors, fostering growth. The platform's scope extends beyond real estate, covering commodities like gold and oil and high-value collectibles like art. Rexas Finance paves the way for a decentralised and inclusive investment market by bridging blockchain

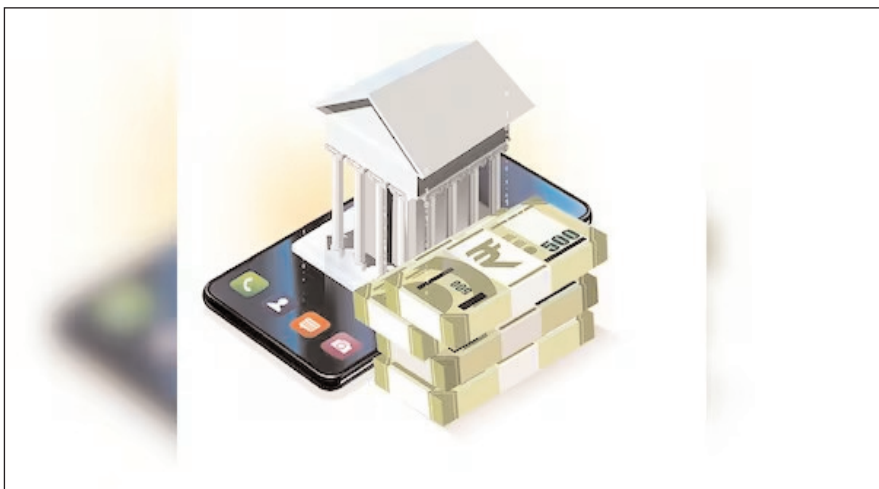
and tangible assets. The REXS presale is a prime example of the platform's momentum. Opting for a public presale rather than venture capital funding, Rexas Finance allows the broader community to join this financial revolution. The approach has resonated strongly, with all tokens in stages 1-10 selling out rapidly. Investors have already .

Reliance acquires Karkinos Healthcare for Rs 375 crore

NEW DELHI: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has acquired technology-driven and oncology-focused healthcare platform Karkinos for Rs 375 crore, the firm said on Saturday. Reliance Strategic Business Ventures (RSBV), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mumbai-listed India's most valuable company, completed the acquisition of Karkinos Healthcare Pvt Ltd with allotment of requisite shares, the firm said in a stock exchange filing. Karkinos was incorporated in India on July 24, 2020, and is in the business of providing technology-driven innovative solutions for the early detection, diagnosis, and management of cancer. It had a turnover of about Rs 22 crore in the 2022-23 fiscal. "Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Ltd has on December 27, 2024, subscribed to and has been allotted 1 crore equity shares of Rs 10 each, for cash, aggregating Rs 10 crore and 36.5 crore optionally fully convertible debentures of Rs 10 each, for cash, aggregating Rs 365 crore of Karkinos," according to the filing. Karkinos, it said, has cancelled the existing outstanding 30,075 equity shares held by the erstwhile shareholders of the company in accordance with the approved resolution plan. It, however, did not give details. Its previous prominent investors included Ewart Investments Limited (100 per cent subsidiary).



Revised MFI ordinance moots 10-yr jail, 5L fine



Bengaluru: After multiple iterations, Karnataka govt has sent its ordinance to governor Thaaawar Chand Gehlot, proposing severe penalties for microfinance institutions (MFIs) found guilty of coercive loan recovery practices. Under the revised draft, it will be considered a criminal offence for MFIs to use violence, intimidation or any form of coercion against borrowers or their families. The ordinance also prohibits use of external agencies to threaten or pressure borrowers into repayment and bans the frequent visi-

tation of borrowers' homes or places of work. The Karnataka Micro-Finance (Prevention of Coercive Actions) Ordinance, 2025, which has already received the cabinet's approval, has suggested up to 10 years in prison and a fine of Rs 5 lakh for MFIs involved in harassment. "It was three years (in the initial draft), now we have increased it to 10 years. This is to ensure that the heat of the law is felt (by violators)," home minister G Parameshwara announced the revision Tuesday. The ordi-

nance, which has seen eight revisions in the past few weeks, is now awaiting the governor's assent. The decision to issue the ordinance comes in the wake of rising suicides and widespread complaints about predatory loan recovery practices used by MFIs. These firms have been accused of using coercive methods which have pushed borrowers, particularly farmers, women and self-help groups, to the brink of financial ruin. "The ordinance aims to protect and provide relief to economically vulnerable groups and individuals.

China overtakes the US as India's trading partner with \$118.4 billion

Delhi: China overtook the US as India's largest trading partner after two years, according to Global Trade Research Initiative data. India's bilateral trade with China totaled \$118.4 billion in , with imports up 3.24% to \$101.7 billion and exports climbing 8.7% to \$16.67 billion. India-US trade fell somewhat. Indian exports fell 1.32% to \$77.5 billion and imports fell 20% to \$40.8 billion in FY24, totaling \$118.3 billion. India relies heavily on Chinese imports in telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and advanced technology, therefore its economic relations with China are closely watched. According to GTRI, "India purchased \$4.2 billion in telecom and smartphone parts, 44% of overall imports in this category, demonstrating strong reliance on Chinese components. China supplied 77.7% of India's laptop and PC imports at \$3.8 billion." India uses production-linked incentive schemes (PLI), anti-dumping penalties, and quality control directives to decrease reliance. India



Apple's first iPad Pro redesign since 2022 uses an AI-focused

Delhi: Apple introduced an artificial intelligence-focused iPad Pro and a bigger iPad Air to revitalize its tablet lineup after two years. The firm launched the first redesigned iPad Pro since 2018 at "Let Loose" online. The new model boasts a smaller body, a sharper Ultra Retina XDR screen with OLED technology, and a quicker M4 CPU for AI. The new iPad Air looks

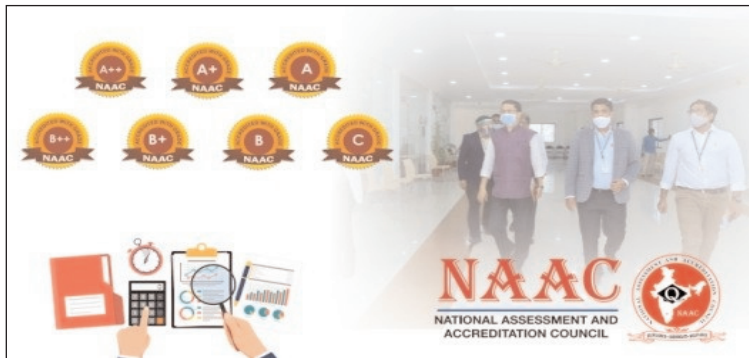
like the previous model but has a bigger screen and M2 CPU. Apple claims the 13-inch iPad Pro is the thinnest apple device ever at 5.1 millimeters. The larger model is a quarter-pound lighter than its predecessor, while the 11-inch weighs under one. It breaks Apple's longest iPad release gap since co-founder Steve Jobs debuted it in 2010.

imported \$2.2 billion in lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles, 75% of which came from China,

Trade with Saudi Arabia was more balanced, with exports doubling and imports rising slower.

NAAC looks to shift to new systems to grade colleges

Bengaluru: Under CBI scanner for alleged bribe-for-grades scam, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is looking to change the current accreditation system to binary system and maturity-based system with different metrics, while keeping at least 400 academicians away from campus visits in the past one year over fears of corruption. The binary system involves grading a college 'accredited or not', without A+, A++ grades. The maturity-based system is an evolving accreditation process which improves a college's rating over the previous level based on its improvement in performance. The current process – which is likely to be shelved -- involves a 70:30 metrics formula: 70% quantitative and 30% qualitative metrics. The latter consists



physical inspection of higher educational institutions by a peer-review team. The NAAC's plan to shift to the new twin systems follows recommendations from the Dr Radhakrishnan committee, which has suggested reforms in the accreditation process. Anil Sahasrabudhe, chairman of NAAC executive committee, said they will expedite the roll-out of reforms soon. "The com-

mittee has debarred offline, physical visits and will do everything online through validation of the documents. We plan to launch both binary system and multigrade system in March. Now that this (scam) has come to light, we will expedite the process, finalise recommendation of the committee, and then adopt them soon." The premier grading agency has come under the central

probe agency's lens for alleged corruption while assessing a college in Andhra Pradesh's Guntur. A NAAC source clarified, "There is no proof against these 400 teachers. We received feedback from trustworthy sources on their conduct. Since we have no evidence against them, we could not take any action. Instead, we prevented them from making any more physical visits." The peer team is randomly selected by the system. Sahasrabudhe said if there is no grading (like A+ or A++), institutions will not try to engage in unethical activities. "The committee is currently working on a maturity-based grading level," he added. The chairman said when they stopped accepting applications in the old format, they had to give colleges transition time.

A warning against bogus syllabuses and sample question papers is released by CBSE

Delhi: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) issued a warning alert informing parents and students to be wary of false information pertaining to the curriculum, study guides, and practice exams for the 2024–25 school year. The Board has issued a warning to pupils about the dangers of falling for online scams that spread false information. We've noticed that some websites and online portals are disseminating stale infor-

mation and unreliable updates about curriculum, sample question papers, CBSE resources, and activities. The alert said, "These links and news erroneously assert to offer up-to-date information for the session 2024–25. "In the interest of the public, we wish to emphasize that information from unauthorized sources can be misleading and may cause unnecessary confusion among schools, students, parents, and other stakeholders," it continued. Due to sig-

nificant discrepancies between theory and practical scores in a few courses, CBSE has recently instructed schools to assess practical exams appropriately. In a notification, the CBSE said that, based on data from prior years' results, it had used sophisticated AI techniques to identify significant disparities between theory and practical grades in specific courses among 50% or more students in about 500 CBSE-affiliated schools.

The National Critical Mineral Mission gets 16,300 crore from

Delhi :The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) with a ₹16,300 crore expenditure and a projected ₹18,000 crore investment from PSUs and other busi-

nesses. "Several crucial decisions have created new scientific and technology prospects for our children, future generations, and the economy. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told a Cabinet briefing that PM Modi approved the National Critical Minerals Mission today. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced NCMM's creation in the 2024-25 Union Budget on July 23, 2024. The Atmanirbhar Bharat mission seeks to assure India's crucial mineral sector self-reliance, recognizing its importance in high-tech industry, lean energy, and

defence. The Mission will encompass exploration, mining, processing, and end-of-life product recovery in the essential mineral value chain. It aims to speed up mining project approvals, incentivize exploration, and recover minerals from overburdens and tailings. The mission encourages Indian PSUs and private enterprises to buy vital mineral assets abroad and strengthen economic ties with resource-rich nations. The plan also calls for a national stockpile of essential minerals to secure supply. The Mission will promote mineral processing parks and crucial mineral recycling.

New military dental care centre in Ahmednagar to benefit veterans

Delhi

This facility will provide advanced oral health care to the sizeable community of army personnel serving with the town's Armoured Corps and Mechanised Infantry schools and centres. In addition, individuals from the Marathwada region will have access to health care services offered at the centre. The dental centre is of significant historical importance as one of the oldest dental units in the Indian Army. In 1942, it moved from Multan (now in present-day Pakistan) to Ahmednagar. The centre's commanding officer, Colonel Vivek Saxena, said, "This premium oral health care establishment features contemporary dental care services, including implant-based treatments and a state-of-the-art cone beam

computed tomography (CBCT) machine for early oral cancer diagnosis." The upgraded centre will eliminate the need for patients to travel to Pune for treatment, thus saving valuable time and resources. A senior official from Maharashtra Sainik Welfare Department told , "Most patients come to Pune for advanced medical treatments. Thus, majority of them go to private hospitals. This dental facility is one of its kind and it will address all oral health complications." Subedar BS Shikare (retired) from Ahmednagar said, "People lack awareness about oral health. The authorities should focus on awareness and hold special camps in the rural pockets of the state. The new hospital is a positive thing for the entire Marathwada region." Pune: Hundreds of mil-

itary veterans, serving armed forces personnel and their dependents will benefit from the newly inaugurated Military Dental Centre in Ahmednagar. This facility will provide advanced oral health care to the sizeable community of army personnel serving with the town's Armoured Corps and Mechanised Infantry schools and centres. In addition, individuals from the Marathwada region will have access to health care services offered at the centre. The dental centre is of significant historical importance as one of the oldest dental units in the Indian Army. In 1942, it moved from Multan (now in present-day Pakistan) to Ahmednagar. The centre's commanding officer, Colonel Vivek Saxena, said, "This premium oral health care establishment features contemporary.

Scrap mop-up allotment of PG med seats to ineligible: HC

Bengaluru: The Karnataka high court Tuesday ordered Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) to scrap the PG medicine seats allotted in the mop-up round to "ineligible" candidates and make them available in the next round of counselling. National Medical Commission (NMC) and Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) should permit the candidates who were allotted all-India quota seats in the MCC-conducted third round counselling to join the allotted seats till 5pm, Feb 9, a division bench comprising Justices Anu Sivaraman and Vijayakumar A Patil said in its order on a petition filed by Dr Akshay V Thuppad and others, who were aspirants in the mop-up round conducted by the KEA. The KEA was directed not to enforce the penalty clause against the students who were wrongly permitted to participate in the mop-up round in violation of the conditions stipulated in its

brochure. The KEA was told to ensure the original documents are returned to the candidates to enable them to join the all-India quota seats at the earliest. The petitioners – and similarly situated candidates who were eligible to participate in the mop-up round – should be permitted to participate in the stray vacancy round where the seats that fall vacant should be made available and seats should be allotted to them on the basis of merit, the bench said. The KEA was directed to take steps to ensure fees – paid by ineligible candidates who had joined the allotted colleges pursuant to the mop-up round – are refunded to them at the earliest. The MCC and KEA were told to inform the candidates who had been allotted seats in the third round of all-India quota counselling but were permitted to participate in the counselling of the KEA without eligibility that they have to join the all-India quota seats.