

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Friday, 30 May 2025

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

'Pak should understand, we have entered your house and killed you three times'

Alipurduar (West Bengal). Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) government from the land of Bengal. He said that the people of Bengal are no longer able to trust the system of the state government and they expect justice only from the court. He alleged that the state is trapped in a labyrinth of violence, anarchy, unemployment and corruption. In such a situation, the people of the state are saying that there is a cry in Bengal, we do not want a ruthless government. Addressing a public meeting in Alipurduar, West Bengal, the Prime Minister once again gave a stern warning to Pakistan. He said, today when I have come to this land of Sindoor Khela, it is natural to discuss India's new resolution regarding terrorism. He said that India is no longer the same as before. Our army has made the terrorists realize the power of sindoor. Pakistan should understand that now India attacks at home. He accused Pakistan that its army's expertise is only in terror and genocide. He also mentioned the atrocities committed by the Pakistani army in Bangladesh in 1971. The Prime Minister held the



Trinamool government responsible for the violent incidents in Murshidabad and Malda. He said that these incidents are open proof of the cruelty of the Trinamool government. Mothers and sisters are unsafe in the state, there is great disappointment among the youth and the rights of the poor are being sacrificed to the selfish politics of power. Prime Minister Modi described West Bengal as an important partner in the progress of the country and said that when India is moving towards becoming a developed nation, then Bengal's participation is essential. Modi said that the central government is investing thousands of crores of rupees for the development of eastern India, following the policy of 'Purvodayahan'. Projects like Kaliani AIIMS, redevelopment of New Alipurduar Railway Station and Dedicated Freight

Corridor (DFC) are examples of this. He said that following the mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, the BJP government is committed to making Bengal a prosperous state. The Prime Minister alleged that the state government is not allowing the central schemes to be implemented in Bengal. He said that while the elderly across the country are getting free medical treatment up to Rs 5 lakh under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, the elderly of Bengal are deprived of this facility. The Trinamool government has also not implemented the PM Janman Yojana, launched to increase education, health and employment in tribal areas, in the state. He said that the Trinamool government is also treating the tribal communities step-motherly. The BJP government is committed to tribal respect and development but Trinamool is repeatedly neglecting them. He said that

under the schemes made for traditional artisans, lakhs of people across the country are getting training, modern tools and loans without guarantee, but 8 lakh applications are pending in Bengal. The Prime Minister also raised serious questions on the education system of the state. He said that the teacher recruitment scam has ruined the future of thousands of families and even now the state government is not accepting its mistake. He alleged that attempts are being made to usurp the PF amount of tea garden workers. BoxWest Bengal surrounded by many crises simultaneously: PMHe said that today West Bengal is surrounded by many crises simultaneously. One crisis is of violence and anarchy spreading in the society. The second crisis is of insecurity of mothers and sisters, of heinous crimes being committed against them. The third crisis is of extreme despair among the youth, of rampant unemployment. The fourth crisis is of rampant corruption, of the continuously decreasing public trust in the system here. The fifth crisis is of the selfish politics of the ruling party that snatches the rights of the poor. Youth, poor and middle class families are bearing the brunt of corruption.



Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, while calling Operation Sindoor a 'national victory', has once again expressed serious concern over the continuous delay in defense projects. He said that the current situation in the world has made us realize that 'self-reliance' is the only solution, we have to be prepared for the future from now on.

Give local address or stay in Tihar: SC to Agusta accused

NEW DELHI: Supreme Court on Thursday refused to entertain a plea of AgustaWestland scam accused and British national Christian Michel James for doing away with one of the bail conditions of providing a local address where he would stay after coming out of jail. The court told him that if he could not find a local address, then he had better remain in Tihar jail. Appearing before a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sanjay Kumar, Christian's

lawyer submitted that he had been in jail for more than six years and he did not know anyone who would arrange a home for him to stay. He said his client had to search for a house himself, which he could only do after coming out of jail. The bench, however, asked him why his family members could not help him to ensure that bail conditions were fulfilled. He replied that he got divorced while he was in custody, and none of his family members are in the country to help him.

HC directs YouTuber to take down defamatory content on news agency

NEW DELHI: Delhi HC Thursday instructed YouTuber Mohak Mangal to remove segments of a video he had uploaded, contending that its contents related to ANI were harmful to the news agency. The court passed the order while hearing the news agency's defamation case. Justice Amit Bansal said Mohak should have expressed his opinion in a civilised manner. "Hafta wasooli", 'gunda raaj', You will take this down... Do it today.

Any talks with Pakistan will only be on terror, return of POK: Rajnath

NEW DELHI: India has redesigned and redefined its strategy and response to terrorism emanating from Pakistan and if talks do take place with Islamabad in the future, they will only be on terrorism and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, defence minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday in what appeared a repudiation of Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif's suggestion that the two countries should engage in comprehensive dialogue that covers all their disputes. POK was an integral part of India and its people, who got geographically and politically separated, and would sooner or later voluntarily return to India "listening to the voice of their souls and self-respect", Singh said,

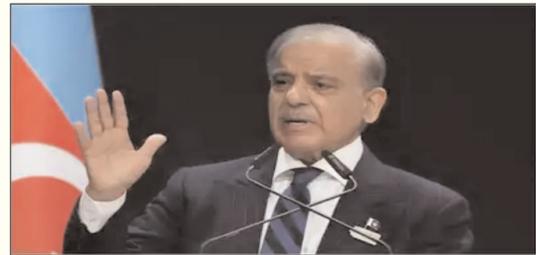


addressing the annual CII business summit here. Echoing Singh, the external affairs ministry later in the day said any dialogue with Islamabad will have to be focused on the return of POK and also wanted terrorists to India. The ministry also said any engagement between the two countries would be strictly bilateral. "We want to reiterate that terrorism and dialogue cannot go hand in

hand. And as far as the issue of terrorism is concerned, any discussion with Pakistan will focus on the list of terrorists we had provided them some years ago - they should hand them over to us," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "Regarding J&K, any bilateral talks will only be about one thing - when will Pakistan vacate POK, which it has been holding illegally .

'Before we could ... ': Shehbaz confesses Indian BrahMos missiles struck Pakistan

NEW DELHI: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has publicly admitted, once again that Indian missiles, including the supersonic BrahMos, struck multiple locations deep inside Pakistan, including an airport in Rawalpindi. Speaking at a trilateral summit in Lachin, Azerbaijan, Sharif described how Indian strikes hit multiple targets in Pakistan before it could mount its planned retaliation. Speaking at the Pakistan-Turkiye-zerbaijan Trilateral Summit in Lachin, Azerbaijan, Sharif described the sequence of events and Pakistan's intended response. "We on 9th and 10th night we



decided to respond in a measured fashion to Indian aggression," he said. "And we had decided that at 4:30 in the morning after Fajr prayers, Pakistan armed forces led very ably by our Field Marshal Chief Army Staff sitting here, Syed Asam Munir to teach a lesson to our enemy. But before that hour reached India again launched missile attacks, BrahMos and

hit Pakistan's various provinces including airport in Rawalpindi and other places." This is not the first time that Sharif has confirmed that Operation Sindoor caused severe damage in Pakistan, earlier speaking at a ceremony the Pakistani PM had acknowledged that Indian missiles struck Nur Khan Airbase in Rawalpindi and other locations. Earlier,

speaking at a ceremony, he said, "At around 2.30am on May 10, General Syed Asim Munir called me on secure line and informed me that India's ballistic missiles have hit Nur Khan Airbase and other areas." Operation Sindoor, launched by India on May following the Pahalgam terror attack, targeted terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and PoK, killing over 100 militants. The strikes targeted nine terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and was followed by the destruction of 11 Pakistani airbases after failed attempts . by Pakistan to target Indian military positions.

“Why US is revoking visas of many Chinese students

NEW DELHI: Just as the dust was settling on a fragile trade truce between the world's two largest economies, the Trump administration delivered a shock to Chinese students and their families. US secretary of state Marco Rubio on Wednesday vowed to "aggressively" revoke visas of Chinese students - a sweeping move that rattled families, university officials, and Chinese authorities. Simultaneously, the Trump administration



has unveiled new export controls restricting the sale of software used to design semiconductors - a key pinch point in

the US-China tech battle. The one-two punch risks not only derailing the fragile trade truce painstakingly negotiated by the world's two

largest economies, but also upending the futures of hundreds of thousands of Chinese students who have long seen the US as the gold standard of higher education. **Why it matters** For decades, Chinese students have been a vital part of the US university ecosystem. They are among the top international enrollees - numbering over 270,000 last year - and generate billions in tuition revenue. Many universities rely on these students to off-

set shrinking domestic enrollment and to maintain cutting-edge research programs, particularly in science and engineering. But now, these students find themselves in the political cross-fire. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement: "Under President Trump's leadership, the US state department will work with the of homeland security to revoke visas for including those with Chinese Communist Party or studying.

Day after being struck down, US appeals court allows tariffs to 'temporarily' stay in effect

NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump on Thursday received temporary approval to continue collecting tariffs under emergency powers, just a day after a federal trade court ruled that he had exceeded his authority by imposing sweeping levies on foreign imports. The US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit allowed the April 2 tariffs to remain in place while the White House appeals



the trade court's decision. "The request for an immediate administrative stay is granted to the extent that the judgments and the permanent injunctions entered by the Court of International Trade in these cases are temporarily stayed until further notice while

this court considers the motions papers," cited by The Independent. Earlier on Wednesday, the US court of international trade had ruled that Trump unlawfully invoked emergency powers under the 1977 International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to declare a national emergency and slap tariffs on imports from nearly every country in the world. However, the Trump administration protested.

Mayor holds meet with councillors over statue unveiling

On May 31, grand statue of Punyashlok Ahilyabai Holkar to be unveiled, followed by women empowerment seminar

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Prayagraj: In a meeting with the councillors at the BJP office in Civil Lines on Thursday, regarding the unveiling of the statue of Ahilyabai and the women empowerment seminar to be held on May 31 under the Punyashlok Ahilyabai Holkar Trishatabdi Smriti Abhiyan, the outline of the program and the subject of making the program successful were discussed in detail. Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani, as the chief guest in the meeting, said that as a public representative, one should take inspiration from the rule of Lokmata Ahilyabai as to how to reach the last person in the society. It is a remark-

able work by the BJP leadership to take her life philosophy to the masses in the form of a Smriti Abhiyan. The

little time is left in the program now. The mayor said that he is fully confident that the councillors will live up

making the unveiling of the grand statue of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar and the Women Empowerment Semi-

President appealed to the councillors and said that each councillor should try to reach the venue with at least 100 people and make this grand program a success. Become active in your respective wards regarding the promotion of the program. Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya will attend the program as the chief guest. The vote of thanks was given by councillor Kiran Jaiswal. During this, councillors Ashish Dwivedi, Bablu Raghuvanshi, Raju Shukla, Deepika Patel, Vishwas Rawat, Krishna Kumar Pathak, Samit Nishad, Rajesh Kesarwani, Vivek Mishra, Vijay Srivastava, Vijay Patel, Ajay Singh etc. were present.



councillors will have to work with full dedication to make this program a success as the state leadership has expectations because very

to the expectations. While presiding over the meeting, BJP Metropolitan President Sanjay Gupta said that the important responsibility of

nar program successful near Dashashwamedh Ghat in Daraganj on May 31 is on the shoulders of the councillors. The Metropolitan

BAFTA National Theatre Festival inaugurated

Soulful presentation of 'Matilda' and 'Ek Rumal Ek Angudhi Ek Chhalni'

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: The four-day fourth National Theatre Festival organised by BAFTA was inaugurated on Thursday, at Zahida Auditorium of Benhur School and College, Karelabagh. Two plays were staged in the inaugural ceremony. The programme began with a classical dance performance by the school girls, immediately followed by the English play 'Matilda'. This play was based on the story of famous writer Roald Dahl, which shows the story of a courageous girl who does not give up even in difficult circumstances and stands with the truth. The beautiful stage decoration, lighting and music arrangements and direction impressed the audi-

ence. The acting of the students was commendable. After this, the play 'Ek Rumal, Ek Angudhi, Ek Chhaalni' was staged, which is based on the story

of this play was done by Shubham Tiwari, while Gunjan Jain acted in it. Art direction was by Bharatendu Kashyap, Suresh Tiwari on tabla,



of Amrita Pritam. It is a poignant expression of a woman's incomplete love. In this, three women share their sorrow and the agony of love. The drama adaptation, concept and direction

light design by Nitish Bhardwaj and production incharge was Vinay Kumar Mishra. This was the 16th and special presentation of this play in Prayagraj, which completed its three years.

HCBA endorses Centre's effort to impeach Justice Yashwant Verma

Move to strengthen public faith in the court

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Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court Bar Association (HCBA) has welcomed the reported intention by the Centre to impeach Justice Yashwant Verma, saying it will boost public faith in the judiciary. Anil Tiwari, head of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association, stated on Thursday that this step (impeachment) will strengthen public faith in the court. If judges become corrupt, people's faith in the justice system would be eroded. It is crucial for the court's existence that action be taken against corrupt individuals. The concern here is not about Justice Yashwant Verma, but about the court's survival, the people's faith, and democracy. Democ-

racy will come to an end if people lose faith in the courts.

Tiwari added, "We have appealed to the opposition parties not to play politics in this (impeachment case) and vote in favor of impeachment." Justice Verma made headlines after a large sum of money was purportedly discovered at his official home in New Delhi following a fire. On March 22, the then-CJI, Justice Sanjeev Khanna, formed a three-member committee to investigate the incident. The Delhi High Court pulled judicial duties from Justice Verma on March 24, as directed by the Supreme Court. Later, Justice Verma was moved to Allahabad High Court.

Instructions to top officials to pass orders as per rules within 3 months

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: The High Court has given a big relief to the 2014 batch Computer Operator Grade-A working in various districts of Uttar Pradesh, Lalitpur, Jhansi, Mau, Azamgarh, Bhadohi, Jaunpur, Kaushambi, Prayagraj, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Ghaziabad, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Agra, Kanpur Nagar, Bareilly, Moradabad, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Aligarh, Bulandshahr and Hapur and the Computer Operators currently working on the post of Computer Operator Grade-B.

The court has directed the senior officials of the Uttar Pradesh Police Department to add the training period of these Police Computer Operator Grade-B to

the service. Also, the Police Technical Services Headquarters of Uttar Pradesh should pass a clear order under the law within 03 months regarding giving the first promotion pay scale grade-pay of Rs 4200 to the police personnel appointed on the post of Computer Operator Grade-A, whose services have been completed for 10 years.

This order was passed by Justice Ajit Kumar while disposing of the petition filed by Computer Operator Grade-B Vivek Raj Mishra and 84 others after hearing the arguments of senior advocate Vijay Gautam. Senior advocates Vijay Gautam and Atipriya Gautam argued on behalf of the petitioners.

They argued that de-

spite the earlier orders of the High Court and the government orders issued later, the department is not doing anything.

The service of the training period is not being added for giving the first promoted pay scale, whereas they are entitled to it.

The petitioners were appointed to the post of Computer Operator Grade-A in the year 2014, thereafter the petitioners were promoted to the post of Computer Operator Grade-B in the year 2024. All the petitioners have completed more than 10 years of their service, but they are not being given the first pay scale grade pay of Rs 4200/- and neither their training period has been added to the service. In the

Government Order dated 05.11.2014, it has been arranged that such State employees who have completed 10 years of service from the date of first appointment on the post of direct recruitment will be given the first pay scale/grade pay.

Senior Advocate Vijay Gautam submitted that in the circular dated 17.03.2012 issued by the Additional Director General of Police, Uttar Pradesh Police Headquarters, Allahabad, it has been clearly mentioned that the posts with grade pay of Rs. 2800/- and grade pay of Rs. 4800/- are not available in the executive force of the police force, that is, both the said grade pays are of non-functional pay scale.

All the petitioners were

appointed to the post of Computer Operator Grade-A in the year 2014, thereafter promoted to the post of Computer Operator Grade-B in the year 2024 and all the petitioners have completed more than 10 years of service, hence in the context of the circular and government orders of the Police Headquarters, they are entitled to get the grade pay of Rs 4200 for the post of Computer Operator Grade-B as first promotion pay scale. It has been said in the petition that Rule 5 (2) of the Uttar Pradesh Computer Staff (Non Guested) Service Rules-2011 provides that after completing 6 years of service on the post of Computer Operator Grade-A, promotion will be given to

the post of Computer Operator Grade-B. The petitioners had completed 6 years of service on the post of Computer Operator Grade-A in the year 2020, hence under the said Rules-2011, the petitioners should have been given the next pay scale from the year 2020 itself. It was also said in the petition that in the case of Lal Babu Shukla, the High Court has made a provision that the training period of police personnel should be added to their service and promotion pay scale should be given. All the petitioners are working in police stations of various districts of Uttar Pradesh. And they write FIRs, maintain case diaries and do other official work.

12 students of BSc agriculture selected in campus drive at SHUATS

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: During the placement drive organized by two companies at Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Science (SHUATS), Prayagraj, 12 students of BSc agriculture were selected by the companies. Director Career Planning and Placement Prof. (Dr.) Ashok Tripathi, while highlighting the importance of organizing the campus placement drives for professional educational programs, said that 10 students of BSc Agriculture were selected in the placement drive organized in several phases by Reliance Bio Energy. Similarly, two students of BSc Agricul-

ture were selected after the personality development round in the placement drive organized by Vimaana Aerospace Technologies.

Prof. Tripathi said that discussions are going on with many nationalized companies and campus interviews are likely to be organized by other companies soon. The selected students attributed their success to the academic environment of the university and the quality education provided by the faculty members. Vice Chancellor Most Rev. Prof. (Dr.) Rajendra B Lal congratulated the selected students and wished them a bright future.

Div Udyog Bandhu Committee meet concluded under Div Commr

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: A meeting of the Divisional Udyog Bandhu Committee was held in Gandhi Auditorium on Thursday under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant. In the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner reviewed the progress of the cases related to Nivesh Mitra Portal, Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Srijan Karyakram Yojana, Mukhyamantri Yuva Swaraj Yojana, Ek Janpad Ek Utpadan Yojana, MSME Policy, A Monaroco Industrial State Teliyarganj and other subjects pointed out. He has directed the officers of all the concerned departments to resolve the problems of Udyog Bandhu on top priority. He has said that promoting industries is one of the top priority points of the government, any kind of negligence or indifference will not be tol-

erated in this. While reviewing the Chief Minister Yuva Udyam Vikas Abhiyan Yojana 2024-25 district wise, the Divisional Commissioner expressed strong displeasure over non-disposal of pending applica-

tional Commissioner while reviewing the disposal of pending cases on the Nivesh Mitra portal, expressed strong displeasure over the rank of Prayagraj district being -53 and Kaushambi district being -



tion forms in the banks even after the stipulated time limit and directed all the banks to mandatorily dispose of the application forms related to the Chief Minister Yuva Udyam Vikas Abhiyan Yojana on the basis of merits and demerits within the stipulated time limit.

Along with this, the Di-

visional Commissioner while reviewing the disposal of pending cases on the Nivesh Mitra portal, expressed strong displeasure over the rank of Prayagraj district being -53 and Kaushambi district being -73 on the Nivesh Mitra portal and has given instructions to find out the reasons for the poor rank of Kaushambi district despite the pending cases being zero after the stipulated time on the Nivesh Mitra portal. He has instructed the officials of the concerned departments to dispose of all

the cases on the Nivesh Mitra portal within the time limit. He has asked to remove all the agenda points related to the entrepreneurs present in the meeting only after their disposal.

In order to resolve the matter related to Monaroco Industrial Estate Teliyarganj, the Municipal Commissioner has been asked to hold a meeting with the concerned entrepreneurs within a week. The entrepreneurs who attended the meeting have given suggestions to the Divisional Commissioner on adding some agenda points and points related to entrepreneurs. On this occasion Industry Committee members Natwar Lal, Santosh Tripathi, Joint Commissioner of Industries Sharad Tandon along with officers of other related departments as well as entrepreneurs were present.

Dettol Welcomes MS Dhoni as Brand Ambassador

Varanasi: Dettol, India's leading germ protection brand, announces cricket icon and India's original Captain Cool - Mahendra Singh Dhoni - as the brand ambassador for its Dettol Soaps, Bodywash & Handwash range. This first-of-its-kind collaboration brings together a legendary cool icon and a trusted cool brand, unveiling the solution to staying cool in summers - Dettol Icy Cool.

Commenting on the announcement, Kanika Kalra, Regional Marketing Director, Health, Reckitt - South Asia, said, "At Reckitt, we are committed to delivering trusted solutions that genuinely address consumer needs with care and effectiveness. Dettol Icy Cool has long been the go-to for summers with 3x intense cooling~ and protection against germs that cause skin infections# - especially

amid the heat and hustle of everyday life. We are delighted to partner with Captain Cool himself, MS Dhoni - a symbol of calm, confidence, and peak performance - to bring the essence of Dettol Icy Cool to life. Together, we aim to inspire millions to stay cool, stay protected, and perform their best, no matter the heat or pressure."

Speaking on the association, Mahendra Singh Dhoni said, "I'm excited to be associated with Dettol to unveil their cool new campaign for Dettol Icy Cool. Staying calm under pressure has always been an important part of how I approach life on and off the field. Dettol Icy cool provides the perfect solution to stay cool - When your body is cool, your mind will be cool. That's why this campaign speaks to me, and I'm thrilled to be a part of it."

Ravindra Kumar Mandhad got angry on Kanungo and Lekhpals

Prayagraj: District Magistrate Ravindra Kumar Mandhad has expressed strong displeasure over the negligence, indifference, laxity and poor working style of the Kanungo and Lekhpals appointed in the district and has directed that all such Kanungo and Lekhpals be identified.

He said that strict action will be taken against the concerned Kanungo and Lekhpals who do not do the measurement despite the

order of Section-24 by the Sub-District Magistrate and show negligence in fencing and other works. He said that such Kanungo and Lekhpals will be identified and transferred from their place of posting and appointed in remote areas of the district. If even then there is no improvement in their working style, strict action will be taken against them. He said that this type of negligence and indifference is not forgivable.

Organising array of Hindi competitions at Zonal Railway level

Prayagraj: With the objective of increasing the creative participation of officers and employees in the use and spread of official language Hindi, as per the instructions of General Manager Shri Upendra Chandra Joshi and under the guidance of Chief Official Language Officer and Principal Chief Safety Officer Shri JCS Bora, the Official Language Department of North Central Railway Headquarters organized Hindi note and format writing, Hindi essay writing and Hindi speech competitions at the zonal railway level. In the Hindi speech

competition organized on the topic 'Changing India, Hopes and Challenges', the participants expressed their useful views on the changing nature of India and the achievements, hopes and future challenges of the country.

On this occasion, Deputy Chief Vigilance Officer (Traffic) Dr. Jitendra Kumar, who was present as the judge, said that as long as existence exists, challenges will remain before the country, society and the whole world. Every aspect has positive and negative aspects. We should use our

discretion and choose the meaningful and positive side, only then we will turn all those challenges into opportunities and keep moving forward on the path of hope and expectation. Dr. Jitendra Kumar praised the subject knowledge of the speakers and praised their language and expression style.

In this competition, Mr. Nishant Chauhan, Junior Accounts Assistant, Accounts Department, Headquarters got the first place, Mr. Sanjeev Kumar, Senior Section Engineer, Wagon Repair Factory Jhansi got the second place, Kumari

Kishori, Chief Office Superintendent, Vigilance Department Headquarters got the third place. Mr. Ajay Kumar Rai, Office Superintendent, Safety Branch, Jhansi and Mr. Om Kumar Kashyap, Technician, Rail Spring Factory, Sithouli and Mr. Sudesh Rao, Senior Section Engineer, Wagon Repair Factory Jhansi were selected for Prerna Puraskar. The program was coordinated by Senior Official Language Officer Shri Chandra Bhusan Pandey and conducted by Senior Official Language Officer Shri Yatharth Pandey.

Radico Khaitan to Withdraw 'Trikal' Brand

Lucknow: Radico Khaitan, one of India's leading IMFL (Indian Made Foreign Liquor) companies, has announced its decision to withdraw the recently launched brand name 'Trikal' following public concerns. The company has emphasized that this move is not merely a commercial decision but a reflection of its commitment to honoring the sentiments of the people of India. The word 'Trikal' is derived from Sanskrit and signifies the confluence of the past, present, and future. The brand name was inspired by the intent to pay tribute to India's rich heritage, culture, and craftsmanship. According to the company, the initiative aimed to present the eternal spirit of the nation to the world through the lens of Indian artisans and cultural legacy. A spokesperson for Radico Khaitan stated, "As one of India's largest IMFL companies, we are deeply rooted in the values and ethos of our nation. We respect the emotions and cultural sentiments of our fellow countrymen. As a responsible and sensitive organization, we have decided-after careful consideration and internal discussions-to withdraw the brand name 'Trikal'." Radico Khaitan reiterated its dedication to preserving and celebrating India's cultural identity while maintaining its responsibility as a corporate citizen.

TODAY'S EVENT

A cultural program will be organized by DN Agro Food Industries Pvt. Ltd. at 12 noon in the premises of Anant Rice Mill Nari Bari.

Dy CM arriving tomorrow

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Prayagraj: Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya will arrive in Prayagraj on May 31. BJP media in-charge Rajesh Kesarwani said that tomorrow on May 31, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya will arrive at the Police Line helipad at 10:45 am and will meet party workers and hold a meeting with departmental officials at the Circuit House at 10:55 am, after that at 12:05 pm, he will attend the Sangam Gaurav Samman program organized at Rama Continental Hotel Civil Line as the chief guest and at 4:45 in the evening will visit the Sankat Mochan Hanuman Temple located at Daraganj, after that will unveil the statue of Lok Mata Rani Ahilyabai Holkar on the occasion of Rani Ahilyabai Holkar Tri Centenary Birth Anniversary Celebration organized by Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani. After that, he will participate in the seminar on women empowerment and then at 6:00 pm, he will participate in Ganga Mahotsav and Ganga Aarti organized by Harihar Ganga Aarti Samiti.



Prayagraj: The newly constructed advocate chambers and parking building in the High Court is to be inaugurated on May 31. Earlier, the advocates have opposed the allocation of advocate chambers with security fee. Advocates led by High Court advocate Barrister Singh have registered their protest by running a signature campaign. A signed memorandum addressed to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was handed over to the Additional City Magistrate and Assistant Police Commissioner on

Signature campaign launched for providing advocate chambers with security charges

Advocates submitted memo addressed to CM

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Prayagraj: The newly constructed advocate chambers and parking building in the High Court is to be inaugurated on May 31. Earlier, the advocates have opposed the allocation of advocate chambers with security fee. Advocates led by High Court advocate Barrister Singh have registered their protest by running a signature campaign. A signed memorandum addressed to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was handed over to the Additional City Magistrate and Assistant Police Commissioner on

Thursday under the leadership of advocate Barrister Singh. In which a complaint has been made through the memorandum that the advocate chambers and parking building which is to be inaugurated on Saturday is being allotted to the advocates with a heavy fee. He said that its construction has been done by the implementing agency on behalf of the state government, so charging fees from the advocates is absolutely wrong. While giving the memorandum, advocate Barrister Singh said that when it has been con-



structed by the Uttar Pradesh government, then taking security amount in chamber allocation would

not be justified. Mr. Singh said that the holy place Prayag has been a center of religion, justice, culture,

education and politics since ancient times. In such a situation, if the chambers and parking building made

for advocates are given on fee basis, then the advocates will not tolerate it at all. Advocate Barrister Singh said that a demand has been made to give the chambers and parking building to the advocates free of cost. Those who submitted the memorandum included advocates Barrister Singh, Vivek Singh, Kamlesh Ratan, Rajesh Kumar Prajapati, Akhand Pratap Singh, Sanjay Singh Kushwaha, Ram Ji, Sunil Kumar, Ranjeet Kumar, Om Prakash Verma, Praveen Tripathi, Mahesh Prasad, Akhilesh Singh, etc.

Prof. Vatsala Mishra, Principal Motilal Nehru Medical College, nominated as member of ABVMU Executive Council

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Prayagraj: In an important decision, Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical University, Lucknow, under the Government of Uttar Pradesh, has nominated Professor Vatsala Mishra, Principal, Motilal Nehru Medical College, Prayagraj, as a member of the Executive Council of the University. This nomination was approved and issued by Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Sanjeev Mishra on 23 May 2025 under the Uttar Pradesh Medical University Act 2018 (Section 20 (1) and 20 (2)(3)). This tenure will be effective for the next three years. Prof. Vatsala Mishra, who has been the former Head of the Department of Pathology and Aca-

ademic Dean, has been a dedicated, visionary and highly experienced teacher in the field of medical edu-



tion reform and faculty development. As Principal, Prof. Mishra has led Motilal Nehru Medical College to numerous achievements-be it the expansion of infrastructure, implementation of new schemes or creation of a student-friendly environment. The innovations introduced by her have further strengthened the identity of the institute at the state level. Her appointment will ensure academic depth, administrative experience and effective presence of women leadership in the decision making in the working council. This appointment is a matter of pride and inspiration for Prayagraj and the entire medical community.

Inauguration of new private ward in Motilal Nehru Divisional Hospital

Prayagraj: A new private ward was inaugurated at Motilal Nehru Divisional Hospital. On this occasion, Chief Superintendent Suman Kumar Chaudhary was present as the chief guest and he formally inaugurated the new ward. Several dignitaries of the hospital attended the inauguration ceremony, including former superintendent Maya Devi, Dr Ramchandra, Dr Savita Singh, Dr Arun Sharma, Dr B K Singh, Dr Zuber Ahmed, Dr Deepesh Agarwal, Dr Suresh Maurya and Dr KK Mishra.

Incharge of the new private ward Brij Lata and nursing incharge Subha Singh gave information about the arrangements. Gyanendra Pandey and store incharge Awadhesh Babu were also present on this occasion. Employees Union President Sujit Kannaujia also appreciated this initiative. From the political field, Congress leader Irshad Ullah, senior vice president Mahesh Prasad, ministers Pramod Maurya, Rajesh

Rai and Sukesh Kumar were also present at the function. Chief Superintendent Suman Kumar Chaudhary described this new ward as a significant addition to the facilities of the hospital. He said that this ward will pro-



vide a better and more comfortable environment to the patients. He thanked all the people present for their cooperation. Other hospital staff were also present in large numbers at this inauguration ceremony. With the opening of the new private ward, patients will now be able to get better private medical facilities.

Memo given to mayor over forceful closing of govt taps

Locals are angry over the closure of government taps in Mutthiganj

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Janhit Sangharsh Samiti Uttar Pradesh submitted a memorandum to Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani at the Mayor Camp Office, Kidganj, regarding the forceful closure of the government tap installed on the road near Mutthiganj State Bank of India. While submitting the memorandum, State Vice President of Janhit Sangharsh Samiti, Rajesh Kesarwani said that for the last 50 years, a government tap has been installed near State Bank Garhiya and the local poor people, labourers, palledars have been getting water through this tap, but for the past several days, in front of where the tap is installed, Naveen Pandey, owner of the government beer shop, and his employees have forcibly closed the tap to sell water in their beer shop, due to which the poor labourers and palledars are

not getting water and there is resentment among them.

The people of the area are also angry about this matter, so the tap should be

opened immediately and the Municipal Corporation demanded punitive action against the beer shop owner Naveen Pandey and his employees for damaging the government tap and causing obstruction. Rajesh Kesarwani, Ajay Agrahari, Shatrughan Jaiswal, Abhilash Kesarwani, Kamlesh Kesarwani, Neeraj Kesarwani and people of the area were present among those who submitted the memorandum

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Congmen mourns demise of ex-Corporator

Prayagraj: The City Congress Committee Workers mourned the untimely and sad demise of former corporator Krishna Dev Kuttu. A condolence meeting held with president Fuzail Hashmi on Thursday afternoon at party office Jawahar Square. Hashmi said he was leader of down to earth, always available for help to all section of society, he died after pro long illness on Wednesday

night. A two minutes silence was also observed in memory of departed soul. UPCC former spokesman Kishore Varshney, Harikesh Tripathi, Ajay Srivastava, Parvez Siddiqui, Ram Manorath Saroj, Moinuddin, Kameshwar Sonkar, Sachin Kushwaha, Keshav Pasi, Anil Kushwaha, Anees Ahmad, Neelu, Bharat Lal Chaudhary, Sadan Lal Jatav, Anil Choudhary.

Two youths arrested with illegal arms

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: The Commissionerate Police has arrested two youths on Wednesday late evening in the case of illegal possession of arms. The action was taken in Puramufiti police station area, where on the information of the informer, both were caught by raiding near Fatehpurghat Tikri Road. Police have recovered a country-made pistol and three live cartridges from the possession of the accused. The arrested accused have been identified as Mohd. Abid (age 18 years), resident of Pura Fateh Muhammad, police station Naini and Mohd. Asad (age 19 years), resident of Umri, police station Puramufiti. Abid was cur-

rently living in New Shivala Market Bamrauli. During the search, a country-made pistol and a live cartridge were recovered from Abid while two live cartridges were recovered from Asad. Police have started necessary legal action against both. In the initial interrogation, the accused did not give any valid reason for keeping the arms with them.

The arresting team included sub-inspector Santosh Kumar Yadav, Virendra Ahirwar, Vishwas along with constables Krishna Kumar and Rahul Yadav. The police is now trying to find out where and for what purpose the two accused were going with the weapons.

Minister Nandi met Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

Meaningful discussion regarding development of UP

Congratulated India on becoming fourth largest economy in world

Nation witnessed benefits of increasing defense budget sector via Operation Sindoor

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Uttar Pradesh's Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi on Thursday made a courtesy call on Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the Finance Ministry located in North Block of the country's capital New Delhi and sought her guidance. He had a meaningful discussion on the development of Uttar Pradesh. He also extended hearty congratulations and best wishes to India on becoming the world's fourth largest economy, moving towards sustainable development under the guidance of the country's Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Minister Nandi said that under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the leadership of the Finance Minister, India is moving towards becoming a 5 trillion dollar economy and the third largest economy in the world.



The way funds are allocated to all sectors in the budget, the result is that every sector is growing. Minister Nandi said that we also saw the result of encouraging Make in India by increasing the budget of the defense sector in Operation Sindoor.

Minister Nandi informed Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that under the guidance of the Prime Minister and the leadership of the state's hard-working Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh is rapidly moving towards becoming a state with a one trillion dollar economy. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman praised the work of the Uttar Pradesh government regarding the increasing industrial possibilities in Uttar Pradesh, rapidly built expressways, construction of airports and development projects.

Coming together legendary cool icon & trusted cool brand

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: Dettol, India's leading germ protection brand, announces cricket icon and India's original Captain Cool - Mahendra Singh Dhoni - as the brand ambassador for its Dettol Soaps, Bodywash & Handwash range. This first-of-its-kind collaboration brings together a legendary cool icon and a trusted cool brand, unveiling the solution to staying cool in summers - Dettol Icy Cool. Commenting on the announcement, Kanika Kalra, Regional Marketing Director, Health, Reckitt - South Asia, said, "At Reckitt, we are committed to delivering trusted solutions that genuinely address consumer needs with care and effectiveness. Dettol Icy Cool has long been the go-to for summers with 3x intense cooling~ and protection

against germs that cause skin infections# - especially amid the heat and hustle of everyday life. We are delighted to partner with Cap-

tain Cool himself, MS Dhoni - a symbol of calm, confidence, and peak performance - to bring the essence of Dettol Icy Cool to life. Together, we aim to in-

spire millions to stay cool, stay protected, and perform their best, no matter the heat or pressure." Speaking on the association, Mahendra Singh Dhoni said, "I'm excited to be associated with Dettol to unveil their cool new campaign for Dettol Icy Cool. Staying calm under pressure has always been an important part of how I approach life on and off the field. Dettol Icy Cool provides the perfect solution to stay cool - When your body is cool, your mind will be cool. That's why this campaign speaks to me, and I'm thrilled to be a part of it." The campaign's TVC, conceptualized by McCann World Group Prasoos Joshi, Chairman, McCann Worldgroup, Asia Pacific and CEO & CCO, McCann Worldgroup, India, said "Body cool to mind cool. With Dettol Icy Cool and Captain Cool MS Dhoni this campaign is celebrating the idea that being cool under the toughest conditions elevates your performance. It's a great example of the product and the brand ambassador being in complete sync with each other".



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Singh Dhoni said, "I'm excited to be associated with Dettol to unveil their cool new campaign for Dettol Icy Cool. Staying calm under pressure has always

State Prez SP Vyapar Sabha Pradeep Jaiswal assures justice to victim

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Prayagraj: On the instructions of National President of Samajwadi Party and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav, a delegation of Samajwadi Vyapar Sabha UP came to meet the family of deceased three and half year old boy Shivaay Jaiswal under the leadership of State President Pradeep Jaiswal. State

Secretary Praveen Kesarwani, State Executive Member Ritesh Jaiswal, Metropolitan President Amit Gupta, District President of Jamunapar Surendra Kesarwani, District President of Gangapar Kamlesh Gupta and Ashwani Jaiswal and along with many big leaders of Samajwadi Party of the region and Dis-



President Pradeep Jaiswal assured the family of Shivaay Jaiswal that they will get justice and said that in this hour of grief, National President of Samajwadi Party UP and former Chief Minister Hon'ble Shri Akhilesh Yadav and the family of Samajwadi Party stand with you and said that wherever and however possible, the people of Samajwadi Party will help in every possible way. Also present in the delegation were State Secretary of Samajwadi Party Dr. Ajay Chaurasia, Vice President of Metropolitan Mohd. Gaus,

trict Vice President of Jamunapar Sanjay Sahu, Ram Bhavan Yadav, Kamlesh Pal, Ravi, Shyamu Yadav, etc. Were present. Thereafter under the leadership of State Secretary Praveen Kesarwani, State President Pradeep Jaiswal ji and all his colleagues went to the residence of Ritesh Jaiswal ji at Krishnanagar Kidganj where they held a review meeting of the Metropolitan and District Committee Executive where Ritesh Jaiswal gave a grand welcome to the State President and all the colleagues who came with him.

NOTICE

For Publication

It is informed to the general public that my correct name is Aitu son of Ram Lal which is mentioned in my Khatauni, Bank Pass Book, and the verification report by the Sub-District Magistrate. Due to mistake, my name has been mentioned as Ram Lakhan in my Aadhar Card No. 470796642136 which is wrong.

In future I should be known and recognized by my real name Aitu son of Ram Lal Resident of village Mirapur PO Sahaso Tehsil Phulpur, District Prayagraj.

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 proffered to us is that of white-turbaned Ali Reza Arafi, 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 presidency 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.

Upstox forays into insurance distribution; aims to simplify

GURUGRAM

Upstox, one of India's premier wealth management platforms, today announced its entry into the insurance distribution business. While Upstox has traditionally been recognized for its offerings in Stocks, F&O, and Mutual Funds, the introduction of Insurance marks a significant stride towards evolving into a comprehensive wealth-building platform. Today, Upstox is a one-stop-shop for a wide array of financial instruments including Stocks, IPOs, F&O, Commodities, Currencies, Fixed Deposits, P2P Lending, Government Bonds, T-Bills, NCDs, Gold, Insurance and much more. With this launch, the company aims to revolutionise India's insurance landscape by offering its users a simplified, transparent and customised experience of purchasing insurance in line with their needs. Currently,



Upstox is offering Term Life Insurance on its platform and is planning to roll out Health, Motor and Travel Insurance soon. HDFC Life is among the first insurers to partner with Upstox and feature their Term Insurance plans on the platform. Kavitha Subramanian, Co-Founder, Upstox said, "We are thrilled to expand our offerings on Upstox and foray into the insurance distribution segment.

We have recognized that navigating the insurance landscape is a daunting task. Customers are inundated with so many questions - which is the right plan, what should be the correct

criteria to select a plan, how much insurance cover will be enough. At Upstox, we understand these challenges, and we're dedicated to helping our customers get answers to all of these without overwhelming them. Our aim is to help customers cut through the noise and help Indians Invest Right. We are constantly working towards making our platform simple, secure, fast, and intuitive.

With the launch of insurance on our platform, we will remain steadfast in our endeavour of helping our users manage their wealth effectively for a secure financial future.

AI reduces the lowest-fare luggage limit to 15kg

Delhi: Air India economy class domestic fliers on reduced fares can now check in 15kg of baggage instead of 25kg. AI's substantial allowance for economy fliers within India was its USP, and it would help make up for the long-awaited enhanced cabin product on the airline's outdated planes. All major Indian airlines give 15kg check-in for free. AI spokesperson: "Last year, we adopted a menu-based pricing strategy for branded fare families to comply with worldwide airline industry standards. Air India's 'comfort', 'comfort plus', and 'flex' fare families offer dis-



tinct features and limits at varying prices. We offer tariff families to help guests choose the finest meal and services for them." "Bundled fares provide passengers more value and choice for less. On a domestic sector like Delhi-Mumbai, the price difference between 'comfort plus' and 'flex' fares is typically

about Rs 1,000, with the 'flex' fare offering nearly Rs 9,000, including 10kg extra baggage, zero change or cancellation fees, more loyalty points, and more free seats." On domestic economy class routes, 'comfort' and 'comfort plus' price families allow 15kg baggage, while 'flex' allows 25kg.

Apple may employ 5 lakh Indians

Delhi: Government sources that Apple will significantly increase its vendor workforce in India. In the next three years, Apple's suppliers and component makers might employ nearly 5 lakh people, up from 1.5 lakh.

Apple's Indian vendor with the most jobs is Tata Electronics,

which runs two factories.

A senior government official "Apple is hiring faster in India. They may employ five lakh people through vendors and component suppliers in the next three years, conservatively."

Apple has not commented on this forecast. Apple's ambitions

to boost Indian manufacturing coincide with this announcement. The corporation aspires to surpass five-fold manufacturing production in India, aiming for USD 40 billion (3.32 lakh crore) in the next four to five years.

This surge aligns with Apple's Indian success.

Home loan outstanding rises Rs 10 lakh cr

Delhi: Household debt has skyrocketed in the past two years. According to RBI's 'Sectoral Deployment of Bank Credit' data, housing sector credit grew by about Rs 10 lakh crore in the last two fiscals to a record Rs 27.23 lakh crore in March. Experts credit this to a significant home market recovery following COVID-19. Buyers who delayed buying homes during the pandemic are now buying. Government efforts to provide affordable housing have also driven this increase. An analogy: Imagine a house loan pool. This pool has risen dramatically in the past two years, signaling a homebuying boom. People catching up on delayed purchases and government affordable housing schemes may explain this. While the pool will undoubtedly increase, its rate may slow. Home ownership remained one of the top three goals in 2023, according to the BankBazaar Aspiration Index. Despite rising interest rates, bank loan books exceeded Rs 21 lakh crore as housing loan demand rose. Bankbazaar's average house loan ticket size in 2023 was Rs 28.19 lakh. Metros had an average house loan ticket size of Rs 33.10 lakh and non-metros Rs 22.81 lakh. Existing customers can move to lower home loan rates and prepay a portion of the loan to minimize the strain of rate spikes.

Ola Cabs announces 10% layoffs; CEO leaves in three months

Delhi: Sources say Ola Cabs is laying off 10%, or 200 workers, as part of its restructuring before an IPO. The company plans to file its draft IPO papers with SEBI in three months and list on the bourses later this year.

The downsizing has mostly affected the support teams, which are also affected by the company's increased focus on AI. The core technical and product teams have not been touched. The company is cutting jobs to streamline its personnel and grow responsibly. The company claims standalone operational earnings of Rs 250 crore in FY23.

Eight US publications sued OpenAI and Microsoft for copyright infringement

Delhi: OpenAI and Microsoft are being sued by eight US newspapers for "purloining millions" of copyrighted news stories to train its artificial intelligence chatbots. New York federal court received the lawsuit from the Daily News, Chicago Tribune, Denver Post, and others. The MediaNews Group and Tribune Publishing executive editor Frank Pine wrote, "We've spent billions of dollars gathering information and reporting news at our publications, and we can't allow OpenAI and Microsoft to expand the Big Tech playbook of stealing our work to build their own businesses at our expense." The lawsuit also



names MediaNews Group's Mercury News, Denver Post, Orange County Register, St. Paul Pioneer-Press, and Tribune Publishing's Orlando Sentinel and South Florida Sun Sentinel. Alden Global Capital

owns all publications. Microsoft declined comment. A request for comment from OpenAI was delayed. The New York Times sued OpenAI and Microsoft in December for Copyright infringement in ChatGPT's con-

struction and training. Teams of wealthy lawyers seeking to stop us from publicizing their stories. Lobby groups with unclear funding that debunk climate emergency and other science. Authoritarian regimes that disregard press freedom. Bad actors propagating online falsehoods to subvert democracy. Something powerful is on our side. We got you. The Guardian is funded by Indian readers like you, and our editor selects what we publish. This week is the 31st World Press Freedom Day, a time to reflect on free expression as the foundation of all rights. It's also a chance to assist independent media worldwide.

Jio Financial Services will hire the head of consumer banking at Standard Chartered Bank

Delhi: Kusal Roy, the head of Standard Chartered Bank's consumer banking division in India, has tendered his resignation and is anticipated to join Jio Financial Services. The news of upcoming consumer-focused initiatives that Jio Financial Services would soon offer coincides with the development. Roy is a seasoned banker who joined StanChart Bank in 2020 after heading Tata Capital. He had previously worked for Citibank and ICICI Bank.



Roy's departure was verified by StanChart in response to an email inquiry. Following the release of the company's most recent financial results on April 19,

Jio Financial Services announced a number of initiatives, which were unveiled concurrently with the announcement of Roy's resignation.

Godrej & Boyce to own Godrej land bank exclusive construction

Delhi:

According to sources and regulatory filings, Jamshyd Naoraji Godrej and his sister Smita Krishna Godrej-controlled Godrej & Boyce will have exclusive construction rights over a vast land bank, including a prime 3,000-acre property in Mumbai, they received as part of the family agreement that split the Godrej empire. Deal splits the 127-year-old organization into two groups commanded by Adi Godrej and his brother Nadir and their cousins Jamshyd and Smita. The former would oversee Godrej Industries Group, which includes listed firms Godrej Industries Ltd, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd, Godrej Properties Ltd, Godrej Agrovet Ltd, and Astec Lifesciences Ltd. Jamshyd Godrej, 75, will manage Godrej



Enterprises, which includes Godrej & Boyce Manufacturing Co., which operates in aerospace, aviation, defense, energy, construction, IT, and software. His niece Nyrika Holkar will be executive director. Both groups will use the Godrej brand, but they have a six-year non-compete arrangement to avoid each other. According to sources and the regulatory filing, they can enter other domains after the non-compete period, but not use the Godrej name.

Sources indicated the separation was done through share transfers, not value. Adi and Nadir Godrej will sell their Godrej & Boyce shares to the other branch. Jamshyd Godrej and his family will pass GCPL and Godrej Properties to their cousins through a family agreement. A separate agreement will regulate ownership rights for thousands of millions of rupees of real estate in affluent Mumbai areas under Godrej & Boyce (G&B).

Bandhan Life hires 1,000 avatars

"Most of our partner distribution operations are tech-enabled, so once a consumer knows what they want to buy, it's quick" said

Delhi: After acquiring Aegon Life Insurance, Bandhan Financial Holdings rebranded it Bandhan Life. The new company plans to become a multi-channel life insurance in five years as part of its expansion strategy. It will hire 1,000 people soon. After buying BCLL and Aegon Indian Holding's shareholding in February 2024, BFHL became the promoter. "Our vision for the



next five years is set," stated Bandhan Life MD and CEO Satishwar B. We will grow into all important product areas to improve our offerings." He continued, "To support our tech-enabled approach, we have extensively invested in technology and data-driven operations. This combination will enable us to develop with the new Bharat." Given their size and scale, Bandhan Bank may be the largest distribution partner initially. Satishwar said it serves mass and conventional banking customers.

Currently, Australia is monitoring Indian spices

Delhi: In order to determine whether a food recall is necessary, Australia's food safety regulator is gathering data on potential contamination of spice mixes produced by Indian businesses MDH and Everest. Three MDH spice blends and one Everest mix were taken off the market in Hong Kong earlier this month. The same Everest mix was recalled by Singapore as well due to excessive quantities of ethylene oxide, which is dangerous for ingestion by humans and can cause cancer if exposed to high levels.

Children under 12 must sit with parents on flights without charge



Delhi: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered airlines to seat children under 12 with a parent or guardian. This change follows many complaints from consumers, particularly group travelers, who were seated separated from their children after opting out of extra seat selection expenses. Under the new rule, airlines must seat children under 12 with their parents or guardians on the same booking reference. The DGCA stressed the need of recording seating arrangements for compliance. "Airline shall ensure that children upto 12 years are allocated seats with at least one of their parents/guardians, who are travelling on the same PNR and a record of the same shall be maintained," a revised DGCA rule stated. Passengers can opt out of opt-in services including premium seating and meals. Airlines may automatically assign seats before departure if passengers do not pick seats during web check-in. "Airline 'opt-in' unbundled services are optional. Auto seat assignment is available to passengers who have not selected a seat for web check-in before departure.

Google under CCI investigation over gaming firm complaint

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.

US retailers utilize Trump tariff threats to boost sales

Delhi: Local media stated that many US businesses are advising clients to buy now before President-elect Donald Trump's proposed tariffs hike prices. Trump threatened 60% tariffs on all Chinese goods and 10% to 20% tariffs on other goods during his campaign. He announced plans to impose 25% tariffs on Mexican and Canadian imports and 10% on Chinese imports. According to Xinhua,

The Union government wants 100% FDI in insurance

Delhi: The Union Finance Ministry proposed raising the insurance sector's FDI ceiling from 74% to 100% in a consultation paper. The insurance FDI limit was raised from 49% to 74% in February 2021. The government said the proposal to alter insurance legislation will make insurance more affordable, grow the insurance industry, and streamline corporate operations.

An office memorandum dated November 26 proposed lifting the FDI ceiling in Indian insurance businesses from 74% to 100% and



allowing insurers to conduct one or more kinds of insurance business and associated or incidental operations. The suggestion also cut foreign reinsurers' Net Owned Funds from Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 1,000 crore. IRDAI can also set lesser entry capital (Rs 50 crore) for underserved or unserved regions on

a case-by-case basis. The sector regulator is trying to increase capital in this capital-intensive industry. The Chairman of IRDAI suggests that the insurance market requires 50,000 crore yearly to double penetration in the country. Insurance penetration is the ratio of annual premiums issued to GDP.

Gold loans rise 50% in seven months

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

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

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

Private Equity and Venture Capital investments surge 156% year-on-year in November

NEW DELHI: Private Equity and Venture Capitalist funds invested \$4 billion in November, according to a joint report by IVCA and EY released on Wednesday.

This shows a 156 per cent year-on-year increase while a 15 per cent decline from the previous month. The month recorded 87 transactions, up 47 per cent from 59 deals in November 2023. "While 2024 had started off on a strong note, geopolitical tensions, uncertainty over US elections outcome, and inflation weighed on the markets, as did the bid-ask spread between seller expectations and buyer valuations," EY's Vivek Soni said. He further said that pure-play PE/VC investments showed significant growth, reaching \$3.5 billion in November, representing a 297 per cent rise from \$873 million in November 2023, and a 27 per cent increase from \$2.7 billion in October 2024, Soni noted.

Investment in real estate and infrastructure decreased by 20 per cent compared to the previous year, settling at \$566 million in November 2024.

The largest investment category was buyouts at \$1.6 billion, with start-up investments following at \$1.1 billion. By sector, industrial products led investments at \$1 billion, whilst financial services and e-commerce followed with \$723 million and \$550 million respectively. November saw 15 exits valued at \$3.7 billion.

, an increase from \$ 1.2 billion across 22 exits in November 2023.

Fund raising activities in November 2024 totalled \$1.1 billion from eight funds, showing substantial growth from \$401 million raised by six funds in November 2023.

Airtel, Vodafone-Idea, and Reliance Jio struggle to reach a crucial Telecom Regulatory

Delhi: As Airtel, Vodafone-Idea, and Reliance Jio struggle to reach a crucial Telecom Regulatory Authority of India deadline, Indian mobile subscribers may experience OTP delays. The telecom watchdog extended the deadline for spam and phishing traceability requirements to December 1, 2024. Telecom companies must now track all commercial messages, including OTPs, to combat fraud. Telecom companies can block scams by identifying message sources. However, missing this deadline could delay or prohibit OTPs, harming banking, e-commerce, and social networking. The TRAI imple-



"The TRAI implementation timeframe is phased. Operators will notify chain declaration violators daily until November 30. All non-compliant messages will be prohibited starting December 1"

mentation timeframe is phased. Operators will notify chain declaration violators daily until November 30. All non-compliant messages will be prohibited starting December 1.

A former employee being sued by Google India for disclosing Pixel secrets

Delhi: Google and its subsidiary in India filed a lawsuit in the US against former Bengaluru office employee Harshit Roy for revealing trade secrets that were considered confidential. In order to prevent Roy from further disseminating the stolen trade secrets that had irreparably harmed Google, Google hired an outside investigator to find him. Among the information that was revealed were comprehensive specifications of proprietary hardware.

New Honda Amaze Variants and Top Features

Delhi: India will launch the third-generation Amaze on December 4, 2024, and unofficial bookings have begun. The car is arriving at dealer yards nationwide ahead of its much-anticipated launch. It will rival the new Maruti Suzuki Dzire, Tata Tigor, and Hyundai Aura. The 2025 Honda Amaze will come in three variants—V, VX, and ZX—with many interior and exterior changes. Since its inception in India over a decade ago, the Amaze has been a popular sedan. Several new features and technolo-



gies will be added. The top model will have a floating touchscreen infotainment system with wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto connectivity, automatic climate control, ADAS technology, six airbags, reversing camera, wireless smartphone charger, multi-functional steering wheel with mount-

French energy giant Total puts Adani Gp investments on hold

Delhi: Total Energies, a French oil company, has suspended investments in Adani Group entities pending the conclusion of US bribery allegations against its founder. The Paris-based company, which owns key investments in Adani Group's renewable energy and gas distribution operations, said it was unaware of the US solar power corruption inquiry. "Total Energies rejects corruption in any form," it declared. "This indictment does not target Adani Green Energy (AGEL) itself, nor any AGEL-related companies." Total Energies claimed it learned about Gautam Adani's and others' indictment from US public pronouncements. Gautam



Adani, his nephew and Adani Green Energy executive director Sagar Adani, and others are accused of a \$265m bribery scam. Total Energies bought 19.7% of Adani Green Energy in January 2021. It invested \$444 million in an equal joint venture with the Indian company to acquire three 1,150MW operational renewable assets in September. Additionally, it owns 37.4% of Adani Total Gas, which supplies

NBCC India will buy sick PSUs and redevelop land banks

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

"Vi was accused of not paying its second bank guarantee"

Delhi: Government sources claimed the Union Cabinet has agreed in principle to waive bank guarantee requirements for telecom companies' deferred spectrum payments, but with strict conditions. The waiver will require telcos to pay three months' instalments in addition to their annual fees. Sources said the government will give up its right to collect Rs 30,000 crore in bank guarantees upfront. The Cabinet waived the requirement for telcos to buy spectrum in six auctions between 2012 and 2022. Spectrum auction regulations from 2022 and 2024 removed the necessity. Airtel and Jio would guarantee Rs 2,300 crore and Rs 4,000 crore. Vodafone Idea (Vi) spectrum auction moratorium ends in October 2025. Current



"Vi was accused of not paying its second bank guarantee of Rs 350 crore for spectrum purchased in a 2012 auction. November 1 was the payment deadline"

rules required the corporation to file bank guarantees 13 months before the next payment due date. The DoT requested bank guarantees from Vi for the September 2025 spectrum payment of Rs 24,747 crore. The DoT also asked the finance ministry to exempt operators from bank guarantees for spectrum payments. The waiver should help Vi. Telco shares

increased 7.8% intraday to Rs 7.53. After opening higher, Airtel shares fell 0.1% to Rs 1,577. Vi was accused of not paying its second bank guarantee of Rs 350 crore for spectrum purchased in a 2012 auction. November 1. was the payment deadline. Vi skipped the payment of about Rs 4,600 crore in 2016 auction guarantees two months earlier.

Tgana rejects Adani's 100-cr contribution

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

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

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



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

Pakistan plans to purchase 40 J-35 stealth fighter jets

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

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

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

apology on social media platform X, Loomer wrote: "I deeply apologize for accidentally doxxing Sriram @sri-rank by sharing public FEC records with his personal info. It was an honest mistake, and I take full responsibility. I've removed the post and I promise that I will be more careful in the future when I post FEC records." "I was posting FEC records which are public information. I was not trying to inflict harm on anyone, & if @sri-rank felt as though I was trying to 'doxx' him, I sincerely apologize for that. I promise I wasn't doxxing & I believe more speech is the answer.

Not less. @elonmusk," she said in another X post. Loomer clarified that she wouldn't apologise for her views on immigration, saying: "I won't apologize for my views on immigration but I wanted to make it very clear that as a journalist I was posting publicly available FEC records. Not doxxing. I know@elonmusk doesn't care because he doesn't like me, but I am telling the truth. FEC makes that clear too." Loomer's criticism of Krishnan's appointment as Trump's AI advisor, alleging that Krishnan seeks to eliminate

Croatia elects president as incumbent looks favourite

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

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



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

HBO and Cablevision founder Charles F Dolan dies at 98

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

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

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

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

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



of Brandon, tearing the roofs off several buildings. **Around 70,000 people without power** Malary White, chief communications officer for the state's Emergency Management Agency, said about 71,000 utility customers were without power in Mississippi, with that number expected to increase. First responders were focused

on ensuring safety and accounting for everyone, White said. "We do anticipate more thorough damage assessments starting in the early morning hours," she added. **Safety alert issued** The Mississippi highway safety patrol issued a safety alert informing people about possible obstructions while traveling.

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

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

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



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

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

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

Bangladesh imposes restrictions on journalists' access to Secretariat

DHAKA: Bangladesh interim government has cancelled the accreditation card of journalists due to security reasons. As a result, the journalists will be restricted from entering the Secretariat. Bangladesh's home ministry on Friday issued an order to impose the restrictions. The Bangladesh Secretariat is the administrative headquarters of the government of Bangladesh and houses the majority of ministries and government agencies and bodies, located in Segunbagicha, Dhaka. Usually, the Press Information Department (PID) issues accreditation cards to journalists to collect news. "Access to the Secretariat through accreditation cards issued in favour of journalists is hereby cancelled until further orders", a press release from the home



ministry said. On August 5, a student-led movement ousted Sheikh Hasina as Bangladesh Prime Minister, after weeks of protests and clashes that killed over 600 people. Hasina, 76, fled to India and an interim government led by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus was formed. The office of chief adviser Muhammad Yunus has cited safety and security reasons for his decision to restrict journalists' access to the Secretariat. "The decision to restrict journalists' access to the Secretariat was taken

in view of the safety and security of the Key Point Installation (KPI), which was hit by a devastating fire this week", chief adviser's office said in a statement. "The government will soon review the existing press accreditation cards and invite fresh applications from all the local and international news outlets for the Press Information Department to issue new accreditation cards", it added. According to the statement, temporary daily access cards will be issued by respective ministries.

Afghan forces hit back after deadly Pakistani airstrikes

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



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

Paktika province this week. A senior Pakistani security source indicated they had targeted "terrorist hideouts", although Islamabad has not formally acknowledged conducting the bombardment. "One frontier corps (FC) soldier has been reported dead, and seven others have been injured," a senior security source at the border informed

AFP, noting that clashes occurred in at least two locations in Pakistan's Kurram border district. The Afghan defence ministry said on X that "several points" across the Pakistani border "where the attacks" in Afghanistan were organised were targeted in retaliation. A Khost provincial official informed AFP that residents.

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

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



Speaking at a national dialogue organised by the Forum for Bangladesh

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

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

Musk will help uncover 'hundreds of billions' in US govt fraud: Trump



US President Donald Trump on Sunday said that Elon Musk will assist in uncovering "hundreds of billions of dollars of fraud" within federal agencies. The Republican in a Fox News interview scheduled before the Super Bowl football championship expressed that the American public desires him to identify wasteful spending. He admitted that Musk, the head of the administration's cost-reduction initiatives, has provided significant assistance in identifying unnecessary expenditure. "We're going to find billions, hundreds of billions of

dollars of fraud and abuse. And, you know, the people elected me on that," Trump said in interview excerpts released by Fox. In his third week since returning to the White House, the president has issued numerous executive orders targeting federal spending reductions. He has designated SpaceX and Tesla chief Musk to spearhead his federal cost-reduction initiatives under the newly established Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE. Musk has initiated the closure of the US Agency for International

Development, resulting in substantial staff reductions. However, federal judges have issued temporary injunctions to stop these dismissals. In his interview, Trump indicated his plans to direct Musk to scrutinise the Department of Education within the next day. "Then I'm going to go to the military," Trump said, highlighting his intention to examine Pentagon expenditure, which amounts to approximately \$850 billion for 2025. Musk's involvement has drawn scrutiny because his firms hold substantial federal government contracts

UK shadow ministers join protest against China's mega embassy

LONDON: UK shadow ministers and fellow Opposition Conservative Party parliamentarians were among hundreds of protesters who descended upon the proposed site of China's so-called mega embassy in east London. Shadow justice secretary Robert Jenrick, shadow security minister Tom Tugendhat and former Tory leader Ian Duncan Smith joined groups representing Hong Kongers, Uyghurs and Tibetans at the site of the historic Royal Mint Court near the Tower of London on Saturday. Shadow ministers are members of the oppo-



sition who scrutinise the work of the government. According to UK media reports, the protesters wanted to register their opposition against a much-larger new embassy which they fear could be used as a "spy hub" if it is allowed permission to go ahead as one of China's largest diplomatic missions in Europe. "We do not want this great historical building behind us -

in the shadow of the Tower of London - to become a mega embassy of the Chinese Community Party," Jenrick told the gathering. "This is the wrong site. It is the wrong process and it is wrong for the national security of our country," said the former housing minister.

The Metropolitan Police clashed with the protesters, who had gathered in large numbers to demonstrate the site's disruptive potential as a massive embassy with offices and homes, with slogans such as "Stand with Hong Kong" and "Mega Embassy, Mega No" ringing out.

US moves to send \$8 billion in arms to

The US state department has given Congress formal notification that it plans to move forward with sales of over \$8 billion in weapons to Israel, bypassing an informal review process that was ongoing in one House committee. The move took place just two days after President



Trump met with Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and said the US would

"take over" the devastated Gaza Strip and turn it into a "Riviera."

Elon Musk calls for impeachment of judge who restricted access to treasury department systems

Elon Musk called for the removal of the federal judge who restricted his federal spending task force's access to Treasury Department payment systems. "A corrupt judge protecting corruption," Musk tweeted in the early hours of Sunday morning. "He needs to be impeached NOW!" On Saturday, US District Judge Paul Engelmayer issued a ruling that barred special government employees and external officials from accessing systems containing sensitive information, effectively removing Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). The ruling stemmed from a legal challenge initiated by 19



Democratic state attorneys general the previous day, expressing concerns about Musk and his team's access to confidential data. This incident represents another instance in the ongoing confrontation between Trump's associates and the judicial system. Trump and his supporters have con-

sistently questioned the credibility of judges, courts, and law enforcement when their decisions have not aligned with the president's preferences. In explaining his verdict, Engelmayer highlighted two primary concerns, the potential exposure of sensitive and confidential information, and

an increased vulnerability of the systems to security breaches, which led him to support the plaintiffs' position. Earlier this month, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent provided Musk and his associates access to departmental systems. Although the Treasury stated that Musk's team had "read-only" privileges, which supposedly prevented data modification or deletion, Wired disclosed that one DOGE staff member received permissions to modify system code. The authorised staff member, 25-year-old Marko Elez, belongs to a group of young individuals without prior governmental experience whom Musk selected for his task force.

WASHINGTON: Shortly after President Trump mused Friday over imposing tariffs on Japan while sitting alongside the country's PM Shigeru Ishiba, the Japanese leader was asked by a reporter to reflect on his first meeting with Trump. It was a prime opportunity to respond to Trump's economic threat. Instead, Ishiba took a different tack - becoming the latest foreign leader to fawn over, rather than flout, the US president. "I was so excited to see such a celebrity on television," Ishiba said,



prompting Trump to turn to him and smile from ear to ear. "On television he is frightening, and he has a very strong personality, but when I met with him, actually, he was very sincere and very powerful, and with strong will for the US." Days before, PM Netanyahu called

Trump "the greatest friend Israel has ever had in the White House". President Nayib Bukele of El Salvador made an unusual gesture, proposing that Trump jail migrants in the country illegally - and even convicted US citizens - in its notorious prison complex.

Ukrainian President Zelenskyy urges allies to 'invest' in mineral wealth

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Saturday Kyiv wants its allies to invest in its mineral resources after US President Donald Trump asked for "rare earths" in exchange for military aid. "We have mineral resources. This does not mean that we give them away to anyone, even to strategic part-



ners," Zelenskyy posted on social media, quoting answers he had given in an interview with Reuters news agency. "It is about partnership. Put your money in. Invest. Let's develop this together and make money," Zelenskyy said. Trump said this week the United States was "looking to do a deal with Ukraine, where they're going to secure what we're giving them with their rare earths and other things". Quoting his Reuters interview, Zelenskyy said Ukraine's mineral wealth was worth "trillions of dollars", citing

its reserves of titanium and uranium, which he described as the largest in Europe. He said it is very important for Ukraine to "keep all this" because these resources represent "security guarantees", adding that he also did not want them to fall into Russia's hands. Trump's call for a deal involving rare earths prompted criticism from the German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Saturday. "We are helping (Ukraine) without asking to be paid in return. This should be everyone's position," he told the RND media group.

Bangladesh: Indian media backing 'militant leader' narrative against Yunus

DHAKA: Bangladesh's interim government has accused the Indian media of being involved in what it calls "a very well-orchestrated" campaign by the Awami League against chief adviser Muhammad Yunus to portray him as a "militant leader", amid claims of banning Sheikh Hasina's party. Claiming that "Hasina's oligarchs" are spending millions of dollars on this, Yunus's press secretary, Shafiqul Alam, Saturday alleged, "It is a well-orchestrated



campaign... The Indian media is also involved in this." Drawing attention to Awami League's messages, Alam said, "Look at them -- their message is Yunus is a militant leader, and Yunus is

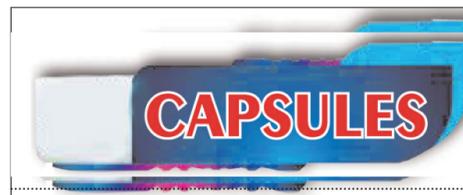
stand that it was not an uprising but a big conspiracy. Alam said Awami League and the "fallen autocracy, the mother of thieves and the mother of disappearances" want to challenge the interim government. Meanwhile, adviser for local government, rural development and cooperatives Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, one of the leaders of the students' movement, hinted that the interim government would soon take steps to ban Awami League as a political party.

Dhaka launches 'Op Devil Hunt', arrests 40

Forty people have been arrested in Bangladesh in an operation launched following a violent attack on student activists during vandalism at the house of an Awami League leader in Gazipur district. Dubbed "Operation Devil Hunt", a government statement said the opera-



tion began after gangs "linked to the fallen autocratic regime attacked a group of students, leaving them severely injured". The violence occurred during the attack on the house of former Liberation War affairs minister Mozammel Haque.



12 terrorists killed in intel-based operation in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



PESHAWAR: Security forces have killed 12 terrorists in an intelligence-based operation in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, a statement said. A security personnel was also killed in the operation on February 5-6 night in the Hasan Khel area of North Waziristan, according to the Pakistan Army's media wing. It said the operation was conducted based on intelligence regarding the presence of insurgents in the area. During the operation, security forces effectively targeted the terrorist hideout, resulting in the elimination of 12 insurgents, the ISPR statement said. The ISPR further said weapons and ammunition were recovered from the possession of the dead insurgents, who had been involved in multiple terrorist activities against security forces as well as civilians. The statement also said a clearance operation was ongoing to eliminate the presence of any remaining insurgents in the area.