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

PM Modi, Shah in BJP's 1st list for 195 LS seats, 20% sitting MPs not repeated

"The list is a reflection of the party's confidence and effort to balance boldness in de-boarding some incumbents with caution in sticking with "safe"



NEW DELHI: PM Narendra Modi, who is seeking a third term, will contest the Lok Sabha elections from his Varanasi seat, while home minister Amit Shah and defence minister Rajnath Singh will seek re-election from their constituencies of Gandhinagar and Lucknow respectively. They along with former CM of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Union ministers Jyotiraditya Scindia, Bhupendra Yadav, Mansukh Mandaviya, Smriti Irani, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Arjun Munda, Kiren Rijju and Sarbananda Sonowal are among the 195 names BJP announced on Saturday for stealing a march over its rivals.

In all, 34 Union ministers figure in the list. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will contest from Kota in Rajasthan. Names were announced for UP (51), MP (24), Gujarat (15), West Bengal (20), Rajasthan (15), Kerala (12), Chattisgarh (11), Jharkhand (11), Assam (11), Telangana (9), Delhi (5), Uttarakhand (3), Jammu and Kashmir (2), Arunachal Pradesh (2), Goa (1), Tripura (1) and Andamans (1), Daman Diu (1). Big states like Maharashtra, Bihar and Andhra as well as Punjab where the party is in coalition or is exploring tie-ups don't figure in the list though the party has finished its homework on its choices for seats it has decided to contest.

The list is a reflection of the party's confidence and effort to balance boldness in de-boarding some incumbents with caution in sticking with "safe" veterans and accommodating the influential ones who crossed over from other parties. The nerve is evident in Delhi where the party has replaced four sitting MPs, replacing 3 of them with new faces: Bansuri Swaraj, Kamaljeet Sehrawat and Praveen Khandelwal. Another Union minister, John Barla from Alipurduar in West Bengal, has been dropped. Nearly 20% of the incumbents have been dropped and 47% of the nominees are less than 50 years, bringing out

the party's focus on youth. The list includes 28 women, making up 14% of candidates announced so far. The party's focus on OBC community has also been reflected as majority of sitting MPs from the caste bracket, mainly in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, have been retained. The category accounts for 57 of the nominations. The party has fielded one Muslim candidate — Abdul Salam from Malappuram in Kerala. This is the first time BJP has fielded a Muslim candidate in Lok Sabha polls since 2014. Former Union ministers who are missing from the list include Harshvardhan (Chandni Chowk) and Jayant Sinha who took to X in the morning to declare that he had opted out of the contest because of his commitment to fight climate change. Suspense is going to linger over the chances of others like Pokhriyal Nishank as the party has refrained from confirming him for his Haridwar seat.

Centre signs pact to address Tripura's indigenous issues

NEW DELHI: A tripartite agreement aimed at making Tripura dispute-free by resolving all issues concerning its indigenous people, was co-signed by the Centre, Tripura gov and The Indigenous Progressive Regional Alliance (Tipra) in the presence of home minister Amit Shah here on Saturday. "Today is a historic day for Tripura. Through this agreement, we have honoured history, corrected past wrongs and accepted today's realities, to move towards the future... the indigenous people of Tripura no longer need to fight for their rights as gov of India will now be two steps ahead to create mechanisms to safeguard their rights," Amit Shah said after the tripartite pact was signed. The pact - eleventh in the series of agreements signed in the current term of Modi gov to make North-East region free of



insurgency, violence and disputes - seeks to resolve all issues faced by Tripura's indigenous people regarding history, land and political rights, economic development, identity, culture and language. The Centre, Tripura gov and Tipra (popularly known as Tipra Motha) have agreed to constitute a joint working group to work out and implement the mutually-agreed points on all issues in a time-bound manner. Starting Saturday and through the course of

implementation of the pact, all stakeholders shall refrain from resorting to any form of protest/agitation. Present at the signing ceremony on Saturday were Tipra Motha founder Pradyot Debbarma, Tripura CM Manik Saha and senior officials of MHA and Tripura gov. Shah thanked Tipra and other tribal outfits for having played an important role in finalising the pact. Shah said the pact seals Tripura's commitment to con-

tributing to and getting its share in realising PM Modi's 'Viksit Bharat' dream. Recalling the 11 agreements signed by Modi gov related to borders, identity, language and culture of North-East region, the home minister said the first such pact, signed with NLFT in 2019, as well as the one signed on Saturday pertain to Tripura. The other pacts include the 2020 Bru and Bodo agreements; Karbi-Anglong pact of 2021; the tribal peace agreement.

No big planning behind move, says Jayant as RLD joins NDA



NEW DELHI: Weeks after Rashtriya Lok Dal chief Jayant Chaudhary confirmed he will join NDA ahead of Lok Sabha elections, RLD made the formal move on Saturday. "Today, in the presence of home minister Amit Shah-ji, there was a meeting with president of RLD Jayant Chaudhary-ji. I heartily welcome his decision to join NDA family," BJP national president JP Nadda wrote on X. Chaudhary had told reporters, "I took this decision (of joining NDA) after speaking to all MLAs and workers of my party. There was no big planning behind this decision, or had we decided this a long time ago. We had to take this decision within a short time because of the situation. We want to do something good for the country, for our people." The RLD chief had said that consultations with MLAs and workers were held after his grandfather Chaudhary Charan Singh was bestowed Bharat Ratna. Bonhomie between BJP and RLD became reasonably apparent after Chaudhary reacted to his late grandfather being given the country's highest civilian honour. "Dil jeet liya" was the first post by Chaudhary after PM Narendra Modi made the announcement.

Cooperatives can empower the marginalised, says Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Union home and cooperation minister Amit Shah on Saturday inaugurated an umbrella organisation - National Urban Cooperativem Finance and Development Corporation (NUCFDC) - for urban cooperative banks and pitched for having such banks in every city across India in a time-bound manner. Underlining the importance of cooperatives, Shah



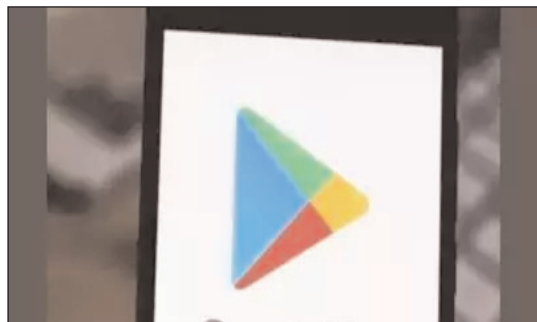
said data alone cannot be a parameter of the country's development and that there should be active participation of people to drive national development. Cooperatives can empower even

the most marginalised to contribute meaningfully, he said. The body, received a certificate of registration from RBI to operate as a Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC) and will act as

a FinTech company and serve both large and small banks in the cooperative sector. Besides, it will be allowed to operate as a Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for the cooperative banking sector. At present, there are over 1,500 scheduled and non-scheduled urban cooperative banks (UCBs) in India with a total number of branches exceeding 11,000.

Google starts reinstating Indian apps after Centre intervenes

NEW DELHI: Google started reinstating some of the Indian apps that it had delisted from its Play Store over payment issues after intervention by Union communications & IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw who said that "this cannot be permitted" as he asked the disputing parties to come and meet the gov on the matter. As some of the top start-up founders came out strongly against Google's move to delist the apps from Play Store, the gov swung into action with Vaishnaw expressing concern over the issue. "India is very clear, our policy is very clear... our startups will get the protection that they



need." The minister said the government will be meeting Google and app developers who have been delisted, next week, to resolve the dispute. "I have already called Google... I have already called the app developers who have been delisted, we will be meeting them next week. This cannot be permitted... This kind of delisting cannot be permitted," Vaishnaw said as reports soon started

coming in of some of the apps being allowed again. Sources say that some of the companies are mulling legal action and may approach fairplay regulator CCI with charges of abuse of dominance against Google, something where the tech giant has already been penalised last year. After the minister's comments went public, reports emerged that apps like Info Edge's Naukri,

Saarc in trouble due to Pak's support of terror: Jaishankar

Even as Pakistan prepares to welcome a new gov, the chances of a revival of Saarc summit process remain slim as India is unlikely to compromise on its zero-tolerance policy for terrorism. EAM S Jaishankar said Saturday Saarc is in trouble because one of the member continues to undertake violent actions against other members. India pulled out of



the summit process, bringing it to a halt, after the 2016 Uri terror assault on Indian soldiers that was carried out from across the border." "We have kind of obfuscated this issue for too long.

We found excuses that there is a constituency out there, there is a reason for why they are doing it. Bottomline is we have to be clear in our own minds. Is it the view that we should proceed with Saarc even if one Saarc member actually has training camps, trains terrorists, pushes them across, supports them in different ways," Jaishankar said at the Ananta Centre.

GDP numbers propels Sensex and Nifty to new peaks

India's GDP growth rate for Oct-Dec, which at 8.4% beat estimates by every economist and analyst by wide margins, enthused Dalal Street investors and the subsequent buying pushed Sensex and Nifty to new all-time peaks on Friday. The day's rally also lifted India's market capitalisation to almost at Rs 400 lakh crore or \$4.8 trillion, also a new all-time high. GDP numbers propels Sensex and Nifty to new peaks

'Motherhood full-time job': HC hikes woman's maintenance cost

BENGALURU: Highlighting demanding nature of motherhood, Karnataka HC in a recent judgment ruled in favour of a woman and her two children, and hiked her maintenance cost. Justice M Nagaprasanna granted the woman Rs 36,000 per month in maintenance from her husband, a manager in a nationalised bank, instead of Rs 18,000 per month awarded by Anekal family court. The couple, who got married in 2012, has two sons, aged 11 and 6. As the relationship deteriorated, the wife in 2020 moved family court and filed an application under Section 24 of Hindu Marriage Act, seeking Rs 36,000 per month as interim maintenance. The family

court had in 2023 initially awarded Rs 18,000 per month in interim maintenance. The wife challenged the order, pointing out that her husband is drawing a monthly salary of Rs 90,000. The woman said she had requisite qualifications and was working earlier, but her husband insisted she quit her job as a lecturer to take care of the children. The husband argued that she is qualified and can resume her career and be financially independent instead of depending on maintenance he is expected to pay. After perusing materials on record and citing SC decision in Shamima Farooqi Vs Shahid Khan and Reema Salkan Vs Sumer Singh.

Kochi city joins WHO's global network of age-friendly cities



KOCHI: In a first in Kerala, Kochi city has been declared as a member of the global network of 'age-friendly cities' by the World Health Organization (WHO). Such cities share and promote the values and principles of WHO's age-friendly approach and are committed to create age-friendly environments. However, organisations working with senior citizen groups are unimpressed and said the city lacks basic age-friendly amenities. "Kochi is the first city in South Asia to get age-friendly city status.

This is a recognition for the efforts made by the corporation to provide the necessary infrastructure for the senior citizens and to create a favourable environment for mental and physical health of senior citizens in the city," said mayor M Anilkumar. The announcement was made on Thursday at the WHO headquarters in Geneva. "We have implemented projects such as making public places and buildings age-friendly, providing health services to the elderly, providing advanced technology

training to senior citizens in collaboration with colleges, special taxi service for senior citizens, and Pakalveedu projects", said Anilkumar. Eyeing on the age-friendly status, the corporation had implemented various programmes based on the recommendations of the WHO in collaboration with Magics, a voluntary organization, and Indian Medical Association (IMA) during the past three years. Corporation claims that various projects are being implemented to benefit an average

BJP eyes options in Badaun against SP veteran Shivpal

LUCKNOW: Who would be up against SP heavyweight and party chief Akhilesh Yadav's uncle Shivpal Singh Yadav in Badaun in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections? The question has started doing the rounds amid broad indications that the BJP may deny the ticket to sitting party MP and daughter of former SP leader Swami Prasad Maurya, Sanghmitra Maurya, this time. Highly placed sources in the BJP said that Union minister and sitting Rajya Sabha MP BL Verma and the party's Braj region president Durvijay Singh Shakyra are emerging as the top contenders for the ticket from the constituency which has a sizable presence of the OBC, essentially Kushwahas, Shakyas, Lodhs and Yadavs. Sixty-two years old Verma is often considered a 'close aide' of former CM Kalyan Singh. Currently, Union MoS for cooperative and north-east development Verma has also been the party's state vice-president. He was nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 2020 and a year later, in July 2021, was inducted in the Modi cabinet. Verma's tenure in RS is till November 2026. Shakyra, too, wields considerable influence within the organisational command given his closeness to the RSS. He started his political career



while working with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad. He later became the Braj region general secretary and vice-president. The saffron brass is also considering the name of SP MLA from Bisauli in Badaun, Ashutosh Maurya, who voted from the BJP candidates in the recently conducted Rajya Sabha poll. Maurya, a three-term MLA from the district, happens to be a Dalit. In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Sanghmitra was the foremost choice of the BJP against SP's Dharmendra Yadav, who has been representing the seat since 2004. The move paid off as Sanghmitra defeated Dharmendra by a margin of over 18,000 votes. Sources said that Sanghmitra

has not been finding much favour from BJP regional brass after Swami Prasad unfurled the banner of revolt against BJP and defected to SP camp in the run-up to 2022 assembly elections. Though Maurya lost the assembly elections from Fazilnagar seat in Kushinagar, Akhilesh propped him as party national general secretary and MLC. The move, however, boomeranged as Maurya courted controversies by making provocative statements against Sanatan Dharma and Ram temple, in what potentially hurt the Hindu religious sentiments. His statements not only drew sharp riposte from the saffron dispensation but also put the SP brass in a discomfiture. Sources said that BJP has been

Rat-hole miner Hassan declines another house offered in Delhi's Dilshad Garden

NEW DELHI: Rat-hole miner Wakeel Hassan, who had lost his house in a demolition drive, has declined another offer of a house in Dilshad Garden here by the authorities. "On Friday night, four government officers, including an SDM, came and offered me a house in Dilshad Garden but I refused to accept it as they wanted me to shift on a temporary basis," Hassan said. "It was also not in writing. That house belongs to an NGO," he said. After the demolition, DDA officials proposed Hassan to relocate to an EWS (economically weaker sections) flat in Narela, which is far from Khajoori Khas in northeast Delhi. Hassan rejected the offer, stating that it was "far and unsafe." On being asked why he declined the second offer, considering that Dilshad Garden is closer to Khajoori Khas compared to the distant Narela, Hassan said that the cost of his demolished house was more than Rs 1 crore and if the government wants to compensate, then the cost of the house should be matched.

Promotion of UTS app at 10 WR stations, redesigned QR code with user-friendly feature

MUMBAI: The Western Railway Mumbai Central division on Saturday introduced 'Utsav' campaign to promote the UTS app -- which is used to purchase unreserved tickets online. This novel initiative has been launched across 10 stations of WR and will run from March 2 to 7, a senior official said. The stations include Churchgate, Dadar, Andheri, Malad, Kandivali, Borivali, Bhayander, Vasai Road,

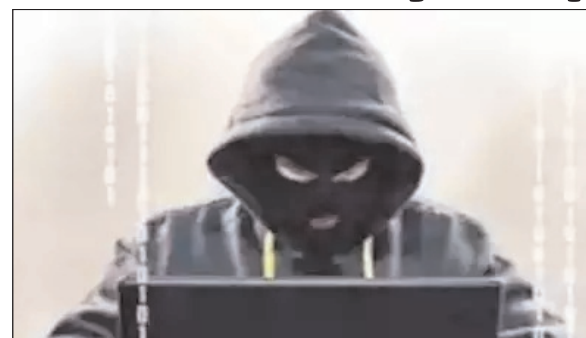


Nalasopara and Virar. Unreserved Ticketing System App Vapro (Gujarati) which signifies a revolutionary approach to railway

ticketing," said WR chief spokesperson Sumit Thakur. As part of the initiative, a redesigned and user-friendly QR code has been introduced, incorporating the UTS App logo and station names for easy readability on smartphones, reflecting advanced technology in the railway system. The newly launched QR code enhances ticketing efficiency with a sleek, user-friendly design. n, he said.

Got a mail from 'Sir'? Beware, say cops

KOLKATA: Beware the next time you receive a message asking you for help online from your beloved teacher from a contact number that you don't even know. Also, stay safe from random WhatsApp or Telegram messages from unverified numbers where your gym instructor or "coaching sir" might be asking for monetary favour. Phishing cases are on rise since puja with multiple employees, especially in IT and banking sectors, receiving phishing links in their WhatsApp from



people in their contact list asking them to buy gift coupons. The latest victims are a female student and an oil firm executive, who lost Rs 30,000 while buying three gift vouchers on request from their "beloved teachers". In both

cases, the SMS and WhatsApp messages were camouflaged to be sent by their teachers with whom they are "still in touch, but mostly online and over phone". Interestingly, in both occasions, the WhatsApp message carried a photograph

of the teacher to pass off the instructions as genuine. "An officer of a state-owned oil company fell prey to cyber fraud while encashing gift vouchers on Thursday afternoon, hours after a college student was duped in a similar manner. After being asked to buy three gift vouchers of Rs 10,000 each and forwarding it to his teacher, he realized he had been cheated. The official filed an e-mail complaint with Kolkata Police's cyber PS on Thursday. On the

PAT increased by 9.5% for Q3, to INR 45.7 Cr

Ambala / Karnal: EaseMyTrip.com, a leading online travel platform in India, continues its strong financial performance, reporting INR 1,607.9 million in revenue for Q3FY24, marking an 18.1% year-on-year increase. EBITDA reached INR 653.7 million, up by 10.9% year-on-year, with a Profit After Tax of INR 456.6 million, reflecting a 9.5% year-on-year growth. Gross Booking Revenue (GBR) for Q3FY24 stands at 20,260.7 million. Following a successful quarter, EaseMyTrip acquired a stake of approximately 13% in ECO Hotels and Resorts, diversifying its portfolio beyond online travel services. This move aligns with the company's commitment towards organic and in-organic growth and sustainability by promoting environmentally friendly prac-

tices within the travel and hospitality sector. Highlighting financial performance, for 9MFY24, the Revenue from Operations was INR 4,265.3, growth of 28.4% Y-o-Y. The EBITDA stood at INR 1,705.2 million, a 17.9% of Y-o-Y growth and the reported Profit after Tax of INR 1,188.6 million, growth of 15.3% Y-o-Y. This strong performance underscores EaseMyTrip's continued momentum and further strengthens its position as one of the few profitable new-age tech companies in the industry. Additionally, the company recorded a GBR of INR 64,226.0 million in 9MFY24, further strengthening its market position. The total number of air bookings (net of cancellations) in Q3FY24 reached 22.6 Lacs. Similarly, hotel night bookings and the other bookings were 91,915 and 2.7 Lacs, respec-

tively. For 9MFY24, air ticket sales (net of cancellations) were 83.7 Lacs. Furthermore, there were 3.8 Lacs hotel night bookings and 7.7 Lacs in the other bookings. Following the triumph, EaseMyTrip was recognized as the Online Travel Marketplace of the Year (B2C) by ET Travel World Awards. The company has always been committed to providing a range of diverse travel related services. In summary, EaseMyTrip has been consistent in customizing its offerings to the evolving needs of travellers. This proactive approach is evident in the expansion of services, user-friendly website design, and implementation of advanced search functionalities and real-time updates. All these features prioritize customer satisfaction by facilitating informed decision-making.

NSE registered investor base crosses 9 crore unique investors

AMBALA: The unique registered investors on the National Stock Exchange of India crossed 9 crore (90 million) on February 29th, 2024. The total number of client codes registered with the Exchange stands at 16.9 crores (169 million) (Includes all client registrations done till date; clients can register with more than one trading member). Unique investor registrations at NSE have seen an accelerating trend over the last few years. While the increase from 6 to 7 crore (60 to 70 million) unique investors took about nine months, the next crore (10 million) investors came in eight months, and the jump from 8 to 9 crores (80 to 90 million) took only five months. During this period, daily new unique registrations



have averaged between nearly 47,000 in October 2023 to 78,000 in January this year. The investor base has seen more than 3x jump in the last five years, facilitated by rapid growth in digitization, rising investor awareness, financial inclusion, and strong market performance. From the beginning of FY24 up to February 29th, 2024, the Nifty 50 returned ~27%, while Nifty 500 delivered 38% return over the same period. Annualised return over

the last five-year period ending February 2024 stood at 15.3% and 17.5% for Nifty 50 and Nifty 500 respectively. Of the new investors that have entered the market since October 2023, nearly 42% hailed from North India, followed by West India (28%), South India (17%) and East India (13%). Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra contributed the largest number of new investors during this period, together

accounting for more than a quarter of all new additions. Currently, the highest number of unique registered investors are from Maharashtra with 1.6 crore (16 million) investors, followed by Uttar Pradesh with 97 lakh (9.7 million) investors and Gujarat with 81 lakh (8.1 million). This increase in new investors has come across states, with all but 33 pin codes having at least one individual directly investing in the market.

Store cashier flees with Rs 1 crore, held while trying to escape to Gujarat

NEW DELHI: A cashier sent police on a wild goose chase after stealing Rs 1 crore from a clothing store in South Extension 1 where he worked. Rishabh Kumar Sharma (26), his wife and two others were finally arrested on Thursday. After raiding five-six places unsuccessfully, police first traced Sharma (26) and his wife in Uttarakhand's Dehradun, but they had left the place by the time the cops reached there. Then Sharma made a call to a friend from his wife's mobile phone, which led to his arrest at Nizamuddin Railway Station while they were trying to flee to Gujarat. His wife, uncle and a friend were also arrested. The owner of the store had filed a complaint alleging that one of his employees who had been working as a cashier for the past seven-eight months had fled with Rs 1 crore on Feb 27.

Two-child norm for govt jobs in Rajasthan gets Supreme Court nod

NEW DELHI: More than 21 years after upholding validity of the mandatory 'two-child norm' eligibility criteria for candidates contesting panchayat polls, the Supreme Court has now put its stamp of approval on an identical norm for public employment, debaring candidates who have more than two children from seeking govt jobs. A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Diapankar Datta and K V Vishwanathan dismissed the appeal filed by ex-serviceman Ram Lal Jat, who had retired from service in 2017 and had applied for a constable's post in Rajasthan Police on May 25, 2018. His candidature was rejected as Rule 24(4) of Rajasthan Police Subordinate Service Rules, 1989 that followed the norm set under the Rajasthan Various Service (Amendment) Rules, 2001, which provides



that "no candidate shall be eligible for appointment to the job who has more than two children on or after June 1, 2002." He had unsuccessfully challenged the rejection of his candidature for constable post in Rajasthan high court, which in Oct 2022 had ruled that the fixation of norms squarely fell in the realm of policy, which could not be interfered with by the court. The Justice Kant-led bench said, "A somewhat similar provision, which was introduced as an eli-

gibility condition to contest panchayat elections, has been upheld by the SC in the case Javed and others vs. State of Haryana in 2003. This court held that the classification, which disqualifies candidates for having more than two living children, was non-discriminatory and intra-vires the Constitution, since the objective behind the provision was to promote family planning." The bench dismissed. Jat's appeal saying the HC judgment did not warrant any interference.

'Bail as a rule' principle losing ground in trial courts: CJI

NEW DELHI: Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud on Saturday expressed concern over 'bail as a rule, jail an exception' principle losing ground in trial courts and said district judges must reverse the trend as well as public perception by giving due importance to citizens' personal liberties. Speaking to a pan-India congregation of district judges at Kachchh in Gujarat, he said, "There is rising apprehension that district courts are increasingly reluctant to entertain matters concerning personal liberty." "Long-standing principle that 'bail is a rule, jail is an exception' seems to be losing ground, as evi-



dened by growing number of cases reaching high courts and Supreme Court as appeals against rejection of bail by trial courts.

This trend warrants a thorough reevaluation." Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who will succeed Justice Chandrachud as CJI in Nov, too said district judges must adopt a proactive approach to protect citizens' funda-

mental rights and liberties by pithily questioning prosecution about sanctity of charges levelled against an accused before deciding anticipatory bail or bail applications of incarcerated persons. CJI said judiciary is facing public trust deficit to a certain extent for two major reasons - backlog or huge pendency of cases and culture of adjournment.

To boost operations, naval base to be commissioned at Minicoy

NEW DELHI: A small naval base, INS Jatayu, will be commissioned at Minicoy on March 6, as part of govt's plan to incrementally boost military presence and security infrastructure in the strategically-located Lakshadweep archipelago

in the Arabian Sea. "With the requisite infrastructure and resources, INS Jatayu will enhance Navy's overall operational capability and reach in the region. The base will facilitate efforts towards anti-piracy and anti-narcotics operations in

western Arabian Sea," an officer said Saturday. "It will also augment Navy's capability as the first responder in the region and augment connectivity with the mainland," he added. The move comes even as plans are also afoot to develop

Myanmar influx has spurred crime in northeast, India tells UNHRC

NEW DELHI: Expressing deep concern over the situation in Myanmar, government said the precarious humanitarian situation and escalation of violence have led to influx of thousands of persons into the northeastern states. The ongoing situation also has direct implications in the form of increased transnational crimes, such as drug and human trafficking, and India is doing its best to deal with this situation, govt said in a statement at the UN Human Rights Council. "India has



always accorded a high priority to maintenance of peace and stability in Myanmar and its economic development. We reiterate our call for the immediate cessation of violence, by all sides, release of

political detainees, humanitarian assistance, and the resolution of the crisis through constructive dialogue," govt said, adding India remains steadfast in its support to Myanmar's transi-

tion towards inclusive federal democracy. "We also reiterate the need for arriving at peaceful solutions that are Myanmar-led and Myanmar-owned," it said. India also called on the international community to work together in pragmatic and constructive ways to support the people of Myanmar and facilitate a return to peace and stability, while pledging to strengthen the democratic processes, people-centric projects and capacity building initiatives in the conflict-ridden country.

Satisfied as interests of Indian farmers & fishermen protected at WTO: Commerce and industry

ABU DHABI:

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday said that India had managed to successfully protect interests of its farmers and fishermen at the WTO meet and sought a quick resolution of the impasse that had rendered the dispute-settlement mechanism dysfunctional. "It is important to get the appellate body back so that disputes can be escalated for resolution. Without an appellate body, no dispute can be taken to its completion. To that extent,



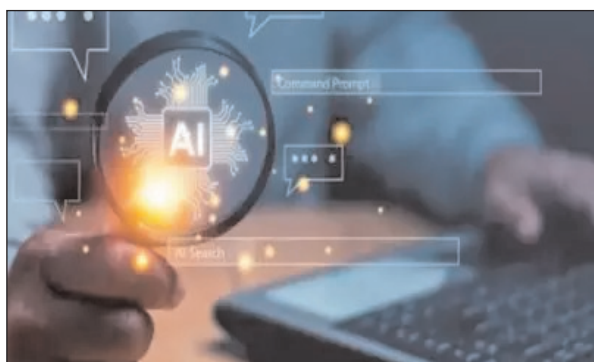
people do feel that it's not worth the while to escalate a concern that many countries may have on practices of others. Given the fact that it's not going to lead to an outcome, a lot of countries will hesitate to get into legal process," he told reporters, while

lamenting slow progress on the issue. As reported by in its late edition, trade talks ended early Saturday, where there was no agreement on key issues - agriculture and fisheries. Member nations, however, agreed to extend customs duty waiver on e-

commerce for another two years. The minister was "satisfied" with the outcome. "A forward movement is always a sign of a possible closure going forward. India continues to retain full policy space for benefit of our farmers and fishermen," he said. While India was pushing to revise formula for calculating subsidies for procurement of grains for the public distribution system, Goyal said, the peace clause that prevents any trade dispute in case of a breach of limit.

AI platforms need permits

NEW DELHI: With general elections on the anvil and following a controversy over unsubstantiated comments on PM Modi by Google's AI platform Gemini, govt on Saturday said it has issued an advisory for artificial intelligence-led internet companies to label any unverified information as potentially false and error prone. Any AI-led public information platform will need to have a permit before being allowed in India, said govt, while warning that it will not hesitate to deny permission in case of potential risks of misinformation or bias. The notice comes almost two-and-a-half months after govt had issued an advisory on the matter of deepfakes after several incidents of synthetically-made content flowing into social media and internet channels. The latest advisory says AI-led platforms should not throw up unlawful, misinformed or biased content that has potential to threaten



the integrity of the nation or of the electoral process. IT & electronics MoS Rajeev Chandrasekhar said AI platforms such as OpenAI and Google's Gemini will have to make disclosures about the nature of their responses to govt as well as India's digital citizens, clearly mentioning that the content can be false, error-prone, and unlawful as the model is still under trial and testing. "If you are an untested platform and you think the platform is still in early stages of training and therefore is unreliable, you need to do three things. Firstly, you need to tell govt that I am deploy-

ing it. Second, you need to inform consumers by having a disclaimer that I am a platform under trial. Third, you need to explicitly mention this to the consumer who is using it, and you need to get his or her consent for using the platform. Take Google Gemini as an example. It will have to tell the government before launching that this is a bit buggy platform." Asked whether govt will have powers to refuse the launch of such a platform in the country if it finds it unreliable, Chandrasekhar told, "We can reject it if we find there is more risk.

The unique registered investors on the National Stock Exchange of India crossed 9 Crore

AMRITSAR/BHATINDA:

The unique registered investors on the National Stock Exchange of India crossed 9 crore (90 million) on February 29th, 2024. The total number of client codes registered with the Exchange stands at 16.9 crores (169 million) (Includes all client registrations done till date; clients can register with more than one trading member). Unique investor registrations at NSE have seen an accelerating trend over the last few years. While the increase from 6 to 7 crore (60 to 70 million) unique investors took about nine months, the next crore (10 million) investors came in eight months, and the jump from 8 to 9 crores (80 to 90 million) took only five months. During this period, daily new unique registrations

Over 46% of all new investor registrations in the last five months originated from districts beyond the top 100 districts (by number of new registrations in the period)

have averaged between nearly 47,000 in October 2023 to 78,000 in January this year. The investor base has seen more than 3x jump in the last five years, facilitated by rapid growth in digitization, rising investor awareness, financial inclusion, and strong market performance. From the beginning of FY24 up to February 29th, 2024, the Nifty 50 returned ~27%, while Nifty 500 delivered 38% return over the same period. Annualised return over the last five-year period ending February 2024 stood at 15.3%

and 17.5% for Nifty 50 and Nifty 500 respectively. Of the new investors that have entered the market since October 2023, nearly 42% hailed from North India, followed by West India (28%), South India (17%) and East India (13%). Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra contributed the largest number of new investors during this period, together accounting for more than a quarter of all new additions. Currently, the highest number of unique registered investors are from Maharashtra

with 1.6 crore (16 million) investors, followed by Uttar Pradesh with 97 lakh (9.7 million) investors and Gujarat with 81 lakh (8.1 million). This increase in new investors has come across states, with all but 33 pin codes having at least one individual directly investing in the market. Over 46% of all new investor registrations in the last five months originated from districts beyond the top 100 districts (by number of new registrations in the period). Indirect participation has also increased meaningfully during this period, as evidenced by almost 1.6 crore (16 million) new SIP accounts opened between Oct'23 to Jan'24, and average monthly SIP inflows of ~Rs 17,600 crores (176 billion) vs. Rs 15,115 crore (151 billion) in the previous six-month period.

Met museum head talks art of repatriation and relevance

It's not easy running one of the world's largest museums with more than 1.5 million works spanning 5,000 years. And certainly not easy amidst heightened scrutiny over looted objects and mounting pressure for repatriation. Max Hollein—who took charge of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met), New York as director in 2018 and CEO last July—knows this all too well. Fresh from signing an MoU with India's Ministry of Culture, being "blown away" by the Sanchi Stupa, Jantar Mantar and the Kanheri Caves and ahead of delivering a lecture at the CSMVS on Friday, Hollein remained composed as he sat down for a chat about policing its art and artefacts with a problematic past. recent restitutions and keeping the museum relevant in an age of sensory overload. What kind of collaborations do you foresee with the signing.

Editorial

New criminal laws: An era of accountability, transparency and justice

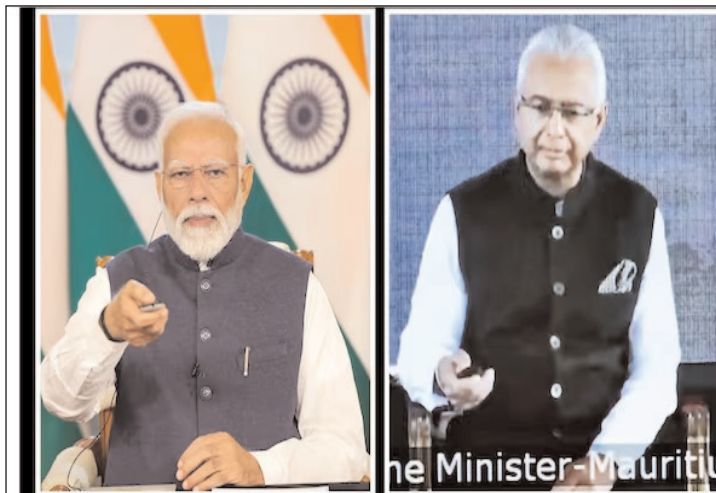
The Central government has notified that the three new criminal laws, namely the Bhartiya Sakshya Sanhita (BSS), Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which aim to replace the colonial era Indian Evidence Act 1872 (IEA), Indian Penal Code 1860 (IPC), and Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 (CrPC), will come into effect from 1 July 2024. One of the most appreciable measures in the enactment of the new criminal laws has been the insertion of the words "electronic and digital records" in the definition of "document" in section 2(1)(d) of the BSS. The scope of "documents" in the new BSS has been widened and made futuristic to include server logs, locational evidence, voice mail messages stored on digital devices...etc. In the IEA 1872, the definition of "document" did not specifically include electronic records. For the admissibility of electronic records in evidence, compliance with Section 65B of IEA 1872 was required. To ease the process further, two new forms have now been included in the schedule of the BSS, which will not only authenticate the collection process but also speed up the appreciation process of digital evidence. These reforms in the domain of "electronic evidence" will help in plugging the loopholes that were present in the IEA 1872. In CrPC 1973, there was no specific provision for Zero FIR. Zero FIR means an FIR registered by the police in case of a cognisable offence, irrespective of the jurisdiction. Earlier section 154 CrPC provided for the registration of FIR but not Zero FIR expressly. Now, section 173(1) of BNSS explicitly provides that every piece of information disclosing the commission of a cognisable offence, "irrespective of the area where the offence is committed", may be given orally or through electronic means to the police. In many instances, the police refuse to register an FIR, citing a lack of jurisdiction, and the helpless victims or complainants have to run from pillar to post to get an FIR registered. The new BNSS, by clearly providing for Zero FIR, will ensure that no common man faces difficulty in getting an FIR registered.

Section 173 further mandates that when such information related to the commission of a cognisable offence is communicated electronically, it shall be "taken on record by him (police officer) on being signed within three days by the person giving it." It will ensure that FIR is registered in a stipulated time without any delay. Section 105 is a new provision added to the BNSS.

Section 105 mandates that search and seizure made by the police, including preparing the list of seized items and signature of witnesses, shall be recorded through audio-video electronic means. It further obliges the police officer to forward such recording "without delay" to the District Magistrate, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, or First-Class Judicial Magistrate. Section 105 of BNSS will ensure more transparency and curb the misuse of police powers by eliminating any likelihood of the police planting fake evidence. A new sub-section (3) has also been added in section 176 of BNSS, which provides for the procedure for investigation by the police. Section 176 was section 157 in the old CrPC. The newly added sub-section (3) specifically provides that where an offence is punishable with imprisonment of seven years or more, a forensic expert shall visit the crime scene to collect the forensic evidence. It further provides that such process of evidence collection shall be video recorded. It is a noteworthy step towards greater transparency and accountability in evidence gathering by the investigating agencies.

India and Mauritius: Gateways to Africa, investment and development

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth jointly inaugurated several infrastructure and connectivity projects in the strategic island nation on 29 February. Prime Minister Modi also recalled his promise given to the people of Agalega island, who have been disconnected from the mainland. He even reiterated the catchphrase 'Modi ki Guarantee' in the context of India's fulfilment of promises even in the context of foreign domains of development as India continues to support the developmental aspirations of friendly people in the Global South while becoming their voice at the global stage. Fighting for their cause in an unjust world has been a major marker of Indian foreign policy. India and Mauritius are crucial and critical in the Indian Ocean Region which is facing increasing traditional and non-traditional threats. As the maritime collaboration continues to expand within and beyond the confines of SAGAR(Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine and IORA(Indian Ocean Regional Association) the outreach of India's non-reciprocal "Neighbourhood First" and "Link Africa Faster" encompasses the fulfillment of developmental aspirations of the Mauritians – 70 per cent of whom are of Indian



origin, courtesy the French and British colonialism. Mauritius since 2005 has been a gateway to foreign direct investment and often aced the charts for the highest investment being routed through Port Louis into India due to a unique Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty and Convention(DTAC). The FDI accounted for over 26 per cent of the total during 2000-2022 amounting to \$161 billion. No doubt since its renegotiation the FDI via this route has come down but Port Louis still retains that ease and charm for investors. Trade is also burgeoning to over half a billion dollars. In the developmental domain too Mauritius takes the larger pie of the cake with high-impact socio-economic, infrastructural and developmental projects let alone a large number of scholarships and

capacity-building assistance provided under various Government of India programmes. These have been tailored under India's Africa policy so succinctly outlined by Prime Minister Modi during his address to the Ugandan parliament in 2018 underscoring that India believes and works for 'Africa for Africans' approach and their wishes must be respected. Projects included the metro to the community centre and developmental projects to social housing, the largest cultural centre, civil services college and the establishment of the World Hindi Secretariat. As Prime Minister Modi said India during the last decade has extended over \$1 billion in Lines of Credit and \$400 million as grants and assistance. For New Delhi, Mauritius is ready to play a more signifi-

cant and dynamic role as a gateway to Africa as the continent moves towards greater integration charting its own course of growth and development including the African Continental Free Trade Agreement(AfCFTA). Since Africa figures prominently in India's foreign and security policy calculus and naturally and mutually sustaining partnerships, Prime Minister Modi invited Mauritius as a special guest at the G20 Summit last September and successfully engineered the African Union (AU) 's inclusion as a permanent member in the G21. India has also been a first responder and a HADR partner in every contingency Mauritius faced from the extensive medical and vaccine assistance during the pandemic to the Wakashio oil spill accident in 2020. Even this time the Prime Minister of Mauritius has agreed to follow the Indian model in digital public infrastructure like RuPay card and UPI as well as the first country to set up an Aushadhi Centre on a similar pattern as in India's Jan Aushadhi Scheme (JAS). Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Jugnauth virtually inaugurated the St James jetty an airstrip and six other high-impact developmental projects to cater to the needs of the people of Agalega who will now be able

to have direct and reliable connectivity with the mainland thereby ensuring aerial, maritime and digital connectivity within Mauritius. This collaborative effort reflects the deep-rooted partnership between the two nations in addressing various challenges in the Indian Ocean region, both leaders underscored. Mauritius is also important from the point of view of maritime strategic calculations. New Delhi has been rendering all possible assistance including joint monitoring and preventing and countering threats in the maritime domain including its extensive and Extended Economic Zone (EEZ). India has always respected the territorial integrity of Mauritius and has stood for it. The case of the Chagos Islands (Diego Garcia) and the Mauritian sovereignty against the British claims over them, is a case in point. In this context Prime Minister Jugnauth, speaking in Creole to his people, wanted to dispel the opposition spreading vicious rumours in his country regarding the Indian desire for a military base in Mauritius while highlighting Indian help and assistance in fulfilling their developmental objectives. Likewise, Prime Minister Modi reiterated that "Various traditional and non-traditional challenges are emerging in the Indian Ocean region."

Fall of The House of Ming: Money, militia and Myanmar

Three years after the military coup in Myanmar, Operation 1027 was launched against the military junta by The Three Brotherhood Alliance members comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army(MNDAA) from the Kokang Region of Shan State, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army also from the Shan State and the Arakan Army (AA) based in the Rakhine State. On 27 October 2023, the Alliance simultaneously attacked military outposts, police stations and took control over key cities and highways in the northern part of Shan state. The rebellion quickly spread across Myanmar and by 7 November 2023 with the launch of Operation 1107 in support of Operation 1027 many

other insurgent groups across the country joined hands. This was perhaps one of the rare occasions in the troubled history of Myanmar where Eastern Armed Organisations(EAO) from a variety of ethnic groups had come together in a meticulously coordinated attack against the junta. AA operating in Rakhine state largely was a surprise entry in this alliance but MNDAA had been an old player in the region. Subsequently, many Myanmar observers debated the pushback by the rebel groups as a victory for democracy, with some reports stating only 30-40 per cent of Myanmar was under the control of the junta. However, in the debates that raged with every town that fell to the rebels what was forgot-

ten was the importance of MNDAA in this offensive. In fact, it was the first blow by MNDAA to the military junta in Laukkaing that propelled the far-reaching consequences of Operation 1027. The fallout of this rebel victory in Shan state resulted in three brigadier generals of the military junta sentenced to death and three to life imprisonment. They were accused of surrendering with their soldiers to MNDAA in Laukkaing, the capital of the Kokang Self-Administered Zone in northern Shan state making it possibly the largest surrender in the history of the military junta in Myanmar resulting in not just a humiliating defeat for the military junta but the sentencing of the brigadier generals sending shock waves across the forces.

Anant Ambani: New-age industrialist or an old-school biz

I belong to a generation that saw the rise and rise of Dhirubhai Ambani, who thumbed his nose at the licence control regime, and who found ways around the control raj. We read the stories about Reliance Industries but most people winked at them as the horrible strangulation of industries. The other reason for letting these stories get buried was the tremendous value that Dhirubhai shared with the investors. His was the first Indian company that began from base zero and went on to make thousands of retail investors prosperous. Thus, he began receiving grudging appreciation. He always seemed down to earth, unaffected by MNCs' bluster and could deal with foreign companies with a style that was almost nonchalant.

Here I may make a disclaimer that I have zero interest in the share market and I do not hold a single share of Reliance. Then came the sad spectacle of two brothers fighting over a huge legacy. Low profile Mukesh plodded on, working day and night to nurture his Reliance group to be a global power in the Petrochem sector apart from creating world-class companies. He was typically a non-fashionable, low-profile good employer. I have heard how he pored over detailed drawings of his



Petrochem plant and found a desi jugaad (solution) when his machines got damaged due to floods in the plant. There are legendary stories that I have heard first-hand about him conducting meetings before sunrise and providing sumptuous breakfast to his managers. I have heard such benefits and protection to the families of the employees that they felt that they were part of a large family. One could see the quintessential good-hearted 'shri-mant' of ancient Bharat in him. Yes, he makes his managers work hard, but creates such an unbelievable support system that families do not feel alienated as rewards reach the entire family. As Mukesh seemed to have become too big to be ignored as a social personality, one could see his religious and spiritual side in various functions. He has been unapologetic about his dharmic identity, and so has his entire family. Then, came the ambitious world-class project — the grand opera house built on his premises with a commitment to the finest in the business. One cannot but gasp at the

quality and grandness of this Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre that has fired up the theatre of Mumbai. Nita Ambani's avatar as the custodian of Indian art forms and handicrafts has enlivened the social landscape of Mumbai. All these actions of Mukesh and his wife, no doubt, created a very positive public image of the Ambani family; but they still seemed a distant rich family. Then, Anant Mukesh Ambani burst into the public domain. Nothing could have created the solid positive impact that Anant in a week achieved for the house of Ambanis. I saw him first on Network18 with Anand Narasimhan, and then on India Today with Rahul Kanwal. He is everything that a billionaire of the most powerful family of India should not be. He is humble, he is warm, he speaks Hindi without affectation and his love and respect for family flows forth unhesitatingly. He showed that his is a modern family that carries the most 'outdated' values of the most important pillar of our civilisation — our family — and that is their strength. It has rung a bell in the hearts of millions who saw his recent interactions in the media. Bhagwan Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita that people copy the leading persons of society. They do what the

Is the situation changing in favour of Russia?

The war in Ukraine has sprung back to life over the last few days with activation of the Eastern battlefield in Donbas. Worldwide, the public's appetite for war, however, seems to have stemmed after the horrific events in both Ukraine and Gaza. The former was largely quiet after the Ukrainian counter offensive in June 2023 which made little headway. Thereafter, the war in Gaza took over ever since October 2023 and held centre stage, pushing Ukraine to the back pages. It was largely presumed that both Russia and Ukraine had suffered heavy casualties and major equipment and weapon losses ren-

dering them ineffective to launch counter offensives of a serious nature. The war was presumably petering out into a stalemate with potential revival being linked to the US elections and its results.

That belief now appears belied, especially in the context of Russia where it was believed that sanctions and embargoes have hamstrung the war effort. Yet, in late February 2024, in a sudden turnaround the Russian forces are reported to have broken the back of the Ukrainian defensive position at the town of Avdiivka, 15 kilometres North West of Donetsk which is one of the biggest cities in

the Donbas region which Russia controls. Although media reports highlight Russian breakthroughs at several points on the battlefield, yet nothing can yet be taken at face value;

we have witnessed these situations in the past with claims of both warring nations. Built-up areas exist along the next potential battlefield to be militarily exploited by the defender. This war has been all about positional defence based upon built up areas which require a huge quantity of artillery and other explosive materials to reduce and capture. It's infantry which changes everything

here. In the US, a \$60 billion package for Ukraine has been sought by the Biden administration from Congress and is politically contested with bipartisan differences.

The sudden surge in information from the Ukraine war front is also being linked to the need for sensitisation of the US political community and the public, on the urgency to act lest the entire effort of NATO goes waste with a potential Russian victory. Therefore, one cannot apply high credibility to reports flowing in of a large-scale Russian breakthrough; one which can spell an operational victory.

After long drama, WTO meet adopts outcome document

ABU DHABI: The WTO meeting, which stretched into the sixth day due to wide gaps in positions, ended early Saturday after a long drama.

Well into extra time and after five or six extensions, around 11 PM (local time), ministers finally assembled for the closing ceremony to adopt the outcome document, which was put together after India agreed to the UAE's request to extend customs duty waiver on e-commerce, covering things like Netflix movies, for another two years.

India, Indonesia and later Brazil wanted the exemption to end, but commerce and industry ministry Piyush Goyal agreed to the proposal after UAE trade minister Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi met him on Friday evening. Just when organisers had start shifting sofas to the side rooms and water dispensers had disappeared as the meeting was about to end, Indonesia sprung a surprise, refusing to



accept the outcome document, citing its reservations on the extension, though over 160 members were already on board. At WTO, the outcome document cannot be accepted unless all countries support the text.

It took around 45 minutes for things to settle down after the Indonesian side said it did not have the political mandate to support an extension. After a few calls to Jakarta, which meant waking up ministers, the Indonesian side dropped its opposition and trade ministers returned to the hall to clear the outcome document. Now, it was the turn of commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal to invoke the e-commerce clause - this time to

keep some small Pacific island nations from seeking to include fisheries on the agenda. India was opposing an agreement as its interests were not protected. Post-midnight here, when trade ministers reassembled in the negotiating room, one of the countries first flagged the issue and then said another member nation wanted it. There was talk of a paper suddenly surfacing. When confronted by India, some officials blamed a senior WTO official leading to Goyal getting up from his seat and walking up to the dais where the UAE trade minister and top WTO officials were sitting. The minister protested the development and took up the issue with WTO chief.

Dosa Dominates: Bengaluru has been named India's dosa capital

Ask a Bengalurean what their favourite dish is and they'll likely reply with one word: dosa, and then they'll likely go on to tell you about their favourite dosa haunt in the city.

Here, dosa isn't just a breakfast option - it's an obsession. Today, on World Dosa Day, March 3, let's raise a toast to dosa and Bengaluru!

Dosa's origins

As per legend, it so happened when an Udipi cook, in an attempt to ferment rice into alcohol, inadvertently poured the mixture onto a hot pan - creating what we know and love, dosa. As for its name, in Kannada, 'dosa' means vice or offence, reflecting the cook's un-



successful pursuit of intoxication. Bengaluru ordered 29 million dosas in 2023!

As per data from food delivery service, Swiggy, a whopping 29 million dosas were ordered across the country in 2023 and the city that contributed most heavily to this statistic was

none other than namma Bengaluru.

The city's love for the dosa is such that it ordered twice the number of dosas than Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata combined. The prime time for dosa being ordered was breakfast followed by dinner.

Punjab National Bank Q3 Results: Tripled net profit, improved asset quality

Delhi: Punjab National Bank (PNB) recorded a net profit of Rs 2,222.8 crore for the December quarter of FY 2023-24, increasing 253.49 percent from the previous year. The bank's gross NPA dropped from 9.76 percent last quarter to 6.24 percent. Net NPA for the quarter was 0.96

percent, up from 3.30 percent year-over-year. The stock rose 0.84 percent to Rs 102 on BSE at 2.50 pm. In Q3 FY24, the bank's net interest income (NII) rose 12.13 percent to Rs 10,293 crore and operating profit rose 10.75 percent to Rs 6,331 crore. PNB credit cost rose 61 bps to

1.26 percent in Q3 FY'24 from 1.87 percent in Q3 FY'23. As of December 23, New Delhi bank provision coverage ratio (PCR) rose 911 bps YoY to 94.28 percent. As of December 31, 2023, the Bank has 10,108 domestic branches with 12,455 ATMs and 29,768 BCs.

Gautam Gambhir requests BJP chief JP Nadda to relieve him of political duties

NEW DELHI: Former cricketer and Delhi MP Gautam Gambhir has requested BJP president JP Nadda to relieve him of his political responsibilities on Saturday. The move comes as Gambhir aims to dedicate more time to his upcoming cricket commitments.

"I have requested Hon'ble Party President @JPNadda ji to relieve me of my political duties so that I can focus on my upcoming cricket commitments. I sincerely thank Hon'ble PM @narendramodi ji and Hon'ble HM @AmitShah ji for



giving me the opportunity to serve the people. Jai Hind!" said Gautam Gambhir on 'X'. Expressing gratitude, Gambhir extended sincere thanks to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and

home minister Amit Shah for the opportunity to serve the people. With this decision, he aims to balance his dual roles effectively. Gambhir joined the BJP in March 2019 and has since emerged as a

prominent figure within the party in Delhi. He successfully contested the East Delhi seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, securing a significant victory with a margin of 6,95,109 votes.

RBI pro-consumer but not anti-tech says Zeta founder

MUMBAI: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is pro-consumer and anti-risk but certainly not anti-tech, and the banking regulator has been "forward-looking" compared to most other countries, a top tech entrepreneur has said. "Banking is fundamentally about risk management above anything else. What is (incorrectly) perceived as RBI's heavy-handedness against fintechs is in fact an opportunity for founders to leverage tech to reduce risks, improve governance, and enhance



compliance," Bhavini Turakhia, founder of Zeta, a banking tech company, said in a series of posts on social media platform X. He also said that India has a stable banking ecosystem with fewer bank failures compared

to developed nations thanks to RBI prioritising customer interest over anything else. Turakhia's comments come amid RBI's move to curb operations of Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL) due to what it described as "persist-

ent non-compliance." Indian fintech's poster boy Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the founder and largest shareholder of the banking entity which has been barred by the central bank from accepting money in any customer account including wallets and other prepaid instruments such as FASTags, NCMC (national common mobility cards), or any other instrument after March 15. The development has nudged the fintech industry to become more vigilant and companies.

Probing cafe blast links with 2022 Mangaluru explosion: DKS



Bengaluru police are yet to make any headway in their probe into the blast at a cafe here on Friday that left nine people injured even as chief minister Siddaramaiah said he was "confident" the culprit will be netted in the next two days. The alleged bomber's images, sliced from CCTV footage from in and around Rameshwaram Cafe and from a bus on which he had travelled to the eatery, are the

closest sleuths have got so far in tracking down the perpetrator. Multiple investigative agencies, including Intelligence Bureau, Research and Analysis Wing, National Investigation Agency, are probing the case, the chief minister said after a meeting with the senior police officers. Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar said links, if any, were being explored between Friday's blast and a pressure cooker

blast in Mangaluru in Nov 2022. "The low-intensity bomb seems to have been prepared locally. There are similarities in terms of the components used (in the Rameshwaram cafe blast) and the Mangaluru blast," Shivakumar said. CCTV footage of the alleged bomber walking into the cafe, sporting a beard and spectacles, along with a cap and a mask, was made public to generate more clues.

When Elon Musk texted Satya Nadella about his 'problem' with Windows PC

● "Musk texted Nadella directly, highlighting his discomfort with the mandatory Microsoft account requirement on Windows PCs. In a post on X"



Elon Musk reached out to Microsoft CEO expressing concerns about the mandatory Microsoft account on Windows PCs. He questioned potential computer shutdown by Microsoft and found a workaround to skip the account requirement by connecting to a local WiFi without a password. Elon Musk contacted Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella via text message to address his concerns about the new Windows laptop PC he recently purchased. Musk disclosed this in a post on X, after a user suggested he contact Nadella for "customer support".

Musk texted Nadella directly, highlighting his discomfort with the mandatory Microsoft account requirement on Windows PCs. In a post on X, Musk expressed concerns about potential access this grants to Microsoft's AI and questioned the necessity of the

account for basic functionalities. The Tesla CEO also suggested that Microsoft has the ability to shut off your computer. "But since they now require that you use their services just to use your computer, @Microsoft can effectively shut off your computer!" Musk's comments sparked discussions on social media, with some users echoing his concerns about data privacy and potential AI influence. However, others pointed out that creating a Microsoft account is a standard practice for Windows PCs, offering features like cloud storage, app downloads, and system updates.

Moto Hero wants e-bikes over 4 lakh

Delhi: "The benefit with EVs is that we not only sell them in India, but also target global markets with them." The Vida electric scooter costs Rs 1.2 lakh (ex-showroom), but Gupta claimed the company will introduce cheaper models. "Vida will be mid-priced and cheap. A last-mile B2B commercial is under consideration. We consider it a promising and substantial segment." He stated Zero will be a premium, performance-oriented offering for 400cc-plus petrol motorbike buyers. "We are working on it and expect the motorcycle to be priced at around Rs 4-5 lakh." Gupta said the two-wheeler sector, which had been under pressure for years due to onerous circumstances for entry-level customers, is improving. "First, the category is underdeveloped and has great potential. As consumer confidence rises, the segment is showing green shoots. Capital expenditures by the government are also increasing revenue and employment.

Driving an Uber, he found a way to solve civic issues



A Christmas get-together at Nayan Technologies. Founder Jayant Ratti is to the left, holding a cup. In November 2016, when he was in the US, Jayant Ratti decided to become an Uber driver. Not to earn money for a living. But because he had a car, because he loved driving, and he wanted to move around a city and see what problem he could solve with the power of mobility. After a few weeks behind the wheel, his thoughts began taking shape – why not work on technology that not only can help clean up

our cities and public spaces, but also make them safer and more liveable. Jayant had done BE in electronics & communication from Delhi College of Engineering, and then a MS and PhD from Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta. His PhD involved robotics and AI, and he went on to launch a couple of robotics ventures in the US to provide robotic and drone-based solutions. In 2017, he returned to India, exited the robotics ventures, and launched Nayan Technologies based on his experi-

ences as an Uber driver. "So many issues we face on a day-to-day basis, which we cry and laugh about – I wanted to solve them. And the idea came up when I actually got on the road," he says. The solution was simple, yet powerful. All it requires is for people to download the Nayan app on their phones, and keep the phone, or the in-house dash-cam, on the dashboard when they are commuting to and from work, or they're picking up people, or delivering food or goods.

Ashwin's wife pens a heartfelt note for star spinner

NEW DELHI: India's premier spinner Ravichandran Ashwin became just the second Indian bowler and ninth overall to pick 500 wickets in Test cricket during the third Test match against England in Rajkot that India won by a huge margin of 434 runs. This was India's biggest-ever win in Test cricket in terms of margin of runs. Ashwin was on 499 scalps at the end of the second Test in Visakhapatnam and completed his 500th scalp with the wicket of Zak Crawley. Ashwin achieved the 500 wicket feat in 98 Test matches, making him the second-quickest in



Test history to the milestone after Sri Lanka's spin wizard Muttiah Muralitharan who achieved the feat in 87 Tests. The other seven bowlers took more than 100 Test matches to get to the milestone. Ashwin is the ninth bowler in Test history to breach the 500-wicket barrier, and the only one from India since the leg-

endary leg-spinner Anil Kumble, who took 619 wickets in 132 Tests. Muralitharan (800), Shane Warne (708), James Anderson (695), Anil Kumble (619), Stuart Broad (604), Glenn McGrath (563), Courtney Walsh (519) and Nathan Lyon (517) are ahead of him in the list of highest wicket-takers in Test history.

Faiz Fazal, Vidarbha's most successful captain, hangs up his boots

NAGPUR: The face of Vidarbha cricket for over a decade. The opener who blunted rival new-ball attacks for as long as one can remember. The elegant left-hander who scripted victories and saved matches with his bat more often than not. The skipper who took his

team to the top of the domestic circuit twice, will walk out on to the field at a match for the last time on Monday. Faiz Fazal, Vidarbha's most successful captain, on Sunday announced his retirement from domestic cricket. Monday, Day 4 of the

Ranji Trophy match against Haryana at the VCA Civil Lines Stadium, will mark the end of an illustrious career spanning over two decades. "Faiz bhai informed us about the decision during the team huddle on Day 1 of the Haryana match.

CAPSULES

From tent to triumph: Yashasvi Jaiswal's rise continues

RAJKOT: The Yashasvi Jaiswal story keeps getting bigger and bigger. On Sunday, the left-handed opener from Mumbai smashed a scintillating double century (214 off 236 balls) - his second on the trot - which included a record 12 sixes, to star in India's 434-run rout of England in the third Test here. Three of those sixes were hit off consecutive balls off James Anderson, arguably the best swing bowler in the history of the game. For a while, it seemed that Jaiswal and his fellow Mumbai young gun Sarfaraz Khan, who was making his Test debut, were batting in the IPL, as the duo added 172 in just 158 balls for the fifth wicket in India's second innings. With India looking for a quick declaration, the duo toyed with England's bowlers. Returning to bat after retiring hurt at 104 the previous evening due to back spasms, 22-year-old Jaiswal unleashed a record-breaking display, putting the England attack to the sword. His feat - becoming only the second batsman in international cricket history to hit 12 sixes in an innings (joining Wasim Akram's 1996 performance against Zimbabwe) - makes his achievement even more remarkable.



BCCI warns players not to put IPL over domestic cricket

NEW DELHI: Not anticipating some players' prioritization of Indian Premier League over domestic cricket, BCCI secretary Jay Shah has asked centrally-contracted players to prove themselves in first-class cricket if they want to be considered for selection in the national side. Shah also warned players that 'severe implications' will follow if they ignore domestic cricket. The secretary pointed out that the board is happy with the IPL's success over the years but asserted on the significance of domestic cricket, saying it has been the 'foundation upon which Indian cricket stands'. "However, there is a trend that has started to emerge and is a



cause for concern. Some players have begun prioritising the IPL over domestic cricket, a shift that was not anticipated. Domestic cricket has always been the foundation upon which Indian cricket stands, and it has never been undervalued in our vision for the

sport," Jay Shah wrote in the letter addressed to players as quoted by ESPNCricinfo. The BCCI secretary further stated that the board have a clear vision from the start that whoever aspires to play for India should play domestic cricket first.

'Go tell Rohit Sharma...': Kumble's advice to Jaiswal ahead of 4th Test vs England

NEW DELHI: Young batting sensation Yashasvi Jaiswal smashed an unbeaten double century to help India register their biggest-ever win (in terms of runs) on Sunday, crushing England by 434 runs in the third Test inside four days in Rajkot. With this win, India took a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. Chasing a mammoth 557 for win, England's batting fell like a pack of cards and the Three Lions were bowled out for 122. It was England's second-biggest Test loss since



their 562-run defeat to Australia in 1934. The 22-year-old hit a record-equalling 12 sixes in his knock, which included three consecutive hits over the fence off James

Anderson -- a first for the veteran quick who has 696 wickets in 185 Tests. The Mumbai batter now stands level with former Pakistan great Wasim Akram, who

also hit 12 sixes in an innings against Zimbabwe in 1996. Yashasvi remains the leading batsman in the series with 545 runs in three Tests at an average of 109.00.

David Warner not expecting affectionate farewell from New Zealand fans

NEW DELHI: As David Warner gears up for his final bilateral international series against New Zealand, the Australian veteran is not expecting a warm farewell from Black Caps fans in Wellington and Auckland. At 37, Warner has bid adieu to Test and ODI cricket already.



abuse affect his game. "Over here, it's always the harsh reality that we're neighbours, in sport we like to beat each other," Warner told reporters in the New Zealand capital on Monday. "From that perspective, we're going to be expecting the crowd to come at us as hard as they come. As we always say, it's in one ear, out the other – if I actually hear anything." Warner described local fans as "derogatory and pretty vulgar" after the Australians were targeted for abuse during a test

and ODI tour of New Zealand in 2016. "I enjoy playing here," Warner added. "It's about coming out and trying to put my best foot forward, and score runs. "The crowd, yeah, they got personal, but if they have to get personal, that's their character ... if you want to pay your money to come and abuse people, you have to go back and lay in your own bed. "We're here to play the game of cricket that we love, enjoy and put bums on seats to keep the game going."

NEW DELHI:

Succumbing to their second worst-ever Test defeat against India in Rajkot on Sunday, England players drew flak from former captains with the 'Bazball' approach being labelled as the cause of their humiliation. Since The Oval defeat against Australia by 562 runs in 1934, England, for the first time, faced such an embarrassing defeat and the former greats of the game were quick to tear into the side's approach in the chase of 577. Nosediving in the improbable chase, England were bundled out for a lowly 122 as India took a 2-1 lead in the series. "This England team are hell



bent on doing things their way, and 'saving Test cricket'. They are giving Test cricket a shot in the arm because they are so exciting," Michael Vaughan wrote. "But ultimately they have to be better than that now. They didn't win in New Zealand, they didn't win the Ashes, and if they carry on like this, they are going to lose in India. As a team, you are judged on series victo-

ries." Michael Atherton said opener Ben Duckett's "the more the better" comments after the third day regarding a realistic target England could chase down were fanciful. "One can admire the positivity and playfulness of Ben Duckett and this England team – such were his comments on the third evening – while also questioning their occasional self-delusion," Atherton

wrote in the Times. "Careful husbandry of resources is not the Bazball way. They have been profligate in the extreme in this match, wasting a golden opportunity to build on Duckett's brilliant second-day hundred and to achieve parity or more on first innings. "They were forced to take some bitter medicine as a consequence on a stifling and totally demoralising fourth day in Rajkot." Writing in his column for the Daily Mail, Nasser Hussain said England must learn from their mistakes. "If England don't consider tweaks, Bazball just becomes a cult that can't be questioned," he added.

Joe Root's shot in first innings was the turning point: Ben Stokes

RAJKOT: England skipper Ben Stokes admitted that former England captain Joe Root's reverse scoop, which was pounced by Yashasvi Jaiswal at second slip, early on Day Three changed the course of the match, as England were 224 for two in reply to India's 445 at that point. However, he refused to blame the out-of-touch Root for one of England's heaviest defeats. "Yes, because he got out to it, definitely (it) was a turning point. Root's scored nearly 12,000 runs, I think we can leave the decision-making and 'why' with Joe. I can understand why there would be frustration around that because of how good a player Joe is," Stokes said. He also made it clear that he wouldn't question Root for playing that shot. "I thought Joe was looking really, really good at the crease, and he sensed that as a time to put something different back onto Jasprit."

India's phenomenal tech leap has thrown up enormous opportunities: Amitabh Kant



India's reforms and technological leap have positioned the country as a global outlier of development. With a focus on digitization, technology adoption in banking, and a thriving startup ecosystem, India is carving its niche in the new world through its strengths and collaborations. India's phenomenal tech leap has thrown up enormous opportunities: Amitabh Kant

hope in a world ridden with global turmoil, said India's Sherpa G20, Amitabh Kant. In a discussion with Times Internet vice chairman Satyan Gajwani and Zscaler CEO Jay Chaudhry, Kant spoke about India's unique and transformational approach in digitising a country of 1.4 billion people. He also delved into the specifics of how adoption of technology on a large scale transformed banking in India, leading to the country executing 128

billion fast payments in 2023, the highest in the world. "India has made a phenomenal technological leap, and this throws up enormous opportunities for people like Jay because cybersecurity is going to be the next big thing in India," Kant said. Speaking on India's digital infrastructure, Gajwani said, "Today is a representation of India's strength at the global level. India has been very receptive to technological innovation and enablement of bots.

India GCC export revenue: \$46 billion or \$120 billion?

Sandeep Panat's research suggests that GCC exports from India may be much higher than previously estimated. Nasscom's methodology and revenue per employee calculation have been criticized. This has implications for policy and analysis of India's tech sector. India GCC export revenue: \$46 billion or \$120 billion?



Sandeep Panat, Founding Partner, Wizmatic Consulting. Last year, Nasscom estimated that exports by GCCs amounted to \$46 billion in 2022-23. And that's the figure that most go by. Sandeep Panat, founding partner at Wizmatic Consulting,

a Pune-based consulting & business advisory, has over the past six months been poring over the financial statements filed by some 1,000 foreign companies in India with the registrar of companies (RoC) for FY2023, and has come up with a GCC export figure of \$120.5 billion, more than 2.5 times that of the Nasscom one. There is some confusion

around how foreign IT services companies – the likes of Accenture, Capgemini, DXC – should be treated. Nasscom says they include them in IT services, not in GCCs. Panat's GCC list includes these companies, but he says even if he were to remove them, the total GCC export revenue would still be about \$103 billion, more than twice the Nasscom figure. If Panat's estimates are correct, then the industry has been hugely underestimating the contribution of GCCs. – and the size of India's tech sector – and this has big implications for policy and analysis.

Delhi tourism to organise heritage walks at 50 places

NEW DELHI: Delhi's tourism department is organising heritage walks at 50 different locations across the capital from Saturday. These walks will continue till March 31 with the first inaugural walk scheduled at Mehrauli Archaeological Park. According to the tourism

department's website, Mehrauli Archaeological Park, which is uniquely dotted with ruins from early medieval times to the 19th century, is one of the most popular heritage sites in the city. The major attractions at Mehrauli Archaeological Park include the mosque and tomb of Jamali, a

royal tomb which is the first building in the sub-continent to use the true arch, a beautiful step well with subterranean rooms and residence of a British official (which was built out of a tomb). The site is adjacent to another historically important place, the Qutub complex.

CAPSULES

UPI payments dip in February from January

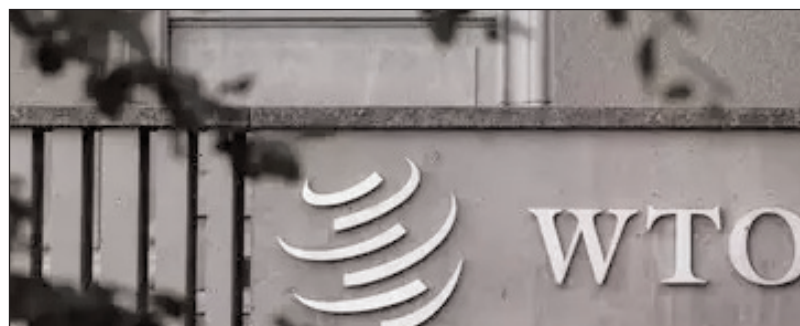
MUMBAI: UPI transactions declined marginally in Feb 2024, both in volume and value, due to the fewer number of days in the month. Data released by NPCI showed that UPI transactions during the month of Feb stood at 1,210 crore for a total value of Rs 18.3 lakh crore. Transactions in Jan were at 1,220 crore, while the total value stood at Rs 18.4 lakh crore.

Aircraft fuel sales back to pre-Covid level in February

NEW DELHI: Jet fuel sales scaled pre-pandemic levels in Feb as visa-free entry allowed by several countries allured more and more Indians to foreign shores, creating additional demand from international flights on top of burgeoning domestic air travel. But diesel demand, a key indicator of economic activities, continued in the slow lane, while petrol consumption posted healthy growth on back of people's continued preference for personal vehicles. Preliminary data of state-run fuel retailers on Friday showed jet fuel sales rising marginally above Feb 2020 level, when the world had started shutting down to stop the spread of Covid. Compared to last Feb, sales were higher by 7%, while 55% increase over the same month of 2022 underpinned the turnaround in demand. On a monthly basis, sales were up 3.5%. Jet fuel sales have been struggling to recover since March 2020 when the lockdown reduced overall fuel consumption by more than half, largely due to reduced international flights. Petrol consumption was the first to recover in late 2021 as people preferred personal vehicles for commuting.

WTO talks end with no progress on agriculture, fisheries

ABU DHABI: WTO talks ended here with ministers making no headway on key issues – agriculture and fisheries, while India and other countries are likely to agree to extension of customs duty waiver for e-commerce by another two years. Trade ministers from across the world refused to budge from their stated positions on reducing farm subsidies or lowering subsidies, resulting in the impasse continuing despite talks being extended by over a day. Indian officials appeared satisfied with the outcome, arguing that they did not yield ground on any of the issues and the permanent peace clause on procurement of foodgrains for the public distribution system



gave govt the freedom to buy as much as it wanted despite the "flawed formula" which counted payments above Rs 3.20 a kg of wheat or rice as subsidy. The permanent peace clause means that despite breaching the ceiling of 10% of value of production, linked to prices prevailing in 1986-88, countries cannot be dragged to WTO for violation of trade rules.

Some countries were pushing WTO members to link the issue of public stockholding of grains to overall reform of global farm trade, which India and other members of G-33 were unwilling to accept, arguing that the issue was delinked from the overall talks and the members had failed to come out with a solution for more than a decade.

Special trading session: Sensex settles marginally higher

NEW DELHI: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty settles at record high closing levels during special trading session on Saturday. Nifty closed up 0.18% or 39.65 points at 22,378.40, while Sensex climbed 0.08% or 60.80 points to 73,806.15. Sensex reached a new record high of 73,994.70, gaining 249.35 points or 0.33% during the session. Nifty also hit its lifetime peak of 22,419.55, after advancing 80.8 points or 0.36%.



The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies reached an all-time high of Rs 394.06 lakh crore. BSE and NSE are conducting the special trading session to assess their prepara-

tions in handling major disruptions or failures at the primary site. NSE and BSE were under scrutiny by the markets regulator after a major trading outage in February 2021 due to

telecoms glitch, causing the exchanges failing to migrate to the disaster recovery site. The first part of the trading session took place from 9:15 am to 10 am on Primary Site, and the second part from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm on the Disaster Recovery site. In separate circulars, the BSE and NSE announced, "Trading members are requested to note that the exchange will conduct a special live trading session with intraday switch over from Primary Site.

There's no silver bullet to leadership; live by values!

I was fortunate to have been given many opportunities by my parents and sibling to craft my own identity. Values were ingrained in me, and it was only much later in life that I realised the benefit of these values. There is no silver bullet to leadership; each one of us has to find our own path and my values have governed my path. Here they are! Focus: Life is full of complexities and challenges. My personal motto has been to relentlessly focus on ensuring the important (may not necessarily be urgent) areas and the right outcomes will follow. Empathy: It is often said that women have more empathy (and not sympathy) than men. I believe this is true and have often seen myself practise this more consciously in my interactions with team members. This is

not about sympathy; this is about recognising what my team member is going through and working jointly for solutions. Discipline: This is actually the other side of Focus. Both work hand in hand for me. Even today, after so many years of working, I ensure I make lists of what I would like to achieve every day, every week and every month! Energy: I wake up every day, raring to deliver something good for our customers, my team members, other stakeholders in my professional and personal life. When I enter a room full of energy, it is infectious and rubs off positively on me. Resilience: Developing a thick skin is par for the course. Recognising that what is happening is not about me as a person but is about circumstances is what stands

me in good stead when issues arise. Multiple examples flash through my mind when I talk about resilience and grit – the Kerala floods in August, 2018; demonetisation in November, 2016, and many more. Attitude: This is my favourite one! What I look for in people is not talent or skills; those can be developed. The right attitude is surely the only attribute that really works for me. Look for opportunities, don't wait for them to come: There are wonderful opportunities for success out there and it is for me to find them. When I left for Brunei on my first international assignment (with Standard Chartered Bank), it was an opportunity to explore a new culture and a new world. When I joined Federal Bank, it was an opportunity to do something unique.

Byju's unable to pay salaries as funds locked: Founder Raveendran

MUMBAI: Byju Raveendran, founder and CEO at troubled edtech startup Byju's hit out at a group of investors, stating that their move to disable the funds raised through the rights issue has hindered disbursement of salaries to employees. "....I regret to inform you that we will still be unable to process your salaries....Unfortunately, a select few (4 out of our 150+ investors) have stooped to a heartless level, ensuring that we are unable to utilise the funds raised to pay your hard-earned salaries," Raveendran said in a letter to employees on Saturday which was reviewed by TOI. "At their behest, the amount raised through the rights issue is currently locked in a sepa-



rate account," Raveendran said, adding that despite the successful closure of its \$200 million rights issue, the company is facing a crisis. Byju's said that it is making attempts to ensure that the salaries are paid by March 10. Four of the firm's investors—Prosus, Peak XV Partners, General Atlantic and Sofina had approached the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), seeking a stay on the rights issue, stating that there are serious allegations of siphoning off funds

by the company's promoters and the company is being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA). Although the court allowed Byju's to go ahead with the rights issue, it passed an interim order, directing the startup to keep the funds received as part of the rights issue in a separate escrow account. The court also said that the funds should not be withdrawn till the disposal of the oppression and mismanagement suit

filed by the investors against the company's management. "It is an agonizing reality that some of these investors have already reaped substantial profits – in fact, one of them has made a staggering eight times their initial investment in Byju's. And yet, their actions convey a callous disregard for our lives and livelihoods," Raveendran told employees. The cash starved company had been banking on its rights issue to raise capital and meet its current liabilities. Byju's will now have to call an EGM (extraordinary general meeting) to seek shareholder approval and increase authorised capital. "Countless hours have been spent exploring every possible avenue, engaging our legal teams.

Singer Anupam Roy is an alum of Texins

Instruments India campus. Naman Bafna, analog design lead at TI India, says music has always been his passion, and at TI, he found a way to connect over it with his colleagues. "Our jamming sessions are woven with laughter, collaboration, and shared passion, and this has given many the confidence to start their own YouTube channels and also perform both on and off campus on various occasions." The Music Room in Texins is a treasure trove of instruments catering to every musical whim – from the serene melodies of classical Hindustani and Carnatic to the energetic beats of fusion, jazz, pop, rock, and even progressive rock. There are drum kits, electric and bass guitars, amplifiers, pianos, tablas, flutes, violins – the list goes on. Arindam Chatterjee, HR leader at TI India, says the space pulsates with creativity and camaraderie.

Half of the patient's disease can be cured by the good behavior of the doctor: CM Yogi

Gorakhpur Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that half of a patient's illness can be cured only by the good behavior of the doctor. He emphasized the importance of creating an environment where patients are positively influenced by their doctors. The Chief Minister made the statements while inaugurating a Blood Bank and a 10-bed Dialysis Unit at the auditorium of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Gorakhpur on Saturday. He described these facilities as "a gift to the public". Additionally, he encouraged doctors to treat patients with kindness, become positive competitors, and engage in continuous research. After inspecting the Blood Bank and Dialysis Unit, the Chief Minister said, "Negativity never leads anyone forward. Those who try to pull others down often become victims of their own actions. On



the other hand, positivity always shows the path to progress." He emphasized that a doctor with a negative mindset, can never provide better treatment to the patient. "Doctors should always remember that they are associated with the service of humanity", he remarked. Sharing the experience of effective teamwork and inter-departmental coordination in controlling encephalitis and COVID, the Chief Minister said that positivity and teamwork are essential for achieving the best results in medical institutions like AIIMS. CM Yogi urged doctors to

focus on quality of medical service and research. He emphasized the significance of hands-on patient treatment experience over theoretical knowledge for examination success. To gain maximum practical experience, the doctor should not limit the number of OPDs. The Chief Minister mentioned that it is crucial to develop a habit of noting important information related to each patient's treatment. Based on the conclusions reached after studying this, an action plan for the treatment and eradication of diseases should be carried forward.

Yogi govt's vaccination drive attains remarkable 96.45% statewide coverage CM Yogi

Lucknow

The Yogi government has achieved a significant milestone in its vaccination campaign aimed at safeguarding children from diseases. Through diligent monitoring by the state government, Uttar Pradesh has maintained an impressive average vaccination coverage of 96.45% from April to December 23, 2023, with January and February excluded from this data. Notably, some districts have surpassed the target, achieving over 100% vaccination rates. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has praised these districts for their outstanding performance and has urged others to meet their targets accordingly. Gautam Buddh Nagar achieved highest vaccination rate of 134.12%. In compliance with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's directives, a statewide campaign was launched to administer various vaccines to children. The Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had also instructed officials to



accelerate the campaign in order to achieve 100 percent coverage of various vaccines in a high-level meeting. As a result, Uttar Pradesh has achieved an average vaccination coverage of 96.45% from April to December 23. According to data available on the HMIS portal of the Health Department, the vaccination rates for Hepatitis B Birth Dose stand at 71.21%, MR at 93.87%, and TD-10 at 99.69%. It is noteworthy that the Yogi government had set a target of vaccinating 42,93,472 children in the financial year 2023-24. By December 2023, vaccination had been completed for 41,41,003 children. Twenty dis-

tricts in the state have achieved a hundred percent target, with the top five districts being Gautam Buddh Nagar, Ghaziabad, Amroha, Mau, and Saharanpur. CM reprimands districts with poor performance in vaccination. During the meeting, a compilation of five districts exhibiting sluggish vaccination rates was laid out before the Chief Minister. These districts, namely Lalitpur, Siddharthnagar, Bhadohi, Jalaun, and Sonbhadra, demonstrated vaccination rates ranging from 69.51 percent to 81.14 percent. In response, the Chief Minister reprimanded these districts for poor performance.

CAPSULES

Major Milestone: Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state in the country to issue 5 crore Ayushman cards

Lucknow

In yet another significant milestone, Uttar Pradesh, led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, has emerged as the first state in the country to issue five crore Ayushman cards. Additionally, Uttar Pradesh maintains the leading position in terms of the highest number of Ayushman cards issued compared to other states. CM Yogi emphasizes the importance of ensuring the health and well-being of every individual in Uttar Pradesh. He consistently directs officials to prioritize the issuance of Ayushman cards to those in need. As a result, today, every economically disadvantaged individual in the state can access treatment in private hospitals. Uttar Pradesh has issued 50,017,920 Ayushman cards, benefiting 74,382,304 individuals. A total of 3,716 hospitals in the state are empaneled under this scheme. Under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme, a total of 3,481,252 health claims have been filed, with 3,275,737 claims settled, representing a settlement rate of 92.48 percent in the state. More than 8.37 lakh cards issued in Ayodhya. In Ayodhya, the city of Lord Shri Ram, a total of 837,700 Ayushman cards have been issued to beneficiaries thus far. 19 private hospitals and 16 government hospitals in the district are providing the benefits of this scheme. Panchayat assistants, Kotedars, and Asha workers conduct door-to-door visits to facilitate the creation of Ayushman cards for residents.

Ramrajya is all about good governance, ensuring every citizen's access to welfare schemes

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Saturday, said that the increasing use of technology in government work is bringing about rapid changes in the lives of common people. He added that Ramrajya is all about good governance, ensuring every citizen's access to welfare schemes without discrimination. The Chief Minister made the remarks while speaking at a program organized by the Food and Civil Supply Department, and Rural Development Department at Lok

Bhavan. He said, "Reforms in every aspect of life, aligned with Prime Minister Modi's vision, have not only increased transparency,

but are also contributing towards ending corruption." He inaugurated 1100 Annapurna Bhawans and launched Electronic Weighing Scale-linked e-POS machines at 79,000 fair price shops across the state on the occasion. The Chief Minister mentioned that with continuous efforts of public representatives, the government has been success-

ful in providing food-graine to every poor person. "Before 2014, those in need did not receive ration. They had ration cards in their names, but the ration would be distributed elsewhere. In fact, before 2017, there were deaths due to hunger in several districts of the state", he stated. "However, we have now started using technology such as e-POS machine, and Electronic Weighing machines. This has led to extensive reforms in the distribution of rations. Reforms carried out by the Food and

Civil Supply Department, around 80,000 ration quota shops in the state are benefiting approximately 15 crore beneficiaries," Yogi added. Referring to the technology-based food distribution system, CM Yogi said that it has not only solved the problem of hunger but has also ended corruption in the system. "Earlier, once the ration left the FCI warehouses, it way. But now it is being monitored from Lucknow itself to ensure that the ration actually reaches the allocated quota.

Kharif Marketing Season 2023-24: UP govt purchases 53.79 lakh metric tons of paddy

Lucknow

As the paddy procurement is progressing smoothly in Kharif Marketing Season 2023-24 at MSP from farmers, more than 8 lakh farmers have benefited with MSP value of Rs 11,745 crore in Uttar Pradesh. A quantity of over 53.79 lakh MT of Paddy has been procured in KMS 2023-24. Notably, the government had set the minimum support price for common paddy at Rs 2183 per quintal and Rs 2203 per quintal for Grade A paddy. In terms of procurement,

Lucknow division topped the list, with over 7.52 lakh metric tonnes of paddy purchased. Bareilly division secured the second position with 6.49 lakh metric tonnes procured, followed closely by Varanasi division with more than 6.18 lakh metric tonnes of paddy purchased. Additionally, procurement from over one lakh farmers was recorded in both the Lucknow and Ayodhya divisions. Lucknow division leads in paddy procurement, followed by Bareilly

division. Lucknow division led in paddy procurement, with over 7.52 lakh metric tonnes purchased. Bareilly division followed closely behind, procuring 6.49 lakh metric tonnes, while Varanasi division saw over 6.18 lakh metric tonnes procured. Additionally, Gorakhpur division purchased 5.09 lakh metric tonnes, Ayodhya division 5.78 lakh metric tonnes, Moradabad division 4.61 lakh metric tonnes, Prayagraj division 4.53 lakh metric tonnes, Devipatan division 3.38 lakh met-

ric tonnes, Basti division 2.89 lakh metric tonnes, Mirzapur division 2.68 lakh metric tonnes, and Azamgarh division 2.12 lakh metric tonnes. Furthermore, Kanpur division procured 1.81 lakh metric tonnes, while Chitrakoot Dham division purchased over 42 thousand metric tonnes of paddy in Uttar Pradesh. Over 8.01 lakh farmers benefited so far. The Yogi government provided extensive support to farmers for paddy procurement, resulting in high participation.

Yogi govt cancels RO/ARO preliminary examination

Lucknow

In a significant move aimed at protecting the interests of the state's youth, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced on Saturday the cancellation of the Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination 2023 over reports of alleged

leak of questions on social media. He further directed that the examination be reconducted within the next six months. The Chief Minister's decision came after conducting a thorough review of the Review Officer/Assistant Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination 2023, which was conducted by the Uttar Pradesh Public Service Commission on February 11, 2024. Complaints regarding certain questions from the question paper circulating widely on social media were discussed during the review meeting. In response,

the government issued a release urging the public to provide evidence related to any attempts to influence the examination. Subsequently, in view of the evidence provided to the government and the

report made available by the Commission, it has been instructed by the Chief Minister that the examinations of both sessions of the Review Officer / Assistant Review Officer (Preliminary) Examination 2023, organized by the Public Service Commission on February 11, 2023, be canceled. The examinations will be rescheduled and conducted again within the next six months. Additionally, the Chief Minister has instructed that this matter be referred to the Special Task Force (STF) of the state to identify individuals involved in these criminal activities and to take strict legal and punitive measures against them. The STF will expedite its investigation to ensure swift action against all those responsible for questions leak.

We have fulfilled our promises, and we will continue to do so: Chief Minister

Gorakhpur

The country is progressing rapidly; world is seeing a new India in every field: CM Gorakhpur, March 2. In a blistering attack on the opposition parties, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Saturday, said that unlike them the BJP government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, refrains from playing the caste card or making false promises for electoral gains. He emphasized, "We have fulfilled our promises, and we will continue to do so in the future." Addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone and inaugurating 48 development projects worth Rs 1006 crore at a program organized at Mahant Digvijaynath Park, the CM highlighted the rapid progress and transformation taking place across the country. "India is mak-



ing rapid progress across multiple fronts, encompassing security, economic prosperity, religious harmony, and livelihoods," he remarked. "Similarly, Uttar Pradesh has witnessed significant development, leading to a positive change in perceptions." Attributing the surge in development initiatives in UP to the effective governance of the double-engine government, CM Yogi stated: "The double-engine government works at double speed and that is why the country is progressing." Furthermore, CM Yogi expressed confidence

in the unwavering support of the public towards Prime Minister Modi's leadership and said, "Just as the public blindly supported the leadership of Modi ji in 2014, 2017, 2019 and 2022, similarly they are determined to elect form the Modi government at the Center for the third time." CM Yogi stressed the need for increased employment opportunities for youth, expanded civic amenities, and enhanced welfare benefits for the underprivileged. "For this," he underscored, "a like-minded government is essential at every

administrative level." Highlighting that development requires 'breakthrough,' not 'barriers,' CM Yogi reiterated the necessity of the Modi government for a third term. He emphasized the critical role of like-minded leadership across all levels of governance to prevent hindrances to development. CM Yogi Adityanath launched a scathing attack on certain political parties, accusing them of prioritizing their own interests over the welfare of the people. Without directly naming them, he said, "Jaatiwadi sarkarein n ghar ki rahi na ghat ki. These parties prioritized their own family interests above all else. They jeopardized the interests of youth, farmers, businessmen, and daughters risked their security." A significant turnout following the consecration of Lord Shri Ram .

NCW chairperson leads delegation to Kolkata amidst Sandeshkhali unrest in

KOLKATA: A delegation led by the National Commission for Women (NCW) chairperson Rekha Sharma has left for Kolkata ahead of her Sandeshkhali visit. The area has been witnessing unrest for over 10 days as women protestors seek justice against alleged atrocities committed by TMC leader Sheikh Shajahan and his aides. Speaking to ANI, the NCW chief expressed her concern about the injustice done to women and her intention to visit every street and talk to the women to assure them of her support. During her visit, she plans to meet the governor of West Bengal and later meet President Droupadi Murmu. Rekha Sharma stated, "Very disturbing news is coming from Sandeshkhali. My member went to investigate but could not meet many victims due to the police.