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

MBA to master sculptor: How Arun carved history out of stone

● "These six months were like 'Vanavasa' for my son. He dedicated every minute to sculpting Lord Ram's idol for the Ayodhya"



MYSURU: This Mysuru man preferred the sculptor's chisel to number-crunching in the boardroom. On Monday, with the Sankranti festivities in full bloom across Karnataka, MBA Arun Yogiraj's alternative career choice stood vindicated with his creation of the statue of Ram Lalla officially picked by the Sri Ram Janmabhoomi Trust, reports Shrinivasa M. Sculpting for Arun is a legacy spanning five generations of his family — his artistic roots intertwined with Mysuru's cultural fabric, dating back to the city's regal past. Last 6 months were like 'Vanavasa' for my

son, says sculptor Arun Yogiraj's mother Weeks after reports strongly indicated that the black statue of Ram Lalla sculpted by Mysuru-based sculptor Arun Yogiraj was the chosen one for the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, the official confirmation finally came through on Monday. Soon after the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra made it official that it had picked Arun's creation, to be installed at Sri

Ram Mandir in Ayodhya that will see its consecration on January 22, there were scenes of jubilation at the Yogiraj household. Following the announcement, Arun's family members gathered at their ancestral home in Agraahara, located just outside the Mysuru Palace, on Monday evening to celebrate the occasion. The fact that Monday also happened to be Sankranti was like an icing on

the cake. Many of Arun's family members became emotional, recalling the hard work put in by the sculptor for the last six months. "These six months were like 'Vanavasa' for my son. He dedicated every minute to sculpting Lord Ram's idol for the Ayodhya Temple," Arun's mother, Saraswathaamma, said. "Makara Sankranti festival has brought good tidings and we are feeling happy," she added.

Hemant Soren ready to appear before ED on Jan 20

RANCHI: After repeated refusals, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren has written to the Enforcement Directorate stating his willingness to join the investigation here on January 20, a day after the ongoing women's hockey Olympic qualifiers being held in the city come to an end. Soren was recently served the eighth summons by the agency asking him to appear for questioning in a money laundering case between January 16 and 19. The CM had refused to attend ED sessions on



all previous summons and had written to it citing his busy political engagements. He may be questioned at his residence on January 20. Sources said in his latest communication to the agency, the CM called the ED summons "illegal" and protested

against such proceedings which he said were out of political vendetta. Last year, the ED had seized/attached assets worth more than Rs 50 crore after multiple searches at the premises of Soren's close associates. Three associates — Prem Prakash, Pankaj Mishra and Amit

Agarwal — were arrested and are in judicial custody. enforcement agency considers Soren's questioning crucial to multiple money laundering investigations as several accused and close associates have claimed his involvement in mining and land scams, besides some others. ED sources had also emphasised that his appeals against the summons were turned down by the high court and the Supreme Court earlier and the CM was told to record his statement before the agency.

Manja kills 4 in Gujarat, 1 each in Mumbai, Madhya Pradesh

The tradition of flying kites during Makar Sankranti resulted in a tragic toll over the past 24 hours as four people in Gujarat, one in Mumbai and a boy in MP fell victim to the banned strings known as Chinese manja,

authorities reported Monday. All the five were on bikes. Manja from discarded kites also left many injured, including a farmer in Maharashtra's Nashik district who needed 150 stitches to close a

deep cut in his neck. Biker Lashkar Chauhan (48) died after a kite string slashed his throat in Gujarat's Bhavnagar on Sunday. Kite strings result in tragedies across cities. In Panchmahal, four-year-old Tarun Machhi

met a similar fate Monday while riding a bike with his father in Boradi village. In Vadodara district, 20-year-old Ankit Vasava died when a kite string left a deep gash in his neck while riding his bike.

Ayodhya opens a new chapter for Gita Press

NEW DELHI: It's the story of a journey — from the risk of extinction to unprecedented expansion. Gorakhpur-based Gita Press, which stood on the brink of closure nine years ago, is now out of stock of its popular edition of Ramcharitmanas; in fact, most of its publications dealing with Hindu scriptures and deities are running out ahead of the consecration ceremony in Ayodhya. The iconic institution, which has been credited by many as protecting and sustaining the Hindu faith at a time when it was being disparaged by the colonial regime and aggressive proselytisers by churning out its low-priced publications, has not been able to meet the mammoth number of print orders in the run-up to the consecration, and has uploaded the entire Ramcharitmanas on its website for downloads for the next 15 days to help Shri Ram devotees perform the rituals they have planned ahead of and on the day of the ceremony. The surge in demand has led those running the Press, whose importance was acknowledged by the Modi government last year by conferring the Gandhi Peace Prize on it, to seriously consider expansion of its facility to cope with the demand, with there being sufficient pointers that the religious groundswell is not going to go away anytime soon. "Currently, we are uploading Ramcharitmanas on the Gita Press website and from Tuesday, it will be available for free download and the service will be available for 15 days, allowing up to 50,000 people to download and search simultaneously. If the load and demand increase, we will scale up the capacity, enabling up to 1,00,000 downloads at a time, and the service period may also be extended," Lalmani Tripathi, manager of the publishing house, said. Tripathi regretted that they didn't have the logistics to print around 4 lakh copies of Ramcharitmanas at such short notice.

Congress leaders to visit hundreds of temples during its yatra

IMPHAL: Congress Monday said party leaders will visit hundreds of temples during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra but the ceremony for Ayodhya temple has been turned into a political event by BJP. Meanwhile, Congress will raise the demand in the budget session of Parliament that PM Modi visit Manipur to heal the wounds of the state.



Standing by the decision to decline the invitation extended to party leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi for the January 22 ceremony, Congress spokesman

Kanhaiyya Kumar said the concept of invites for the temple function was strange in Indian culture, as temple visits follow the divine calls to followers. "We have since time immemo-

rial followed 'chalo bulawa aya hai, mata ne bulaya hai' for pilgrimages. It is the almighty who calls us. There was never an invitation to attend temples," Kumar added. Kumar said Congress is not an atheist party and does not oppose any religious ceremonies. "Why won't we go to temples?"

Uddhav group moves SC seeking to quash Maharashtra speaker's orders

NEW DELHI: The two-year-old political dispute over control of Shiv Sena between factions led by Uddhav Thackeray and Maharashtra CM Shinde reached Supreme Court on Monday as Sena (UBT) faction led by the former sought quashing of assembly speaker's January 10 orders lock, stock and barrel. Sena (UBT) accused speaker Narwekar of acting unconstitutionally and in violation of apex



court's May 11, 2023, judgment in Subhash Desai case laying broad parameters of anti-defection law and to decide disqualification pleas. In its plea, Sena (UBT) sought stay of Narwekar's orders recognising Shinde faction as the real Sena and dismissing pleas for

disqualification of 39 'rebel' MLAs led by Shinde, though "there was more than sufficient evidence" about them defying whips to split the party in June 2022. Thackeray group representing by senior advocate Devadatt Kamat, said it amounted to the speaker taking a constitutionally impermissible route to approve a split as a ground for defection despite the clause to that effect omitted by the Constitution.

Eye on China, India inks first overseas lithium mining deal for five blocks in Argentina

NEW DELHI: Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL), a joint venture of state-run miners, has inked India's first overseas lithium exploration and mining deal involving five blocks in Argentina, setting off New Delhi's overseas hunt for the critical mineral to loosen China's stranglehold on a key



element of energy transition. "The deal will help India strengthen lithium supplies, while developing lithium

mining and downstream sectors of both the countries. It will also facilitate diversification of supply chain for critical

materials towards achieving Global Net Zero goals," coal and mines minister Prahlad Joshi said after signing of the agreement on Monday. The US Geological Survey puts total lithium reserves globally at just 80.7 million tonnes.

ED-CBI-NIA team going to UK to hasten fugitives' extradition

NEW DELHI: A high-level team of CBI, Enforcement Directorate and National Investigation Agency is leaving soon for the UK to expedite extradition of India's most wanted fugitives, including defence dealer Sanjay Bhandari, diamond trader Nirav Modi and Kingfisher Airlines promoter Vijay Mallya. An effort is on to iden-



tify their properties in the UK and other countries to take possession of the 'proceeds of

crime'. Sources said the team is headed by a senior officer from foreign ministry and meetings have been scheduled by Indian High Commission in London with the UK authorities for seeking pending information on assets acquired by the fugitives in London along with details of their banking transactions.

Army video puts LAC incidents in public domain, later deleted

NEW DELHI: Skirmishes between Indian and Chinese troops as well as tactical operations by the two armies have been taking place intermittently all along the Line of Actual Control, ever since the military confrontation in eastern Ladakh erupted in April-May 2020, with the overall situation remaining quite tense, though largely stable. The fragile situation along the 3,488-km LAC, with forward deployment by the two armies stretching from eastern Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh, has been reinforced by several previously undisclosed incidents coming to light after the Army's Western Command uploaded a video clip on YouTube about the gallantry awards and citations presented during its annual parade and investiture ceremony on January 13. With the video clip creating waves on the social media.

Iran, EAM S Jaishankar says must address Red Sea security



New Delhi: Amid the latest flare-up in West Asia, which has seen US and UK launch air strikes on Iran-backed Houthi targets in Yemen, external affairs minister S Jaishankar discussed the Gaza situation with his Iranian counterpart H Amirabdollahian in Tehran, underlining India's support for a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and its condemnation of the October 7 Hamas terror attacks on Israel. The minister called for addressing the threat to maritime security in the Red Sea where the Houthi have targeted commercial vessels. Jaishankar also

spoke about the situation in Afghanistan, Ukraine and also cooperation under BRICS. "Our bilateral discussion focused on the long term framework for India's involvement with Chabahar port and the INSTC connectivity project. Also spoke about threats to maritime shipping in the region. Important that this be speedily addressed," said Jaishankar in a post on X. Speaking about attacks in the vicinity of India, Jaishankar said it is a matter of great concern to the international community. "Obviously, it also has a direct bearing.

On PM's call, BJP leader Yogesh Shukla launched cleanliness campaign in religious place Devkund Nath



On PM's call, BJP leader Yogesh Shukla launched cleanliness campaign in religious place Devkund Nath. Meja. On Monday, under the call of the country's popular Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP leader Yogesh Shukla along with his colleagues reached the famous religious place of Manda, Dev Kund Nath Dham, as part of the cleanliness campaign in every temple of the country from January 14 to January 22,

2024. On this occasion, BJP leader Yogesh Shukla said that I appeal to the people of Manda that all of you should reach this famous religious place once a week and engage in cleanliness campaign and play an important role in keeping this holy place clean. . Shri Shukla urged the people of the area that if you all come to this religious place then do not use plastic and bring your own bag for garbage and take it with you

while leaving and destroy it at a safe place. . On this occasion, BJP leaders Hari Mohan Pandey, Rakesh Shukla, Pector Pandey, Kailash Nath Pandey, Shri Kant Pandey, Vijay Pandey, Shiv Das Dubey, Ram Bahori Maurya, Pramod Kumar, Durga Pandey, Hari Kant Pandey, Jai Prakash Bind, Vikas Singh, Hundreds including Sandeep Pandey, Vijay Pandey were present.

Bottlenecks at Barkat Ali road and P D'Mello takes away the joy of city's fastest ride

MUMBAI: For Neeraj Dixit, a Dadar resident who frequents his Taloja office via Vashi was in a jubilant mood Monday morning as he was breaking nearly 15-year-old conventional Sion-Panvel route to reach his destination. Even though Neeraj now lauds the zoom ride he enjoyed on Atal Setu to and from his office, he said the Barkat Ali Dargah road that connects Wadala with Freeway via Antop Hill road and L M Nadkarni road was a nightmare. For several

motorists like Neeraj from Dadar, Matunga, Wadala, Lalbaug and Lower Parel who took MTHL on Monday to reach destinations in Navi Mumbai (Nerul-Belapur to Panvel) and beyond (and vice versa) had to face a traffic bottleneck at Barkat Ali junction in Wadala even on their return journeys. On an average the motorists zoomed past the sea link to reach either side in 20 minutes but Viraj, Neeraj's wife said she and several of their friends had to spend

another 15 minutes each in the traffic on this narrow Barkat Ali Dargah road stretch due to bumper to bumper traffic. Pratik Sinha, another motorist who has a second home in Panvel, said during morning and evening peak hours on Tuesday the traffic volume would be even bigger delaying the journey as several installations had a Makar Sankranti holiday on Monday. "People can actually take the freeway from either sides--Antop.

Karnataka starts aggressive drive to reclaim over 1.1 lakh acres of govt land

BENGALURU: The Karnataka government has launched a statewide drive to reclaim over 1.1 lakh acres of government land unlawfully occupied by encroachers across 31 districts. The Karnataka Public Lands Corporation Limited (KPLCL) has set a dead-

line of January 31 for deputy commissioners to develop action plans to identify, clear, and regain control of vacant government plots currently held by squatters and land mafias. As per data compiled by KPLCL, out of Karnataka's total land bank of 63.3 lakh acres, a substantial 14.7

lakh acres are under unauthorised occupation. While over 10 lakh acres across the state are being cultivated by farmers who have filed applications seeking land grants from the government, approximately 3.9 lakh acres have been earmarked.

Delhi shivers as temperature hits season's lowest at 3.3°C; very dense fog tomorrow

NEW DELHI: Delhi woke up to bone-chilling cold on Monday morning with the mercury dropping to 3.3 degrees Celsius, the lowest temperature recorded this season. This is four degrees below the average temperature for this time of the year. The city was enveloped in a thick layer of fog, causing visibility issues in various parts, as reported by weather officials.



The previous lowest temperature of the season was recorded on Sunday at 3.5 degrees Celsius. This marks a slight dip from Saturday's 3.6 degrees Celsius and Friday's 3.9 degrees Celsius, both of which were also the season's lowest for those respective days.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast-

ed that very dense fog will persist on Tuesday and that cold wave conditions will prevail throughout Monday.

This means that people should continue to take necessary precautions to stay warm and protected.

In addition to the freezing temperatures, Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) stood at 382,

according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). An AQI reading between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe". The current reading indicates poor air quality in the city.

Donkey flight: 'Punjab emigrants told to seek US asylum on Khalistan plea'

AHMEDABAD: CID (Crime) officers probing the human smuggling case after France grounded last month a chartered flight carrying 303 Indians, including 96 Gujaratis, during a refuelling stop at Vatry airport near Paris, on Friday said that the human smugglers had told illegal emigrants from Punjab to seek asylum in the US claiming they were Khalistan supporters in case they were caught by security agencies.

This is because Khalistan supporters have been agitating



against the Indian state there. Sources in the police said those from Gujarat were told to seek asylum either as Congress or AAP workers on the grounds of political persecution. Newlyweds or young

couples were told to seek asylum on the grounds of inter-caste marriage or family feuds. Gujarat ADGP CID (Crime) Rajkumar Pandian said they have booked 14 agents for human smuggling, destruction of evidence

and criminal conspiracy. "The procedure to issue look-out circulars against the 14 agents, many of whom are abroad, will be taken up very soon," Pandian said. He said the agents made the emigrants delete messages and destroy evidence, but the CID succeeded in retrieving some of them. The agents booked by CID were named as Joginder alias Jaggi Paji and Joginder Mansaram from Delhi; Salim Dubai and Sam Paji from Dubai; Chandresh Patel, Sandip Patel.

Health at your doorstep to be implemented in Mumbai: CM

MUMBAI: On the lines of Shasan Aplya Dari (The government at your doorsteps), the Arogya Aplya Dari (Health at your doorsteps) initiative will be implemented in Mumbai. The health department of the Mumbai municipal corporation will visit each and every household and implement the Arogya Aplya Dari venture under this initiative. Free health check-up will be carried out under this campaign and quality medical facilities will be made available to them," said Chief Minister Mr Eknath Shinde. Shinde under took the Deep Clean Drive in Shiv Vallabh Chhed road, Nana-Nani Park, Nancy Colony, Savarkar Nagar, Dahisar East, Sigh Estate Road number - 02, Thakur gaon, Kandivali East, Daftari Marg, Malad East, Tapovan Malad East and adjacent areas.

He further said that in this cleanliness drive being implemented in Mumbai city, along with the sanitation workers and employees the school children, citizens, and social organizations are also voluntarily participating and it is really a matter of joy. Stating that the cleanliness drive has now become a widespread public movement; the Chief Minister had interaction with the people present on the occasion. He said that people themselves have taken up the cleanliness drive and made it a people's movement. He asked everybody to keep continuity in this campaign and appealed to everybody to actively participate in it. Shinde visited the Aaji-Aajoba (Nana-Nani) park during the cleanliness drive and had good interaction with the senior citizens. Speaking on the occa-

sion he said, "The senior citizens give energy and encouragement to the society and I am here to take your blessings. The government is already running various schemes for the senior citizens and now the Vanshree scheme is going to be started for them and soon the GR will be published." He also said that the Municipal Corporation should make separate arrangements in order to ascertain that the senior citizens get good medical facilities with priority. He instructed the municipal corporation administration to start recreation centers for the senior citizens Chief Minister Mr Eknath Shinde today inaugurated the Hindu Hriday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray Apala Dawakhana and dedicated it in Bua Salvi ground area in Dindoshi. After that he inspected the registration cell.

On Day 1 post-inauguration, over 45,000 enjoy drive on India's longest sea bridge

MUMBAI: A day after PM Narendra Modi inaugurated India's longest sea bridge, MTHL aka Atal Behari Vajpayee Nhava Seva bridge, curiosity drove more than 45,000 people to the 21.8-km scenic stretch on Saturday, when it was thrown open to the public.

Besides a beaming sense of pride, the bridge — that shrinks the distance between Navi Mumbai and Mumbai to less than 20 minutes — filled many who had travelled from distant Kalyan and Juinagar with a sense of renewed proximity to the city. While a smooth signal-free ride over the eastern water front was a big draw, several visitors in the 8,500-odd vehicles that plied here on January 13 till 7pm, described it as an 'engineering marvel' but admitted in the same breath that they may not be able to afford daily commute owing to the high one-way toll of Rs 250. Some felt a carpool option may make things easier. Till late in the night, the number of vehicles that took the bridge reached roughly 12,000, taking the number of



first day visitors to approximately 45,000. From the Chirle-end (equidistant from Panvel and Belapur), Panvel residents Aashutosh Kale and his wife Kshipra were among the first to arrive along with their mothers, while at the Sewri-end, a group of marathoners from Ghatkopar-Chembur — who had just finished an 18km run between NCPA and Haji Ali — were among the early birds. The runners left gushing about the "well-built" bridge. A nearby emergency lane filled up with parked cars of families that stepped out to take selfies against the sea, the flamingoes and the floating balloons. Many took group photos and selfies. "It is the most sophisticated bridge that I have seen. The road surface is of extremely superior quality," said civil

engineer Sameer Zemse. Infrastructure enthusiast Jaideep Kane — who has documented the construction of the bridge through videos, called the bridge a "huge boon" for people in Panvel-Raigad belt, particularly to those who have to come to Mumbai to catch a flight or board an outstation train from CSMT. "A Panvel resident will save at least 20 minutes of time going to the airport as they can now avoid the congested stretches in Mumbai," said Kane. While the dread of traffic jams would keep Atul Kulkarni from visiting the city on weekends earlier, the Panvel resident, who reached Sewri within 30 minutes on Saturday, is now planning to drive down regularly to explore food joints in South Mumbai with his family.

Bystanders busy looting Rs 1.5 lakh from him, crash victim dies

AGRA: A man who met with an accident earlier this week would have survived, in all likelihood, had the bystanders helped him reach a medical facility instead of looting his money. A video circulating on social media, showing a crowd purportedly looting Rs 1.5 lakh in cash from Dharmendra Kumar Gupta (46), a critically-injured Agra-based businessman, has been eliciting shocked responses. The 47-second video has also drawn the attention of cops who said they are going to file an FIR in the matter. The incident pertains to Tuesday, when a speeding truck collided with around 20 vehicles on the Agra-Delhi national highway, resulting in the death of three individuals including Dharmendra, a milk trader who was returning home from Mathura on his motorcycle. He was carrying a bag that had around Rs 1.5 lakh in cash, as per his family.

PM Modi and Putin agree on roadmap to boost special ties



NEW DELHI: PM Modi and Russian President Putin, who spoke over phone on Monday, assessed developments in bilateral relations and agreed to chalk out, according to an Indian readout, a roadmap for future initiatives to further strengthen India-Russia 'Special & Privileged Strategic Partnership'. This was their first conversation in 2024 and came on the heels of foreign minister S Jaishankar's visit to Moscow last month during which he had called on Putin. Modi likely to visit Russia later this year for bilateral annual summit

year for the bilateral annual summit that hasn't taken place for the past two years. The Russians on Monday quoted Modi as saying India intends to contribute in every possible way to the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Russian presidency. According to the Indian government, Modi and Putin reviewed progress on a number of issues of bilateral cooperation in follow-up to recent high-level exchanges between the two countries, while exchanging views on regional and global issues of mutual interest like the Ukraine war. "PM conveyed his best wishes for Russia's Presidency of BRICS in 2024 and assured of India's full support. The two leaders agreed to remain in touch," said the Indian government. "The achievements in practical cooperation in such areas as trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation, energy, transport and logistics, and cooperation in the Russian Far East were noted with satisfaction. Vladimir Putin and Narendra Modi expressed interest in further intensifying mutually beneficial bilateral ties and wished each other success in the upcoming elections - presidential in Russia and parliamentary in India.

HC: Make awareness against nylon manja use part of school curriculum

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR: The Bombay high court's Aurangabad bench on Monday asked the School Education Department to make awareness against the use of nylon manja for kite flying a part of the official school curriculum. The court also asked for mandatory conduct of necessary awareness programmes in educational institutions every year between October and March in the future without fail. "The police department is burdened with routine work when it comes to carrying out crackdown on the nylon

manja. However, small steps put together in the form of awareness can lead to major results," the bench of Justice Ravindra Ghuge and Justice YG Khobragade said while hearing a suo motu PIL initiated in 2020 in response to a TOI report highlighting the menace of nylon manja. The court has asked the principal secretary of the School Education Department to submit the necessary affidavit in response to its order in the next three weeks. The court further suggested that the local administrations can put up awareness

posters at public places throughout the year. "If political posters can be seen everywhere, let there also be space for posters making the public aware of the harm caused by nylon manja to humans and birds. Let it come at the cost of revenue of the local administrations," the court said. Asking authorities to continue with the action against the sale and the use of nylon manja, the court said it has given blanket powers to authorities so that the use of manja is shunned completely by the public for kite flying.

More seers extend support to Ram temple consecration

NEW DELHI: More Hindu figures came out on Monday to throw support to the 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony of Lord Ram's idol at the temple in Ayodhya, which is scheduled for January 22, saying that those faulting the consecration on the ground that the construction of the temple is still

under way are glossing over the important precedent of Somnath Temple in Gujarat. Endorsing the ceremony, they noted that when the consecration ceremony at Somnath Temple in Gujarat was done, it was far from complete and asserted that the exercise in Ayodhya is in line with scriptures.

Shashikant Das of Saryu Aarti said in a statement that the auspicious occasion in Ayodhya has come after a wait and struggle of 500 years and nothing should be done to take away from its enormity. Mahant Narayan Giri of Dudheswar Mandir said the consecration ceremony is an event.

Sanatan case: Patna court calls TN CM's son Udhayanidhi Stalin on February 13

PATNA: A special court in the Bihar capital served a summons on TN minister Udhayanidhi Stalin on Monday, directing him to appear before it for a February 13 hearing in a case linked to his controversial remarks on Sanatan Dharma. Special judge (MP/MLA cases) Sarika Wahaliya gave Udhayanidhi, son of chief minister M K Stalin, the option of having a lawyer represent him at the hearing to respond to charges levelled against him under various sections of IPC for his statements that stirred a hornet's nest four months ago. At a writers' conference in Chennai in the first week of September last year, Udhayanidhi said, "Sanatan is like malaria and dengue, and so it must be eradicated and not simply opposed." Kaushalendra Narayan, a Patna HC lawyer, filed a criminal case against Udhayanidhi at CJM's court on September 4. The case was transferred to special judge Wahaliya on January 6.

Union home minister bereaved

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's elder sister, Rajeshwariben Shah, passed away in Mumbai after undergoing treatment for a period of illness. Shah, who represents Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency, canceled his engagements in Gujarat to be with his family. Rajeshwariben was in her mid-60s, and her last rites were performed at Thalje crematorium with a considerable presence of supporters and well-wishers.

President Murmu makes her maiden visit to PM museum

● " 'Freedom and Unity' galleries, showcasing films on Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Subhas Chandra Bose"



NEW DELHI: In her maiden visit to Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya on Monday, President Droupadi Murmu spent over one hour exploring the Constitution gallery, the 'Temples of Modern India' section, and institutions established post-Independence. The Toshakahana, featuring gifts received by successive PMs caught her interest. Additionally, she toured the private wing of India's first Prime Minister

Jawaharlal Nehru. In the new building, the President explored the 'Freedom and Unity' galleries, showcasing films on Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. She also visited the galleries of various PMs, observing items like Lal Bahadur Shastri's badminton racket and charkha, the letters of Jayaprakash Narayan and his

jail diary, as well as the exhibits on Pokharan II nuclear tests, Golden Quadrilateral and Kargil War. President Murmu visited the addition to the museum - the Narendra Modi gallery - which will be thrown open to the public from Tuesday. The gallery, divided into sections including Modi's early life, focuses on the his style of governance.

Spitting case: Plaintiff hostile, man gets bail

INDORE: In a stunning turn in the case where two minors and an 18-year-old were arrested for allegedly spitting on a Mahakal Sawari procession in Ujjain, the complainant and witness have turned hostile, with the complainant even denying the contents of the FIR. The Indore bench of Madhya Pradesh high court referred to this and granted bail to Adnan Mansuri, the lone adult among the accused, who was 18 at the time. He spent over five



months in jail. In his judgment, Justice Anil Verma observed: "Complainant Sawan Lot and eyewitness Ajay Khatri have been examined before the trial court and they both have turned hostile and not supported the case

of the prosecution. The applicant (Adnan) is a permanent resident of Ujjain and the final conclusion of the trial is likely to take a long time. Under the above circumstances, prayer for grant of bail may be considered." The adminis-

tration had razed allegedly "illegal portions" of Adnan's ancestral house on July 19, two days after the complaint was filed against him. Ujjain civic officials and police arrived with JCB machines and tore it down, as drummers played. Justice Verma granted bail to Adnan on December 15, 151 days after he was arrested along with two 15-year-old boys on charges of allegedly spitting from the terrace of a building at a procession of Lord Mahakal near Tanki Square.

If committed to justice, arrest Sandeshkhali attackers: Calcutta HC

KOLKATA: Those accused of the Sandeshkhali attack should be arrested if the state wanted justice to be done, Calcutta High Court told the advocate general on Monday. Prime accused Sheikh Shahjahan, who has been in hiding since January 5, also moved the HC to file an appeal.



"Why isn't your client surrendering? You were trying to influence the advocate general. I mistook you as the junior counsel for the state. Why were you trying to stop the advocate general?" When the AG submitted that four people had already been arrested, Justice Sengupta said: "Why only four... among so many accused? Why is the investigation still in

the hands of the Nazat Police when the prime accused is at large for so many days?" "Why hasn't Section 307 of the IPC (attempt to murder) been added to the FIR against the accused?" Justice Sengupta added. Dutta submitted that the section had not been included because the injured ED officers had alleged that they were given a "shove and push" by the mob.

It's not me, Sachin warns fans as deepfake hits social media

Sachin Tendulkar has become the latest target of a deepfake video. The batting maestro, in a clip on X, raised an alarm on Monday over the fake video that deceptively uses his voice and image to promote a dubious gaming app promising quick money. Dismissing the video as fabricated, Tendulkar shared the clip on X exposing it as "fake" along with a message expressing concern about rampant tech misuse. Sachin Tendulkar's deepfake video goes viral; cricketer's strong reaction! After actors Alia Bhatt and Rashmika Mandanna, cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar has become the latest target of a deepfake video. The batting maestro, in a clip on X, raised an alarm on



Monday over the fake video that deceptively uses his voice and image to promote a dubious gaming app promising quick money. The video, eerily convincing and circulated widely on social media, features a seemingly genuine Tendulkar praising the app for helping make money effortlessly. Besides, he mentions that his own daughter uses the platform. Dismissing the video as fabricated, Tendulkar shared the clip on X

exposing it as "fake" along with a message expressing concern about rampant tech misuse. "These videos are fake. It is disturbing to see rampant misuse of technology," he wrote, urging followers to immediately report such content - videos, ads, and apps - en masse. "Social media platforms need to be alert and responsive to complaints. Swift action from their end is crucial to stopping the spread of misinformation and deep-

fakes," he added, highlighting the need for platforms to heighten vigilance in the face of increasingly sophisticated digital manipulation. Hours after the master blaster's post, Union minister of state for electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar took to social media to express gratitude for raising awareness, and pledged stringent action. "Deepfakes and misinformation powered by #AI are a threat to Safety & Trust of Indian users and represent harm & legal violation that platforms have to prevent and take down," Chandrasekhar, who is also junior minister for skill development and entrepreneurship, declared on X. He said stricter regulations under the Information Technology Act would soon be notified.

Assaulted over cricket match dispute, cop dies

NASHIK: A dispute over a match between players of rival cricket teams ended in the killing of a police constable at Chalisgaon in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, reports Santosh Sonawane. Subham Agone, a 28-year-old constable attached to Mumbai police, was attacked with swords and cricket stumps by 10 to 12 members of the rival cricket team. Shubham succumbed to his injuries. Three men have been arrested so far. On a complaint lodged by Anand Agone, a farmer who also was attacked by rival team players, the Chalisgaon city police have registered an FIR against 12 people for offences punishable under IPC, including under Sections 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 504 (intentional insult). Assistant inspector Sagar Dhikle, investigating the case, said Shubham was in his hometown.

Editorial

Spiritual resonance of slogans: A journey through Janambhoomi movement in India

Spiritual resonance of slogans: A journey through Ram Janambhoomi movement in India (File) Under-construction Shri Ram Janambhoomi temple during a media tour organised by Shri Ram Janambhoomi Teerth Kshetra, in Ayodhya, on 26 December, 2023. PTI Slogans in the Indian context possess a more spiritual dimension, contrary to Western beliefs associating them with temporal attributes. They enable us to decipher project rationale, create comprehensive mobilisation models and convey ideas of solidarity. Historically, we've witnessed ideas materialise and robust mobilisation in social, political, cultural and economic movements, primarily driven by slogans, and constructing consent. The vitality of slogans can be understood in the binary of Identity and Communication. Firstly, a strong communication network is established among the masses, leading to a pervasive campaign. Secondly, there's a fervent rise in group identity formation, evolving into naturalization, crucial for sustaining any movement. The Indian journey of the Ram Janambhoomi movement is akin to a pilgrimage. It serves as a fitting case study of how a movement is constructed through slogans, fostering popular consent throughout the campaign. An entire superstructure of pan-India nationalism is constructed through slogans, engineering deep-seated faith in people's hearts. This journey can be divided into three essential parts: the early 1950s, marked by petitions and prayers; the mid-1980s to the 1990s, termed the era of mass mobilisation; and post-2014, labelled as the era of national and cultural resurgence in Bharat. The common thread uniting these parts is the symphony of nationalism, participation and consent. The unwavering commitment of decisive masses, willing to sacrifice their way of life to uphold the moral intuition supporting the movement, is pivotal.

National will and discourse often revolve around slogans, where popularisation is key to comprehensive mobilisation, followed by faith development in the cause. Historically, slogans have played a central role in disseminating essential movements and establishing emotional, social, financial, political, and national bases. To theorise this, we need to understand it at four levels. First, Participation, where masses from different parts of the nation engage in movements driven by popular slogans. Second, Interactional level, fostering solidarity among participating agents. Third, Informational level, contextualizing the movement within the participant-built network. Lastly, Consent is created among participants to actualize the commonly desired movement.

This understanding is contextualized in the Ram Janambhoomi movement, illustrating how profound slogans like "Mandir Wahin Banayenge," "Garv Se Kaho Ki Hum Hindu Hain," "Jai Shri Ram," and "Hindu-Hindu Bhai-Bhai Beech Mein Vardi Kaha Se Aayi" led to the creation of a popular national discourse. In the 1990s, two prominent figures in Hindutva, Balasaheb Thackeray and Pramod Mahajan, notable orators and impeccable organisers, utilised sloganeering magnificently in post-colonial India. The monumental call of "Garv Se kaho Hum Hindu Hain" became inseparable from Balasaheb and the Ram Mandir Andolan, etching his place in the national consciousness. Equally noteworthy is the resonance of the phrase "Mandir Wahin Banayenge," embodying the fervour surrounding the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. Pramod Mahajan's role in shaping the narrative around the Ayodhya issue.

How India-France are shaping a dynamic partnership in the changing global landscape

Nobody, not even the best soothsayers or experts, can explain why the world is suddenly changing so quickly, but remember the prophecy once sung by Bob Dylan, it seems to become true, "For the times, they are a-changin'". A sign of the changing time, France has a new prime minister, 34 years of age of a different sexual orientation as the head of the government. Of course, in India is difficult to understand that such a young 'inexperienced' leader, could lead a country with multiple problems, but how old were Adi Shankara or Swami Vivekananda when they changed India in so much depth. One can't compare the new French leader to the two above-mentioned spiritual giants, but one can hope that fresh blood will be good for France in these 'changing' times.

Macron back in India

In the meantime, French President Emmanuel Macron will be the Chief Guest for Republic Day. I still remember his last State visit in March 2018; addressing a French gathering in Delhi, the President spoke of the Chinese hegemony in the region and said that France was ready to work with India on the oceans: "France is a power of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans; we are present at



the Reunion, we are also there in French Polynesia and New Caledonia. And we are a maritime power, it is often forgotten but France is the second maritime power in the world. We have a strong navy, we have nuclear submarines equipped like few other powers in the world; a maritime surveillance capability through our own satellites and technologies; it is obvious we are a military and intelligence power ranking us among the first nations in the world." This language was surprising at that time, but one can measure how much the world has changed and particularly the great powers' views on the Middle Kingdom in the post-Covid era (and post-Eastern

Ladakh confrontation for India). Many more countries have today realized that China can't be left free to engulf the oceans around it. **Twenty-five years of strategic partnership**

The '90s saw a tremendous boost in bilateral relations with the visits of president Jacques Chirac in January 1998 and prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's trip to Paris later in the year (incidentally, the new French prime minister is Mr Attal, with two 't', though the French will not pronounce differently). The most striking feature of 1998's visit was the setting up of a framework for a strategic partnership. Using a de Gaulle-like language, Jacques Chirac saluted India,

"a nation which has affirmed its personality on the world stage". He said that he had come to show that "France wanted to accompany India in its potent march [towards the future]." Chirac's words were not mere political niceties. When India conducted its nuclear tests in Pokhran in May, France was one of the few countries which did not condemn Delhi (or impose sanctions). This was greatly appreciated in Delhi and when prime minister Vajpayee returned Chirac's visit in October, the new strategic dialogue could take its first concrete steps. These events set in motion a closer collaboration.

The deal

The French government has recently submitted a response to India's Rs 50,000 crore tender to purchase 26 Rafale Marine fighter jets for the Indian Navy; according to India Today: "India has initiated the USD 6 billion deal with France for the acquisition of 26 Rafale Marine aircraft, aiming to enhance the Indian Navy's aircraft carrier capabilities." The purchase of three new Scorpene submarines is also in the pipeline. These deals are expected to be soon finalised.

Reciprocal collaboration

The collaboration between France and India is multiple and reciprocal. For example,

the Paris Region of France is calling for more investments from India. Valérie Pécresse, President of the Paris Region, recently met Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani and Tata Sons chief N Chandrasekaran in Mumbai and asked the Indian entrepreneurs to invest in her region. Pécresse told media: "We are on a charm offensive to win hearts and minds of Indian students, tourists, investors and film makers." Today Indians represent fraction of the 50 million tourists visiting Paris; for example, figures say that the number of Australians and Chinese visiting the French capital is far higher than Indians.

Local collaboration

The collaboration is today getting delocalised. France recently set up an exclusive pavilion at the third edition of the Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet (GIM), a two-day event from 7 January, whose objective was to foster economic ties with India. The Consulate of France in Puducherry and Chennai coordinated the French participation; France was a country partner for the event. The French Pavilion showcased many Paris-based companies including Michelin, Precia Molen, Valeo, Cryolar and Numeric among others.

Vikrant Massey's 12th Fail: Scene stealer of hope & honesty from the Vidhu Vinod Chopra's masterpiece

Depicting the true life of IPS Manoj Kumar Sharma, Vikrant Massey's 12th Fail was a true story of hope and honesty. The last scene where his girlfriend goes to see the final list and says that he has actually cleared it was the actual scene-stealer. There is so much emotion in that scene. Vikrant Massey's eyes did all the talking and the way he fell down on the floor showed the character's emotions and how many sleepless nights he has had to make this dream come true. It was a moment not only of the film, but to millions of people who are struggling hard to become a civil servant.

For the audience too 12th Fail was a movie of hope. It's a true

story of an underdog, IPS officer Manoj Sharma which gives hope to millions of viewers. A boy coming from an extremely humble background, who studied in a village and makes it to becoming an IPS officer. His struggles are lessons that many of us coming from a comparatively privileged can learn from. True to its purpose, 12th Fail shows how from being a dog walker, a toilet cleaner to sleeping on the streets, Manoj Kumar Sharma, the real IPS officer has done it all to achieve his dream. The movie teaches one how to be persevering and that there is no substitute for hard work. The UPSC exam is like a game of snake and ladder. Once you go up by clearing the prelimi-

nary exam and you are unable to clear mains, you will have to again clear the prelims. And if you clear the prelims, the mains and fail in the interview. You will have to again go back to square one and clear prelims and mains again. It's a huge gamble and years of loss. The movie shows that if you really have the fire in your belly to be an IPS officer, you will have to keep doing it until you make it one day. Vikrant Massey's 12th Fail is about the middle child of a family of farmers from Chambal (a region known for its bandits, according to the voiceover narration). The movie teaches that you will have to keep your dreams alive and have faith in those who have faith in you.

Why Maldivian ministers actually helped Narendra Modi

Most Indians who travel within the country for leisure mostly prefer pilgrimage spots, and Ayodhya will get the lion's share of that traffic for quite a while. Although, given the sheer number of Indians—1.4 billion and counting—even the fraction who do not head for temple towns is enough to swamp most domestic destinations in peak season. And Lakshadweep is currently in the public eye thanks to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's endorsement.

The lakhs who will head to Ayodhya are not all potential snorkellers too. But most of those interested in Lakshadweep are misled by its name. It does not comprise 1,00,000 islands off the Kerala coast but just 36 atolls. Of them only 17 have islands; the rest are reefs in the turquoise waters of the Laccadive Sea. Thanks to history and happenstance Maldives got the lion's share of the archipelago that was once collectively Lakshadweep or "one lakh islands." Maldives has 1,194 to India's 36, and the southern-most 7 atolls comprise the Chagos Islands. Of Maldives' 1,194 'dweep's, only 200 are inhabited and 164 of those have tourist facilities—172 resorts, 883 guest houses, 13 hotels and 152 tourist vessels—which hosted a record 1.7 million tourists in 2023, of which roughly 2.1 lakh each were from India and Russia; Chinese



tourists were third at around 25,000 less. Lakshadweep's facilities are abysmal in comparison. But India's interest in the region is not new. Just over 1,000 years ago, Emperor Rajendra Chola conquered the entire archipelago as part of his campaign in Chera country. Over 1,200 years before that, the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka's daughter Sanghamitra is believed to have brought Buddhism there. More recently, the part of Lakshadweep that is now Indian was under the suzerainty of the Chirakkals and then the Arakkals of Kerala besides Tipu Sultan. So there must be a deeper purpose to Prime Minister Modi's support for India's part of the picturesque archipelago that has remained curiously under the radar of most Indians, and also of the hospitality industry. It is hard to say which one is to blame for Lakshadweep's lethargy: has its relative lack of facilities ensured tourist disinterest all these years or the other way round? The last time it was really in the news was

when another prime minister holidayed there—in 1987. Of course, Rajiv Gandhi's winter fam-jam there was in news for all the wrong reasons back then. It was reported that he used a ship of the Indian Navy to get there to join the 24-strong party of family and friends. Moreover, as the chosen island, Bangaram, lacked most facilities, everything had to be transported there from the mainland for the jamboree, obviously at public cost, from huts, helipads and electricity generators to cooks, food and drinking water. Blame it on the lack of social media back then but the only real filip that Lakshadweep got from the prime minister's holiday was that the VVIP "cottages" in Bangaram were repaired and prettied up, two new ones were added as was a conference hall. There was also a somewhat predictable "interest" in the destination soon after by the ruling Congress (I) groupies: two Parliamentary committees also decided to have their meetings in Lakshadweep.

Equitable responsibility sharing: A crucial shift in global refugee strategy

Refugees from sub-Saharan Africa sit in a makeshift boat intercepted by Tunisian authorities in the Mediterranean Sea about 50 nautical miles (93km) off the coast of the city of Sfax. AFP. Despite more than 70 years of the existence of the Global Refugee Convention, the number of people seeking refuge have increased. Last year we saw the largest yearly increase recorded in the number of refugees – from 27.1 million in 2021 to 35.3 million at the end of 2022. Indications are that the year 2023 is going to see further increase. With the crisis increasing, sentiments are not growing

in favour, rather as indicated above, there is a growing lack of empathy and increasing hostility to refugees and people seeking refuge across borders. The Global Refugee Forum event held every four years, brings together governments, civil society, refugees, and other stakeholders to share best practices, make pledges of support, and mobilize resources to help refugees and their host communities. Clearly there is a lot that needs to be on the table. At the heart of discussions about the refugee protection system are two significant philosophical inquiries: firstly, determining the

definition of a refugee, and secondly, understanding the ethical guidelines for how states should support individuals seeking asylum. In its present state, the Refugee Convention does not resolve these questions and leaves them as subjects of disagreement and dispute. There is urgent need to expand the Convention's definition to include refugees fleeing persecution due to economic, environmental, climate change factors or sexual orientation. Based on such a definition there is need for concrete guidance on how states should support refugees and affirm refugees'

inherent right to immigrate and establish a new life where they want to. It is only by expanding the reach of refugee protection and refugee participation in substantive discussions and decision making, that we can strive for an approach that is more comprehensive, fair, and empathetic in safeguarding the human rights of all individuals escaping persecution. The Convention must strive to ensuring that refugees have the right to reunite with their families and access resettlement opportunities, regardless of their nationality or the country of origin.

24.8cr people moved out of multidimensional poverty in India in 9 years

NEW DELHI: A recent report by NITI Aayog revealed that a staggering 24.82 crore individuals have escaped multidimensional poverty in India between 2013-14 and 2022-23. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh have shown the most significant decline in this regard. Multidimensional poverty is determined by improvements in healthcare, education, and standard of living, as stated by the report. The NITI discussion paper highlighted that India's multidimensional poverty has decreased from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23. The trend signifies the upliftment of 24.82 crore people from this bracket during the specified period. "Uttar Pradesh registered the largest decline in the number of poor with 5.94 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty during the



last nine years followed by Bihar at 3.77 crore, Madhya Pradesh at 2.30 crore and Rajasthan at 1.87 crore," according to the report. NITI Aayog's approach to measuring multidimensional poverty involved considering 12 indicators aligned with the sustainable development goals. These indicators encompass crucial aspects such as nutrition, child and adolescent mortality rates, maternal health, educational attainment, access to basic amenities like clean cooking fuel, sanitation, safe drinking water, electricity, housing,

, as well as possession of assets and bank accounts. "Significant initiatives covering all dimensions of poverty have led to 24.82 crore individuals escaping multidimensional poverty in the last 9 years. As a result, India is likely to achieve its SDG target of halving multidimensional poverty well before 2030," the statement said. "The government's persistent dedication and resolute commitment to enhancing the lives of the most vulnerable and deprived have been instrumental in this accomplishment," it added.

'Cancel flights likely to be delayed by over three hours': DGCA's new SOP to airlines after fog wreaks havoc on flight

NEW DELHI: Airlines will now have to cancel flights "sufficiently in advance" that are expected to be delayed by over three hours. And they are also required to inform in real time the flight status, along with expected departure time, to passengers to avoid overcrowding at airports. Following instructions from Union aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Monday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued new protocol for airlines after two days of sheer havoc that fog has played with flight schedules, forcing thousands to remain holed up inside planes, airports and even tarmac for hours. Scindia has also directed Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) to without any further delay operationalize IGIA's CAT IIIB runway, 28/10 that has been closed for repairs since last September. Scindia on

flyer assaulting Indigo pilot: 'Incidences of unruly behaviour are unacceptable, will be dealt with strongly in line with existing legal provisions' Warning passengers against indulging in unruly behaviour — after a passenger of a hugely delayed flight assaulted an IndiGo co-pilot — he assured "everyone that all stakeholders are working round the clock to minimise fog-related impact" and directed DGCA to step in.

Abu Dhabi Chamber obtains three ISO certificates

DUBAI: The Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry has obtained three ISO certificates for its dedication to upholding the highest international standards and optimal global management practices in quality, environmental sustainability, and occupational

health. The certificates include the ISO certificate for quality management systems (ISO 9001:2015), the ISO certificate for environmental management systems (ISO 14001:2015), and the ISO certificate for occupational health

management systems (ISO 45001:2018), after successfully passing all requirements and conditions for external auditing. Ahmed Khalifa Al Qubaisi, Chief Executive Officer of Abu Dhabi Chamber, said, "The success of the Abu Dhabi Chamber in passing the external audit.



Paving the digital highway: Netplus and the future of connectivity in Punjab

As the digital landscape evolves, the telecom industry stands at the forefront of this transformation, reshaping how people connect and communicate. In Punjab, a region embracing technological advancements, Netplus, under the visionary leadership of Gurdeep Singh, is playing a pivotal role in revolutionising connectivity. Netplus, a broadband service provider subsidiary of Juhar Group is known for its connection speeds and customer retention rate. Netplus Broadband is one of the fastest-growing ISP in the region, providing next-gen services such as high-speed broadband, smart telephony & OTT. With an exponential rise in data consumption, the introduction of 5G technology, and a growing emphasis on seamless connection, the telecom sector is undergoing a seismic transformation. It is no longer enough just to be connected; it is also necessary to be connected quickly, reliably, and securely. Netplus has been at the forefront of this transformation in Punjab. Speaking on this, Gurdeep Singh, Chairman, and Founder, shares Netplus's story and its role in influencing the future of connectivity. "Netplus has been proactive in embracing technological advancements. We recognized the burgeoning demand for high-speed internet and expanded our infrastructure to provide reliable fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) services. Moreover, we're closely monitoring the 5G landscape, preparing to integrate this cutting-edge technology into our services as soon as it becomes available in Punjab. Our priority has always been customer satisfaction and technological innovation.

China's military and government acquire Nvidia chips despite US ban

BEIJING: Chinese military bodies, state-run artificial intelligence research institutes and universities have over the past year purchased small batches of Nvidia semiconductors banned by the US from export to China, a Reuters review of tender documents show. The sales by largely unknown Chinese suppliers highlight the difficulties Washington faces, despite its bans, in completely cutting off China's access to advanced US chips that could fuel breakthroughs in AI and sophisticated computers for its military. Buying or selling high-end US chips is not illegal in China and the publicly available tender documents show dozens of Chinese entities have bought and taken receipt of Nvidia semiconductors since restrictions

● "The graphic processing units - a type of chip - that are built by Nvidia are widely seen as far superior to rival products for AI work"

were imposed. These include its A100 and the more powerful H100 chip - whose exports to China and Hong Kong were banned in September 2022 - as well as the slower A800 and H800 chips Nvidia then developed for the Chinese market but which were also banned last October. The graphic processing units - a type of chip - that are built by Nvidia are widely seen as far superior to rival products for

AI work as they can more efficiently process huge amounts of data needed for machine-learning tasks. The continued demand for and access to banned Nvidia chips also underlines the lack of good alternatives for Chinese firms despite the nascent development of rival products from Huawei and others. Prior to the bans, Nvidia commanded a 90% share of China's AI chip market. Purchasers included elite universities as well as two entities subject to US export restrictions - the Harbin Institute of Technology and the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, which have been accused of involvement in military matters or being affiliated to a military body contrary to US national interest.

Markets record-breaking rally make investors richer by Rs 9.68 lakh crore

NEW DELHI: Dalal Street investors became richer by Rs 9.68 lakh crore in five days of market rally, where the Sensex breached the historic 73,000-mark for the first time ever to reach a new record peak, taking the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies to an all-time high of Rs 376 lakh crore. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 759.49 points or 1.05 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 73,327.94 on Monday.

During the day, it zoomed 833.71 points or 1.14 per cent to reach its all-time peak of 73,402.16. In five days, the BSE benchmark rallied 1,972.72 points or 2.76 per cent. During this time, investors' wealth surged Rs 9,68,544.93 crore to reach a fresh record high of Rs 3,76,09,510.01 crore. "It is a historic day for the Indian stock market as the Nifty breached the level of 22,000. The better-than-expected results

from IT majors have hinted that it may be the bottoming out of the poor performance by IT stocks," said Shauryam Gupta, CEO, Rupeez. Among the Sensex firms on Monday, Wipro jumped over 6 per cent after the IT company's December quarter earnings beat estimates. The other prominent gainers were HCL Technologies, Infosys, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries. HCL

Technologies on Friday reported a 6.2 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 4,350 crore, highest ever on a quarterly basis, in the three months ended December 2023, on the back of growth in both services and software businesses. Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Motors, Tata Steel and Axis Bank were among the laggards. "Nifty and Sensex soared to fresh record highs.

Infosys, Wipro & HCL Tech results, experts suggest Indian IT sector rebound likely in FY25

Analysts anticipate a turnaround in the coming quarters based on management's comments on the demand environment. Growth in India's information technology (IT) sector is expected to bounce back in the next fiscal year, according to experts. However, the recent performance of the country's top four IT companies in the third quarter has not instilled much confidence, says an ET report. Although IT companies showed little improvement in market confidence following the US Federal Reserve's announcement of potential interest rate cuts in 2024, analysts anticipate a turnaround in the coming quarters based on management's com-



ments on the demand environment. During the fiscal third quarter ending in December, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), India's largest IT firm, reported a 4% increase in revenue and a 2% growth in profit compared to the same period last year. On the other hand, Infosys, the second largest IT services company, revised its revenue growth guidance for the fiscal year 2024 to 1.5-2.0% after experiencing a 7.3% decline in profit and a 1% increase in rev-

enue. Wipro's profit declined by 12%, marking the fourth consecutive quarter of lower profits. Additionally, its revenue dropped by 4.4%. In contrast, HCLTech witnessed a 6.5% rise in revenue and a 6.2% growth in profit. Peter Bendor-Samuel, the chief of IT industry research firm Everest Group, predicts a demand revival by the second quarter of 2024 (April-June) based on the current guidance from these IT companies.

Adani Group to provide Dharavi residents 350 sqft homes with independent kitchens and toilets

Dharavi redevelopment: Eligible residential tenements, existing before January 1, 2000, will have separate kitchens and in-built independent toilets in each flat. D h a r a v i Redevelopment Project Pvt Ltd (DRPPL), a collaboration between the Adani Group and the government of Maharashtra, announced that eligible residential tenements in Dharavi will receive flats featuring independent kitchens and toilets, with a minimum area of 350 sq ft. This compensatory area is almost 17% larger, marking the highest among slum redevelopment proj-



ects in Mumbai, as stated by the developer. In November 2022, Adani Properties, the real estate development company under the Gautam Adani-led Adani Group, secured the rights to redevelop the 600-acre Dharavi slum in Mumbai. With an 80% stake held by an Adani Group entity in DRPPL, the govern-

ment of Maharashtra holds the remaining 20%. Previously, informal settlement dwellers in Maharashtra were allocated houses measuring 269 sq ft. However, since 2018, in adherence to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana for urban poor housing, the state government began providing homes ranging from 315 sq ft to 322 sq ft, according

to an ET report. Eligible residential tenements, existing before January 1, 2000, will have separate kitchens and in-built independent toilets in each flat. The dwellings will prioritize being well-lit, ventilated, hygienic, and secure. Ineligible residential tenements in Dharavi will be accommodated under the proposed affordable rental housing policy, following the defined norms of the Maharashtra government. The Adani Group has indicated similar development plans for the various Navi Dharavis is being considered, addressing the substantial demand for dwelling units.

Jio Financial Services Q3 net profit falls 56 pc to Rs 294 crore

NEW DELHI: Jio Financial Services Ltd on Monday reported a 56 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 294 crore for the third quarter ended December 2023, compared to the previous quarter. The company had earned a consolidated net profit of Rs 668 crore in the second quarter of the current fiscal, Jio Financial Services said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue too moderated to Rs 414 crore, from Rs 608 crore in the September quarter. For the nine months ended December, the company's net profit stood at Rs 1,294 crore, the filing said. The total expenses increased sequentially to Rs 98.95 crore, against Rs 71.43 crore in the previous quarter. Jio Financial Services, carved out from Reliance Industries Ltd

Renowned Industrialist & Philanthropist Dr. Dinesh Shahra Unveils "Sanatan Avatar" - A Literary Masterpiece Inspiring Harmony and Enlightenment

New Delhi: In a grand event that resonated with the convergence of tradition and modernity, Dr. Dinesh Shahra, the esteemed industrialist and philanthropist celebrated for spearheading the yellow revolution, introduced his eagerly awaited book, "Sanatan Avatar," on 14th January in Delhi. The gathering witnessed the presence of distinguished personalities, including opinion sensation Ms. Richa Aniruddha and other eminent figures. The event marked not only Dr. Shahra's evolution from industrialist to prolific writer but also featured mesmerizing performances in anticipation of the Ram Mandir inauguration on January 22nd. This milestone unveiled a narrative transcending time, resonating with our cultural ethos, and symbolizing Dr. Shahra's transformation into a



lifelong learner and bestselling author. "Sanatan Avatar" stands as a spiritual masterpiece, drawing from Dr. Shahra's profound insights gained through his association with Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. The enchanting evening featured the soul-stirring composition 'Jai Gurudev,' dedicated to Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. Dr. Shahra engaged in an insightful dialogue with TV personality Richa Anirudh, sharing his transformative journey and vision for Sanatan, emphasizing its national and global impact.

Expressing deep sentiments, Dr. Shahra stated, "Sanatan embodies timeless values with the potential to shape our national identity and influence the global landscape. My endeavor is to shed light on these enduring principles, guiding us toward a harmonious, happy, and sustainable future." Distinguished guests, including senior members from Art of Living, commended Dr. Shahra's noble mission through Sanatan Living, aimed at proliferating timeless values and fostering a connection with our cultural heritage.

THE MOST ADVANCED COMPACT SUV: KIA INTRODUCES THE NEW SONET WITH ADAS AT A SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE STARTING INR 7.99 LAKHS

Chandigarh: Kia, India's leading premium car-maker, has introduced its most premium Compact SUV - the New Sonet, at a special introductory price starting from INR 7.99 Lakhs (Ex-show-room) nationwide. Unveiled in December 2023, this latest iteration of Kia's second best-selling innovation boasts 25 safety features, including an outstanding ADAS with 10 autonomous features and a robust 15 Hi-Safety features. The vehicle hosts over 70 Connected car features including 'Find My Car with SVM', which gives a surround view of car's vicinity and Hinglish commands to make Sonet the most comfortable drive. The New Sonet offers a diverse range of driving experiences with its availability in 19 different variants, including the 5 Diesel Manual variants starting from INR 9.79 lakhs. Segment-best ADAS Level 1, featuring 10 autonomous functions, is accessible in the top-



of-the-line variants for both diesel and petrol engines. The GT Line and X-Line variants in Petrol costs INR 14.50 and 14.69 Lakhs and the Diesel costs 15.50 and 15.69 Lakhs, respectively. The new muscular and sportier Sonet retains its distinctive road presence with an upright body style. Packed with 10 autonomous features, like Front Collision-Avoidance Assist (FCA), Leading Vehicle Departure Alert (LVDA), and Lane Following Assist (LFA), among others, the latest iteration of the popular compact SUV deeply resonates with the personality of modern Indian customers. Enabling a safer driving experience, it also boasts Robust 15 Hi-

Safety features standard across the variants, consisting of 6 Airbags, Electronic Stability Control (ESC), and Vehicle Stability Management (VSM), to name a few. With this introduction in Sonet, Kia has made 6 Airbags standard across its product portfolio. Furthermore, the Sonet hosts 10 best-in-segment features, including Dual Screen Connected Panel Design, Rear Door Sunshade Curtain, and All Door Power Window one-touch Auto up/down with Safety, to name a few. Compared to the nearest rivals, the new Sonet has at least 11 advantages over them and is the most technologically advanced and feature-rich Compact SUV. The new Sonet now includes an uplifted front facade with a new grille and new bumper design, Crown Jewel LED Headlamps, R16 Crystal Cut Alloy Wheels, and Star Map LED Connected Tail Lamps.



Penalise unscrupulous litigants who turn civil matters into criminal cases, says Supreme Court

Supreme Court has called for strict action and imposition of heavy penalty on unscrupulous litigants who attempt to mislead the judiciary through "concealment, falsehood and forum hunting" and slapped an exemplary cost of Rs 25 lakh on a litigant for attempting to convert a civil dispute into a criminal case. "This unnecessary turning of a civil matter into a criminal case not only overburdens the criminal justice system but also violates the principles of fairness and right conduct in legal matters," the bench said. Penalise unscrupulous litigants who turn civil matters into criminal cases, says Supreme Court. Supreme Court has called for strict action and imposition of heavy penalty on unscrupulous litigants who attempt to mislead the judiciary through "concealment, falsehood and forum hunting" and slapped an exemplary cost of Rs 25 lakh on a litigant for attempting to convert a civil dispute into a criminal case. A bench of Vikram Nath and Rajesh Bindal in a judgment on Friday said, "Unscrupulous litigants should not be allowed to go scot-free. They should be put to strict terms and conditions including costs. It is time to check with firmness such litigation initiated and laced with concealment, falsehood, and forum hunting." Even state actions or conduct of government servants being party to such malicious litigation should be seriously reprimanded, the bench said, while dealing with a case where one Karan Gambhir had initiated criminal proceedings in a civil suit, that too in Noida.

'Wrong to hit, but pilot was ...': Eyewitness recounts Indigo assault case

NEW DELHI: The co-passenger of an Indigo flyer, who filmed him hitting the aircraft's pilot over an inordinate delay, has claimed that the pilot was "blaming" the passengers for asking questions instead of being "understanding and supportive". Russian Indian actress Evgenia Belskaia said the situation escalated after the pilot resorted to counter-accusation and blamed the passengers for adding to the delay by arguing and questioning. While agreeing that hitting the pilot was unfortunate, Belskaia said people were "really angry" as they were made to sit on a flight for two hours. "Of course, it's wrong to hit the pilot 100 per cent, I will not agree with that. But why was he blaming passengers in



this, he was supposed to understand and support them," Belskaia said in a video posted on her Instagram handle. "So the story is my team; they had a flight Delhi to Goa...7.40 am. They came to the airport by let's say 6 a.m. They came up very early, they came there. Then the IndiGo flight was saying like every hour, it's a one-hour delay, two-hour delay. So like this, they've been waiting for ten hours," the actress said narrat-

ing the initial incident when the passenger in yellow hoodie assaulted the pilot. "Then they told them that they can enter the airplane. They enter the airplane and in an airplane, they'd be sitting for two hours waiting, so people were really angry. And of course, they've been asking questions from the crew, why it's like this (and) when we going to leave and all." "Then this pilot came and said that you guys are asking too many questions. Because of you we missed our line/our turn. Now you will have to wait more." The accused, identified as Sahil Kataria, was charged under Section 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt), 341 and 290 (punishment for creating public nuisance) of the IPC.

FASTags with incomplete KYC to be blacklisted after January 31

NEW DELHI: All FASTags with incomplete know your customer (KYC) will be deactivated or blacklisted by banks after January 31 even if these have enough balance, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) said on Monday while giving vehicle owners a little over a fortnight to complete the exercise. Banks and wallets have issued some seven crore FASTags but around four crore are seen to be active with no estimate available with NHAI on how many are compliant with KYC norms prescribed by



RBI. There are around 1.2 crore tags—your passport to cashless payment at toll plazas and parking lots—which are "duplicate" or the same vehicle have multiple FASTags. As a result, the highway agency has asked users to keep only one tag -- the latest one which

was purchased. The others will be blacklisted from February, it warned. "FASTag is like the Aadhaar of a vehicle and hence we can't allow more than one tag linked to a vehicle," said an official, adding that the KYC exercise was initiated by banks in

November, but given the slow response NHAI opted to set a deadline. "We don't expect the numbers to be high as banks had been sending out alerts to their customers for more than two months. There have been instances where FASTags were blocked on this account even when the wallets had enough balance," an official said. NHAI officials also said there have been instances of people deliberately not fixing the FASTags on the vehicle windscreen and even keeping them in their pockets or wallets.

Now after dialing 1 number in entire Haryana, veterinary facility will be immediately available through vehicle: Minister JP Dalal

Karnal: Haryana's Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Jai Prakash Dalal said that now by dialing one number, veterinary facility will be available in the entire Haryana within a short delay. As soon as the number is dialed, a vehicle equipped with a doctor, medicine and compounder will reach there and provide veterinary treatment. This scheme will be launched soon. He said this information at the conclusion of the Third Potato Expo and Conclave-2024 organized at the Potato Technology Center in Shamgarh on Monday. Agriculture and Farmers Welfare JP Dalal said that it is a happy occasion to meet the farmers. Farmers are moving away from traditional

farming, making and selling potato seeds and adopting new farming techniques. Because of the farmers of Haryana, today the state is among the leading states in farming. Haryana government is going to build an international level market for farmers on 550 acres in Ganaur. This market has been designed according to international markets. Our primary goal is to increase the income of farmers. The state government has insured 8.5 lakh animals. Farmers are being given loans for animal husbandry. **Agriculture budget increased from 800 crores to 3900 crores-** Agriculture and Farmers Welfare JP Dalal said that the Haryana government is continuously bringing new schemes for the farmers. The

agriculture budget in the year 2014 was Rs 800 crore which is now Rs 3900 crore. Today Nano Urea is being sprayed through drones for Rs 100. He said that making farming easier is his priority. Now farmers are moving towards farming using technology. Minister JP Dalal said that today farmers are getting honors like Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. Recently also when Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar visited Hisar, farmers were felicitated. He said that the government has made such a system that the crop money is coming to the farmer's account within 72 hours, which earlier used to go to the middleman. The amount of work that is being done for the farmers now has never been done before.

Pradeep Choudhary campaigned under the 'Ghar-Ghar Congress, Har Ghar Congress' campaign

Kaithal: Haryana Pradesh Congress Executive Member and former Chief Minister of Haryana Ch. Pradeep Kumar Choudhary, a special supporter of Bhupendra Singh Hooda, went door to door in various villages of the constituency under the 'Ghar-Ghar Congress Har Ghar Congress' campaign and made the villagers aware about the policies of the Congress and the failures of the government. During this, Pradeep Kumar also distributed New Year calendars among the villagers. After this, while talking in a meeting in the town, Pradeep Kumar said that under the able leadership of former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Bhupendra Singh Hooda, State President Uday Bhan, Rajya Sabha



member Deependra Hooda, now through 'Har Ghar Congress' campaign, one to one contact with voters. A dialogue is being established and the public is being told how Congress is known for keeping its promises, while BJP is known for breaking promises. Today there is an atmosphere of inflation and inequality in the entire country including Haryana. The youth of Haryana are forced to migrate from the country. BJP-JJP have broken all records of unemployment and corruption in Haryana. He said

that former Chief Minister Ch. Pradeep Kumar Choudhary, a special supporter of Bhupendra Singh Hooda, Congress had made Haryana number one in per capita income, investment, employment generation, law and order, development and prosperity, but the present government has made the state number one in unemployment, inflation, crime, drugs, corruption and atrocities. made. The youth of Haryana are forced to migrate from the country. BJP-JJP have broken all records of unemployment and corruption in Haryana. He said

increasing crime and many types of public problems, Congress's efforts are to eliminate these problems from their roots. The people of the state have understood that return is necessary. The coming time will be of Congress in Haryana state and the public will support former Chief Minister of Haryana Ch. Congress is going to form the government with strength under the leadership of Bhupendra Singh Hooda. He alleged that the prices of petrol, diesel, fertilizers and everyday items used in agriculture are increasing exponentially and the coalition government of the state is responsible for the current situation in the state. Many workers and friends were present with him on this occasion.

Shinde faction challenges order in HC

MUMBAI: Bharat Gogawale, chief whip of the CM Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, on Monday approached the Bombay High Court challenging the "legality, propriety and correctness" of assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar's order dismissing the disqualification petition submitted by him against 14 Sena (UBT) MLAs, including Sunil Prabhu, reports Swati Deshpande.

"The final order, dated January 10, by the speaker erroneously concludes that the grounds as raised by the petitioner are mere allegations and assertions on the part of the petitioner.

This conclusion is ex facie illegal and cannot be sustained," said the petition. "This vote is a part of the record of assembly and in no manner can be said to be a mere allegation."

Prakhar creates history, slams unbeaten 404 in Cooch Behar Trophy final



NEW DELHI: Karnataka's Prakhar Chaturvedi has attained the unachievable feat in the final of the Cooch Behar Trophy against Mumbai. The opening batter scripted history by becoming the first player to score 400 in the U-19 tournament final. Prakhar carried his bat through the innings to remain unbeaten on 404 off 638 balls studded with 46 fours and three sixes as Karnataka posted a mind boggling 890/8 declared.

In the process, Prakhar also broke Yuvraj Singh's 25-year-old record for the highest score in the U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy final. Yuvraj, who later emerged as an Indian cricket legend, had hammered 358 runs for Punjab in a match against Bihar in 1999. India's World Cup-winning captain MS Dhoni was a member of that Bihar squad. The record for the highest individual score in India's premier U-19 domestic event is held by Vijay

Zol, who scored an unbeaten 451 for Maharashtra against Assam in the 2011-12 season. Karnataka clinched the title on the basis of first innings lead on Day 4 of the summit clash at the KSCA Navule Stadium in Shimoga on Monday. In the intriguing encounter, India's head coach Rahul Dravid's son Samit Dravid also made his presence felt by contributing 22 runs off 46 balls while batting at number five during the same match.

Dhoni gets invitation for Ram Mandir Pran Pratishtha ceremony in Ayodhya

NEW DELHI:

Former Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, renowned archer Deepika Kumari, and folk singer Mukund Nayak are among the 16 distinguished individuals from Jharkhand who have been invited for the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya on January 22. On Monday, senior RSS official Dhananjay Singh extended the invitation to Dhoni at his Ranchi residence.

Karmaveer Singh, BJP organising secretary, was also present during the occasion. The inclusion of these prominent personalities from Jharkhand reflects a diverse representation



of the significant event in Ayodhya. "We handed over the invitation card to him (Dhoni) on behalf of the Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust for the Pran Pratishtha ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22," Dhananjay told PTI. Dhananjay mentioned that Dhoni and his family members expressed their happiness after

receiving the invitation for the Pran Pratishtha ceremony. "As many as 16 distinguished personalities, including senior BJP leader and Padma Bhusan Karia Munda, Padma Shri Mukund Nayak, Padma Shri archer Deepika Kumari, AJSU Party chief Sudesh Mahto have been invited for the consecration ceremony in Ayodhya," he added.

Ajinkya Rahane remains determined for India comeback, wants to play 100 Tests

NEW DELHI: Ajinkya Rahane, undeterred by his absence from international cricket since the West Indies tour in July 2023, remains resolute in his aspiration to reach the milestone of playing 100 Tests for India. Despite not featuring in the national team, the 35-

year-old continues to lead Mumbai in the Ranji Trophy. Having already played 85 Tests, Rahane's determination for a comeback underscores his commitment to the game. The seasoned cricketer is focused on contributing to the team's success and is eagerly

working towards making a significant return to the Indian squad in pursuit of achieving the coveted milestone of 100 Test matches. "My goal is to secure both the Ranji Trophy and the bigger objective of playing in 100 Test matches," Rahane told reporters.

Virat Kohli's humble gesture, urges security personnel to show kindness to fan

NEW DELHI: Virat Kohli not only captivates the hearts of his fans with his performances, but the star batter's on-field demeanour also reflects his kindness as a human being. Kohli's gentle side was witnessed during the second T20I against Afghanistan in Indore on Sunday when a young fan managed to breach security to touch his feet and embrace the former Indian skipper. Security personnel promptly detained him at the boundary but Kohli intervened,



urging them to show kindness towards the fan. According to a police official, the young man, who appeared to be a devoted Kohli fan, possessed a valid ticket for the match

and gained entry to the Holkar Stadium through the Narendra Hirwani Gate. The official mentioned that the fan, fueled by a strong desire to meet the player, accessed the

ground by scaling the fence of the spectators' gallery. The officer said that the youth was being interrogated. Clive Lloyd on whether Virat can break Sachin's record of 100 centuries. Further steps will be taken in the case on the basis of interrogation, the official said. Kohli made a comeback to T20Is after a hiatus of 14 months having last played in the shortest format in the T20 World Cup 2022 semi-final. He played a 16-ball 29-run cameo.

Smith's promotion as Test opener leaves former Australia captain 'nearly vomited'

NEW DELHI: Steve Smith is all set to begin his new innings when he opens the batting for the first in his 13-year long Test career in the first Test against West Indies in Adelaide on Wednesday. The decision to elevate Smith to the top of the batting order drew mixed reaction from all quarters with former Australian skipper Kim Hughes expressing profound surprise over the move. Hughes opined that Cameron Bancroft will be the appropriate replacement of recently-retired David



Warner. "I nearly vomited. I've got no doubts in my mind that if Cameron Bancroft played for New South Wales, he'd be in the Test side. He is in his prime," he told WA Sports. "Touch this, do this, do that [imitates Smith]... never want to leave when I am given

out. He's like a petulant kid. Smith is struggling at the moment. He's been an absolute superstar, but as an opener, he is no more opener than me opening the bowling. He needs to stay at No.4, get his mojo back if you like, without all the fluff," Hughes said.

"I think the other, and a very important thing is, you must reward those that are performing well, and our Sheffield Shield competition - yes it is not as strong as it used to be when he had our Test players playing in it - it is still the competition from which you can have a look and see who is playing well. I just think get Bancroft in there, it also sends a message to the Shield players that if you perform, you'll get picked. You may as well go and play marbles - it would be just shattering."

'I was asked to play, not thinking about...': Shreyas after Ranji outing against Andhra

NEW DELHI: Shreyas Iyer remains unfazed by the exclusion from the Afghanistan T20I series and is not overly concerned about the forthcoming England Test series following a challenging performance in South Africa. Iyer's absence from the ongoing T20 series against Afghanistan is attributed to the abundance of right-handed batsmen in the Indian top order, according to insiders familiar with the situation. "See, right now I'm being in the present. I have finished the match which I was asked to play (Ranji game against Andhra). I came, and I executed, so I am happy with what I'm doing. "Something that is not in my control, I can't be focusing on that. Coming here and winning the match was



my focus and that's what we did today," Iyer told reporters after Mumbai's emphatic win. In the face of Andhra bowlers attempting to exploit his perceived weakness against short-pitched deliveries, Iyer responded with a brisk innings, scoring 48 runs off as many balls. Asked about the Test series, Iyer replied he isn't looking that far ahead. "It's important to take one match at a time, not think about five-match Test series. The

team is only for the first two games. The motto would be to perform in the first two games and then look forward to the rest of the games." Iyer, a master player of slow bowling, is expecting turners against England with first Test starting on January 25. What Iyer found most satisfying during 145 plus overs of fielding, across two Andhra innings, was his fitness. "I'm assuming that we would be getting turning wickets against England.

Prakhar dreams of Karnataka Ranji debut after record-setting 404

BENGALURU: Prakhar Chaturvedi sounded bushed, understandable if an 18-year-old bats 638 balls to score a record-setting 404, but elation was unmistakable too as he trained eyes on Karnataka U23 and Ranji Trophy debuts. On Monday, Chaturvedi became the first quadruple centurion in the Cooch Behar Trophy final as his knock earned Karnataka their maiden title in the U19 tournament. During his unbeaten knock, Chaturvedi also broke former India batter Yuvraj Singh's 24-year-old record of 358, the previous highest score in a Cooch Behar title clash. Riding on Chaturvedi's innings, Karnataka made 890 for eight in 223 overs, replying to Mumbai's 380 all out in the final at Shivamogga.



"It is a great feeling. I am delighted that the innings came in the final, and helped Karnataka earn the first title (Cooch Behar). Feeling a bit tired but, yes, nothing can match the happiness of a team winning the title and you are contributing to it," Chaturvedi told PTI. Chaturvedi comes from a household that has placed academics as the first priority as his father, Sanjay Kumar Chaturvedi, owns a software firm in Electronics City, while Rupa, his moth-

er, is a technical advisor in DRDO. But that has not prevented them from allowing their son to pursue his heart's calling. "They have been very supportive of me from the time I took up cricket as an eight-year-old. They had even availed me of the services of a private throwdown expert during the (Covid-19) lockdown. Fortunately, I have been able to carry both cricket and studies together," he added. Chaturvedi gave a lot of credit to

his coach Karthik Jeshwant for his development as a cricketer. Jeshwant coaches Chaturvedi at the SIX Cricket Academy at the Padukone-Dravid Centre for Excellence here. "Jeshwant sir is technically very knowledgeable. He quickly spots even the minutest technical error in my batting. It is a blessing that I am able to work with a coach like him," said Chaturvedi. Jeshwant, a former Karnataka captain, coach and selector, is an impressed man. "Prakhar is a dedicated boy. He keeps coming to the academy (near Devanahalli) from his home (Bellandur), which is quite a distance away. "Apart from his good technique, his biggest quality is his ability to handle pressure. He has a mature head on his shoulders.

Always enjoy the enthusiasm, energy and vibe that the Indian people have for cricket: David Miller

NEW DELHI: Paarl Royals have made an impressive start to Season 2 of the SA20, clinching victories in both home and away matches against the Pretoria Capitals. Captain David Miller, displaying sublime form, played a crucial role in the team's thrilling 10-run win at Centurion in Pretoria, contributing an unbeaten 75. Miller's back-to-back outstanding performances have captured the interest of Indian fans, especially those who have witnessed his explosive displays in the IPL. The South African acknowledged the passion and enthusiasm of Indian cricket fans, expressing gratitude for their unwavering support. "I have been playing over in India for a long time now with the IPL and a lot of series in South Africa.

CAPSULES

Govt installs 'bio-toilets' along Saryu Ghats for devotees' convenience & cleanliness



Ayodhya Municipal Corporation installs bio-toilets*Bio-toilets offer convenience to devotees bathing in Sarayu on Makar Sankranti festival. Yogi gov plans to make Ayodhya a model city for religious tourism & environmental sustainability

Ayodhya

In its ongoing effort to facilitate stay of devotees and tourists in Ayodhya along with maintaining cleanliness in the city, the Yogi government has implemented various measures one of which is installing bio-toilets along the ghats of river Sarayu on the occasion of Makar Sankranti. All these bio toilets have been installed by Ayodhya Municipal Corporation. Govt aims to promote religious tourism and cleanliness. Vishal Singh, the Municipal Commissioner of Ayodhya and Vice Chairman of Ayodhya Development Authority, highlighted the substantial development taking place in Ayodhya. "Under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's guidance, the installation of bio-toilets along the Saryu river banks is aimed at promoting religious tourism and ensuring cleanliness. The Ayodhya Municipal Corporation's initiative focuses on enhancing convenience for devotees during events like Makar Sankranti", he added. Singh emphasized that these bio-toilets are integral to a broader vision of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to establish Ayodhya a model city for religious tourism and environmental sustainability. Notable features include a 24/7 toll-free helpline, free public access, and a commitment to cleanliness and efficient operations. Focus on user-friendly features. He further informed, "Our emphasis extends to enhancing user experience with features such as multilingual signage and gender-specific toilets, ensuring accessibility and convenience for all." In alignment with environmental standards, the bio-toilets are constructed according to the Solid Waste Management Rules 2016 as well as the NGT and Swachh Bharat Mission SBM 2.0 guidelines, Singh highlighted. He called upon devotees to actively participate in the collective effort to shape Ayodhya into a symbol of cleanliness, stability, and spiritual significance, underscoring the invaluable nature of their support in this endeavor.

Elaborate arrangements have been made for devotees' safety & comfort in UP: Chief Minister

Gorakhpur The Chief Minister and Gorakshpethadhiswar Yogi Adityanath, on Monday, extended his heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all residents on the occasion of Makar Sankranti and said that comprehensive arrangements have been made for devotees' safety and comfort across Uttar Pradesh as part of the government's commitment to respect people's faith. After offering the 'sacred' khichdi at the Gorakhnath Temple as part of the tradition on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, the Chief Minister, in a media interaction, said that the government's effort is to ensure that there is no inconvenience to the devotees anywhere.

"Adequate arrangements have been made throughout the state for the safety and comfort of devotees. In Gorakhnath Temple, arrangements have been made for the convenience of lakhs of devotees who throng the temple to offer khichdi", he remarked. He further mentioned that a large number of devotees have been visiting the Gorakhnath Temple since Sunday to offer khichdi adding that the number of devotees in the temple as on Monday, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti.

Chief Minister offers 'khichdi' to Mahayogi Gorakhnath on Makar Sankranti

Gorakhpur Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday offered khichdi to Guru Gorakhnath on the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti as per the tradition of the Nath Panth and prayed for the welfare of the people. After rituals were performed by Yogi Adityanath at 4 am, Khichdi was also offered on behalf of the dynasty King of Nepal.

Then Nath yogis, sadhus and saints also offered khichdi and offered prayers. With this, the doors of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple were



thrown open to the public. On the auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti, lakhs of devotees thronged the Gorakhnath temple amid the bitter cold to offer the khichdi of public faith to the Shiva avatar Guru Gorakhnath. Devotees, who came from other states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and neighbouring country Nepal, queued up after

Six grand entrance gates will soon welcome devotees in Ayodhya

Ayodhya Aiming to restore the glory and grandeur of ancient Ayodhya, the Yogi government is spending Rs 140 crore to construct six grand gate complexes in the city. The government has started the process of building grand entrance gates on all entry routes of Ayodhya, which would be reminiscent of gates in the ancient capitals. In line with CM Yogi's vision, work has started on the Navya

Ayodhya Phase-2 project to develop Ayodhya into the world's most beautiful city. Under this project, the Uttar Pradesh Project Corporation Limited has initiated the construction process of three grand gate complexes in the first phase. Once the contractor is selected, they would be expected to complete the construction of gates within 100 days. In the initial phase, approximately Rs 45 crore will be spent to

construct impressive gate complexes on Ayodhya-Gonda Road (Rs 15.21 crore), Ayodhya-Gorakhpur (Basti) Road (Rs 15 crore), and Ayodhya-Sultanpur Road (Rs 14.69 crore). It is notable that after construction, all these gate complexes will be named after mythical and Ramayana characters. Land acquisition work completed, now construction process will begin. It is noteworthy

that the construction of all entrance gates will be done according to the designs and standards prepared by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). The Public Works Department (PWD) will collaborate and incorporate the architecture of Ayodhya into the design. A budget of Rs 67 crores was approved for the land acquisition process to complete the construction.

Not amused with joke, group beats 20-yr-old to death

BHOPAL: A 20-year-old man paid with his life for a joke he had cracked during an evening adda in MP's Sagar district last week. His father, who was also attacked, sustained injuries and is critical. Dasherath alias Chhotu Lodhi was thrashed on January 12 in Neguwan Todka village, around 100km from Jabalpur, and succumbed in hospital on Sunday. Two of the suspects, Hakam and Chhatar Singh, have been arrested while the prime accused, Durgesh, and another attacker are on



the run. Dasherath had been chatting with Durgesh when he allegedly cracked a joke about a girl, not realising that Durgesh knew her. It led to an argument which quickly spiralled into violence and Durgesh and some of his aides began assaulting Dasherath with lathis, said cops. Dasherath's father

Ghanshyam and a friend, Devraj, tried to save him but they too were thrashed. All three were taken to Tendukheda hospital, and then transferred to Lakshmi Narayan Hospital in Narsinghpur, a further 60km, where Dasherath died. Police have registered a case and sent out teams to arrest the accused.

Major flight delays at Bengaluru Airport

BENGALURU: Angry scenes with heated arguments with airline staff unfolded on the floor of Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) from Sunday morning as 53 flight delays and eight cancellations to various destinations to the country from Bengaluru left passengers enraged. The chaos was caused as bad weather on Sunday widely disrupted flight operations. Sources with the Bengaluru Airport said, on Sunday a total of 56 flights scheduled to depart from Bengaluru to various

domestic destinations were delayed due to bad weather situation prevailing across the country and out of which 26 flights were delayed due to foggy conditions in Bengaluru. Eight flights from Bengaluru including six operated by IndiGo airlines to Goa, Varanasi, Delhi, Vijayawada and Prayagraj, and one by Akasa Air to Varanasi and another by Air India to Mumbai were cancelled on Sunday affecting hundreds of passengers. Passenger anger at Bengaluru Airport. The disruption in flight operations at Bengaluru put many

domestic passengers at hardship as the delay and cancellations saw passengers angry and disappointed on the floor of the Bengaluru Airport mainly with airline ground staff who failed to give clear answers on Sunday's flight situation. Bollywood actor Ranvir Shorey who was also one of the many passengers who were affected by the situation termed the Bengaluru Airport situation as "pandemonium." He lashed out at the treatment of passengers by the airline ground staff calling it "utterly shameful."

Why Tharoor's 'logical analysis' for 2024 Lok Sabha elections may not hold true

NEW DELHI: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has predicted that the BJP will emerge as the single largest party in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections but the saffron party can be brought down to a level where their continuation in government may not be possible. The Congress MP cited the results of 2019 Lok Sabha elections to explain his 'logical analysis' on how the opposition stood a

chance against the BJP in 2024. Tharoor compared the BJP's 2019 results with the grand old party's "worst-ever performance" to argue that it will be advantage Congress and the opposition in the upcoming elections. "In 2019, the BJP did so well that it'll be difficult for them to match that target. Remember the Congress got 0 seats in Haryana, 0 in Rajasthan, 1 in Madhya Pradesh, 1 in

Bihar, and 1 in Karnataka. There were several states where we did our worst-ever performance and we are definitely going to do better this time in all those states," Tharoor had said at the Kerala Literature Festival (KLF). The Congress leader hoped for a better party performance in states like Himachal Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka where the grand old party has a government.

AI surveillance and anti-mine drones ensuring security at Ayodhya Dham

Ayodhya The Yogi government has implemented robust security measures in Ayodhya, combining the deployment of forces with cutting-edge technology to ensure comprehensive safety. Ayodhya is now under the watchful eye of drones equipped with artificial intelligence, alongside the utilization of anti-mine drones, as part of the concerted efforts to enhance security in the region. While AI-supported drones are conducting aerial surveillance across

Ayodhya, promptly reporting any detected suspicious activity to the control room, anti-mine drones are simultaneously inspecting the ground for mines or explosives. Notably, CM Yogi has directed police officers to implement these security measures in Ayodhya.

As part of this initiative, the UP Police has introduced AI-based anti-mine drones for deployment. Anti-mine drones will search for explosives even under the ground. Operating at a

height of one meter above the ground, the anti-mine drone is equipped with advanced technology for detecting underground explosives. There is a plate below it which is helpful in spectrometer wavelength detection. Employing this technology, the drone identifies explosives hidden beneath the surface. This drone scans the area under the ground. Through this drone, mines or explosives can be detected and neutralized in large areas.