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## Karpoori Thakur, quota politics pioneer, awarded Bharat Ratna

**● socialist icon Karpoori Thakur who, as chief minister of Bihar, was the first to implement an OBC quota with a sub-quota for MBCs in the north in 1978**



**NEW DELHI:** Modi government has conferred Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian decoration, on socialist icon Karpoori Thakur who, as chief minister of Bihar, was the first to implement an OBC quota with a sub-quota for MBCs in the north in 1978. Thakur's 26% package, that also had quotas for women and economically weaker sections, and which provoked violent protests, was implemented a year before the constitution of Mandal Commission. If Modi government's decision, which came a day ahead of Thakur's birth centenary, marked the recognition of a leader who played a major role in organising

the socially backward and the poor and was known for exemplary probity, it was also seen by many as an overture to the most/extremely backward castes in Bihar at a time when the opposition has raised the issue of 'caste census' to forge a coalition of OBCs. Belonging to the extremely backward Nai (barber) caste, 'Jan Nayak' Thakur was born into a poor family in north Bihar's Samastipur district. He fought off the odds and obscene social prejudices to become an agent of change in the state which was synonymous with upper caste hegemony. An entire cast of OBC biggies - from Lalu Prasad to Bihar

CM Nitish Kumar - owe their current prominence to him and have been competing for his legacy. "I am delighted that government of India has decided to confer Bharat Ratna on the beacon of social justice, the great Jan Nayak Ji and that too at a time when we are marking his birth centenary. The prestigious recognition is a testament to his enduring efforts as a champion for the marginalised and a stalwart of equality and empowerment," PM Narendra Modi wrote on X. Thanking PM Modi for the decision, Bihar CM and JDU president Nitish Kumar said the Bharat Ratna to Thakur was a

"years old demand". He said the honour will "create positive sentiments among the Dalits, deprived and neglected sections". Award will inspire us to carry on Karpoori's mission: Modi PM further wrote on X: "His unwavering commitment to uplift the downtrodden and his visionary leadership have left an indelible mark on India's socio-political fabric. This award not only honours his remarkable contributions but also inspires us to continue his mission of creating a more just and equitable society." A staunch socialist, Thakur abolished English as a compulsory subject, liberating thousands of students from poor and rural backgrounds from the onerous burden of competing with their peers, rich and from the cities, who had the resources to learn the language. He also waived land rent on unremunerative holdings, which came as a huge relief to small and marginalised farmers.

## CJI: Fundamental right can't be subservient to Parliament-made law

**NEW DELHI:** Supreme Court said under the Constitution, fundamental right of religious and linguistic minority communities under Article 30 to establish and administer educational institutions cannot be made subservient to laws recognising their degrees, regulations on infrastructure and faculty requirements, and government aid. This was the reaction from a bench of CJI D Y Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Surya Kant, JB Pardiwala, Dipankar



Datta, Manoj Misra and Satish Sharma after attorney general R Venkataramani argued that "Article 30 is an enabling provision... In order that an educational institution of a particular character/class could be established by any person, minority or

otherwise, the first prerequisite is legal competence/authority to establish that class of institution." CJI said, "Problem about the argument is that Article 30 right is contingent upon requirements of a Parliament-enacted statute. Enabling regu-

lations is understandable as the minority institution must also have requisite infrastructure and experienced faculty to attain a national standard in education. Mere establishment of an institution by legislature-enacted law would not take away its 'minority' character." The bench said no minority community, or for that matter any community, today can say that it would establish an institution without recognition under relevant laws or the UGC Act.

## Day after Pran Pratishtha, 5 lakh get Ram Lalla's darshan

**AYODHYA/LUCKNOW:** Over five lakh devotees thronged the Ram temple as soon as its gates opened on Tuesday, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the rituals in a grand consecration ceremony

attended by 7,200-odd guests from across the globe. Crowds broke through barricades on a few occasions in the morning, triggering stampede-like situations that were controlled each time by the 8,000-

strong police contingent deployed in and around the premises. By evening, the flow of devotees was better regulated, although queues stretched beyond the main gateway to the temple at Ram Path.

After an aerial survey of the town, UP CM Yogi Adityanath reached the temple complex to take stock of crowd management even as a seemingly unending tide of devotees swamped the shrine.

## Bihar Grand Alliance divided over Bharat Ratna

**PATNA:** Bihar's governing Grand Alliance appeared divided Tuesday over extending wishes as Modi government posthumously conferred India's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna to the state's former CM Karpoori Thakur, fondly known as Jannayak. While JD(U) thanked Prime Minister Modi, RJD and Bihar Congress alleged that the decision was politically motivated with an eye on the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. CM Nitish Kumar of JD(U) took the lead, expressing happiness over the decision. "The highest civilian honour given to late Karpoori Thakur ji on his 100th birth anniversary will create positive sentiments among the Dalits, deprived and neglected sections," Nitish said in a presser on Tuesday. He said he had long advocated for conferring Bharat Ratna on the socialist leader. Social welfare minister and JD(U) leader Madan Sahani thanked PM Modi, expressing deep gratitude for the decision.

RJD welcomed the move, while suggesting it was driven by "political compulsions". RJD's chief spokesperson Shakti Singh Yadav said: "Our leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav had raised the demand...while our MP Manoj Kumar Jha raised the issue in Parliament. BJP was afraid due to our repeated demands and took this decision under political pressure." Congress too welcomed the decision, but highlighted its perception as a politically motivated move. Senior Congress leader Tariq Anwar said: "Karpoori-ji deserved that honour... but one thing that is clear is that the decision has been taken keeping in view the 2024 Lok Sabha polls." Congress MLA and AICC media panellist Prem Chandra Mishra accused BJP of playing politics in an election year and urged them to follow the ideals of Karpoori Thakur. Mishra described Thakur as a great leader who did a "tremendous job in the field of social justice". With political parties vying to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of late Thakur, who hailed from an extremely backward caste (EBC), BJP's decision is expected to impact the political landscape.

## Ayodhya airport handled 123 flights over 2 days

**LUCKNOW:** The newly built Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in Ayodhya handled 123 flights, including 101 chartered flights, over two days during the Pran Pratishtha ceremony at Ram Temple on January 22. The Ayodhya airport, which on average handles 380 passengers daily since its inauguration on December 30 last year, welcomed 4,500 guests,



including 350 VIPs, on Jan 21 and 22. DIG Shrikant Kishore, the chartered and 10 CPRO of CISF, said: "On Jan 21, we handled passengers of 42 flights, including 32 chartered and 10 scheduled movements. On the day of the consecration ceremony, passengers of 12 scheduled and 69 chartered flights were assisted."

## Maldives ignores India, lets Chinese spy vessel dock

**NEW DELHI:** India's ties with the Maldives seemed set to take another hit with Male effectively declaring that it would allow a dual use "spy" Chinese vessel, Xiang Yang Hong 03, to make a port call, regardless of Delhi's concerns about the vessel's research activities. The Maldives foreign ministry on Tuesday said the port call was meant only for rotation of personnel and replenishment, and



that the vessel would not conduct research in Maldivian waters. After repeated objections by India, Sri Lanka, another Indian Ocean neighbour, had announced earlier this year a 1-year moratorium on such visits by

research/ survey ships that can accumulate data for both scientific and military purposes. According to Male's statement, the Maldives has always been a welcoming destination for vessels of friendly countries, and continues to host both civilian and military vessels making port calls for peaceful purposes. The vessel is expected to arrive in the Maldives anytime in the first week of February.

## Bapu-led stir after 1942 was a non-event, Netaji delivered freedom, says Tamil Nadu governor

**CHENNAI:** Tamil Nadu governor R N Ravi on Tuesday credited Subhas Chandra Bose more than Mahatma Gandhi for India getting its freedom in 1947. "India's national freedom movement led by Mahatma Gandhi became a non-event after 1942 and if Netaji had not been



there, India would not have become free in 1947," he said at an event in Anna University to mark Netaji's 127th birth anniversary. Ravi said that after World War II began, the freedom move-

ment spearheaded by Indian National Congress had 'fizzled out'. "If you look at the history of the national freedom movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, after 1942, it was a non-event. Nothing has happened. We were all busy fighting among ourselves.

## TMC can't spare more than 2 seats for Congress: Mamata Banerjee



**KOLKATA:** Refusing to give in to Congress's "impractical" demand for eight to 14 Lok Sabha seats in Bengal, CM Mamata Banerjee said on Tuesday that TMC could spare no more than two seats for its prospective INDIA ally to contest. "If necessary, we will fight alone in Bengal. Prepare to fight alone," she told TMC's Birbhum leadership during a meeting in Kolkata's Kalighat. Mamata said she wouldn't rule out Congress try-

## Karpoori's relentless pursuit of social justice had a positive impact on crores



**Today is the birth centenary of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji, whose relentless pursuit of social justice created a positive impact in the lives of crores of people. His life revolved around simplicity and social justice, resonating deeply with common people. He worked to address systemic inequalities and improve education for the poor.** JD(U) leader Ram Nath Thakur, son of Karpoori Thakur, and family members celebrate after the Bharat Ratna announcement,

in Bihar's Samastipur Today is the birth centenary of Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur Ji, whose relentless pursuit of social justice created a positive impact in the lives of crores of people. I never had the opportunity to meet Karpoori Ji, but I heard a lot about him from Kailashpati Mishra Ji, who worked closely with him. He belonged to one of the most backward sections of society, the Nai Samaj. Overcoming numerous obstacles, he achieved a lot and worked for societal betterment.

## Indian Air Force saves man who suffered heart attack at Ram temple event

**NEW DELHI:** A mobile hospital of the Indian Air Force's (IAF) rapid response team saved a devotee who suffered a heart attack while attending the 'Pran Pratishtha' event at the Ram temple in Ayodhya on Monday. Ramkrishna Srivastava, the devotee, col-

lapsed inside the temple complex, a team of BHISHM Cube led by Wing Commander Manish Gupta evacuated him within a minute of the incident and provided on-site treatment, capitalising on the critical golden hour — the first hour following a traumatic

injury or medical event which is crucial for successful emergency treatment, health ministry sources said. Upon initial assessment, it was found that Srivastava's blood pressure level had shot up to dangerously high levels of 210/170 mm Hg, it added.



## AIIMS, IIT-Delhi develop low-cost voice box for throat cancer patients



**NEW DELHI:** In what could prove to be a boon for patients who have lost their ability to speak due to throat cancer, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, in collaboration with IIT Delhi, has developed a cost-effective prosthesis to restore their voice. According to doctors, many throat cancer patients are unable to speak after the removal of their larynx due to advanced stages of laryngeal disease. Larynx, or voice box, contains vocal cords and helps a person speak, breathe and swallow. A study conducted on 20 patients over three years has yielded positive outcomes, said

● **Thakar, head and professor of otolaryngology and head/neck surgery, said the aim of developing the device was to ensure patients who lost their voice due to cancer in the larynx**

AIIMS doctors. Until now, patients have been implanted with commercially available voice prosthesis costing between Rs 20,000 and Rs 40,000. However, the AIIMS-IIT prosthesis is free of cost for AIIMS patients. Following successful trial completion and approvals, it may be made available for

other patients and could cost a few hundred rupees. Dr Alok Thakar, head and professor of otolaryngology and head/neck surgery, said the aim of developing the device was to ensure patients who lost their voice due to cancer in the larynx can speak again without shelling out thousands of rupees on an artificial voice box. "During the tracheoesophageal puncture (TEP) procedure, we create a small hole in the wall between the trachea and esophagus, the tube that moves food from mouth to the stomach. A small one-way valve, called tracheoesophageal pro-

## FPIs pull out 13k crore from stocks in January

● **Also, since the valuations in India are high, FPIs used the excuse of less-than-expected results**

**NEW DELHI:** Foreign investors have adopted a cautious approach this month, offloading domestic equities worth Rs 13,000 crore in the first three weeks owing to high valuations of Indian stocks and surging US bond yields. In contrast, foreign investors are bullish on the debt market and injected Rs 15,647 crore



in the debt market during the period under review, data with the depositories showed. According to the data, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) made a net withdrawal of Rs 13,047 crore in Indian equities this month (till Jan 19). They pulled out over Rs 24,000 crore from equities during Jan 17-19. Before this, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 66,134 crore in Dec.

"The US bond yield started rising with the 10-year yield rising from the recent level of 3.9% to 4.2% triggering capital outflows," V K Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said, adding, "Also, since the valuations in India are high, FPIs used the excuse of less-than-expected results from HDFC Bank to press massive sales too."

## Truck driver who mowed down woman arrested

**New Delhi:** Two days after a 39-year-old physically challenged woman died after she was mowed down by a speeding truck while crossing the road, police nabbed the accused in Geeta colony on Saturday. The accused was identi-

fied as Firoz (36) a native of Uttar Pradesh. He had initially fled the scene, and the vehicle, utilised for transporting concrete and building materials, didn't have a visible registration number on either side. Police said an extensive probe, which included analysing

footage from CCTV cameras in a 10km radius, led the cops to solving the case. According to Surendra Choudhary, DCP (Shahdara), they had received a PCR call on Jan 18 about the incident near Shamshan Ghat, Geeta Colony.

## After Abu Dhabi And Africa's Zanzibar, UK Now Invites IITs

● **"Government official recently expressed the country's interest in collaborating with India's premier institutes"**



**Delhi:** After Abu Dhabi and African country Zanzibar, the UK might become the next destination to have the offshore campus of the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT). A top British government official recently expressed the country's interest in collaborating with India's premier institutes. Similarly, many universities from the UK are also looking forward to set-

ting up their branch campuses in India and are working out on formulating a final regulatory framework from the University Grants Commission (UGC). The official said that the UK was in a process of clearing the regulatory framework so that universities from their country are able to set up their campuses in India. Steve Smith, the International Education

Champion of the UK government, noted that discussions were ongoing between the governments and authorities of the two countries for setting up campuses of IITs in the UK. Two of India's top IITs have already entered into agreements with foreign countries for setting up their offshore campuses abroad. While IIT Madras is setting up its campus in Tanzania's Zanzibar, IIT Delhi is setting up an offshore campus in Abu Dhabi. The increase in India's industrial reputation and startup growth ecosystem has attracted the attention of many global universities. Many of our IIT graduates have gone on to top jobs and are leading the global markets.

## US Issues Record 90,000 Visas To Indian Students

**Delhi:** The United States has issued a record number of visas to students from India in the months of June, July and August. The US Mission in India announced on X (formerly Twitter) that more than 90,000 visas were issued to the aspirants from India who filed applications to pursue their higher education from the US. In the post on X, the US Mission also said that almost one in four student visas worldwide was issued in India. Greeting the Indian students, the US Mission



said, "Congratulations and best wishes to all the students who have chosen the United States to make their higher education goals a reality." The numbers were released as the US

Mission was closing its applications for the session. A recent report highlighted an increase in the number of Indian students who are heading abroad for their higher education. The

rise is a result of eased application formalities, financial aid and scholarships offered by foreign universities to attract students from India. Earlier, France had also expressed its desire and goal to welcome around 30,000 students from India. The country is making efforts to increase the intake of Indian students by 2030. The aim will be achieved by fostering academic excellence, boosting cultural ties and enhancing long lasting friendship between the two countries.

## All You Need To Know About Education In Dubai

**Delhi:** United Arab Emirates is one of the growing economies in the world. The city is expanding in various sectors which is consequently leading to increased job opportunities for students who graduate from there. Few reasons that are making Dubai a preferred destination to study abroad for Indian students. The sectors such as oil and gas, tourism, trade, finance, logistics, manufacturing, and renewable energy are growing at a high pace in Dubai. The recent boost in the economy has resulted in increased job opportunities. Students who wish to pursue their higher education from Dubai will also benefit from improved and increased jobs in these sectors. The country therefore has emerged as a major higher-education destination in recent years. The easy application process and



other flexible government policies further simplify international student recruitment in the United Arab Emirates. The government policy such as the new long-term 'golden visa' for outstanding students rewards top-performing international students. The students who benefit from this policy are given a 10-year residency permit which helps them to begin with their careers soon after graduating in the country. A major attraction of the students or working professionals in Dubai is the Tax free income that they earn. The employees in the United Arab Emirates

enjoy tax free salaries which acts as one of the key selling points for study in Dubai. Pursue affordable degree from UK, US universities Most of the international universities have set up their branches in Dubai. A student can pursue a degree from any recognised university of the US, UK or more by enrolling in its branch located in Dubai. These degrees will be cheaper as compared to studying the same in the respective Countries. Dubai has a smooth visa process wherein the institutions will help in the application process, thus making it much easier. No language problem Over 80% of the population in the country including the locals in Dubai speak in English. This makes it convenient for foreign students to communicate and interact with the local population.

## CBSE switch underway, but Jagan plans US system for Andhra govt schools

● **School bags, books, uniforms, shoes-socks, belts etc are provided free once a year under the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka scheme**

**Delhi:** Nearly two and half years after a road map was announced to introduce CBSE curriculum, the Jaganmohan Reddy government signed an agreement with International Baccalaureate (IB) to introduce the American education system in government schools. In February 2021, Jagan announced a road map to introduce CBSE curriculum in all the government schools, beginning with Classes 1 to 7 from 2021-22. But, only 1,096 high schools out of about 45,000 government schools had switched to CBSE till last year, with the rest continuing to follow the AP State Council of Education



Research and Training (SCERT) curriculum. The IB syllabus, in vogue in the American schools, will be introduced in the government schools at the foundation level initially and expanded to the higher classes gradually," Jagan said, after the agreement was signed "IB, which specialises in modern, innovative examination patterns, will vastly improve our students' worldly knowledge and help them grab good opportunities in global universities." The same day, the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet gave its approval for the MoU with IB. "The tangible outcome of this transformation is students who graduate from Class 10th, 12th will receive a joint certificate of AP board and IB," the document says. While a top

**Ahead of the next year's state election, Jagan's present idea comes on the back of initiatives like Jagananna Ammavodi, which provides Rs 13,000 annually to poor mothers for sending their children to schools**

education official says the plan is to introduce IB for Class 1 from 2024-25. There are 62,530 schools, including private ones, which are recognised by the Andhra Pradesh government and follow the SCERT curriculum. They have to switch to IB once the state adopts the pattern. The over 320 schools — including private, Navodaya, Kendriya Vidyalayas that offer CBSE and ICSE courses — can continue to operate under these central boards. Ahead of the next year's state election, Jagan's present idea comes on the back of initiatives like Jagananna Ammavodi, which provides Rs 13,000 annually to poor mothers for sending their children to schools.

## National School of Drama To Set Up New Campus In Tripura

**Delhi:** The Tripura government has allocated a plot of 2.36 acre to the National School of Drama (NSD) to set up a campus in the state. The campus will be set up at Ranirbazar in West Tripura district, and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed regarding it, "Following NSD's request, the state government has provided a plot of 2.36 acre. A MoU was signed between the two sides on Tuesday," Subir Roy, NSD Agartala centre's programme coordinator. Now, we will do mutation of the land, before starting the work for setting up a full-fledged NSD Centre in Tripura. Presently, the NSD Centre is functioning from Nazrul Kalashetra," he said. At present, the Agartala centre is offering a one-year course in 'Theatre in Education', which will be extended to two years, he added.



## Voters should save Karnal from becoming a political picnic spot: Maratha

**Said - Karnal's Parliament has been neglected for 70 years, no strong MP has been found till now**



**Karnal:** Virendra Verma Maratha, the state chief of Nationalist Party and former Union Minister Sharad Pawar's chief satrap in Haryana, who left his job in administrative service and entered politics to bring respect and justice to North Haryana, has said that in the last years, Karnal Political parties have made it a political picnic spot. Till date, Karnal has not found any MP who is in love with this land. For the last seventy years, Karnal has got an area sensitive MP. Hundreds of people come to meet him. On this occasion, State General Secretary Ram Kumar Kashyap Advocate, Rishi Pal Panchal, Krishna Maratha, Dr. Parmal, Raj Kumar Kashyap also gave information. Shri Maratha said that if he gets a chance, he will complete the work done in the last seventy years. Karnal's MP got a chance

to become a minister at the Center and the MLA here got a chance to become the Chief Minister, but Karnal could neither progress at par with Banaras nor Rohtak could match Hissar Sirsa in development, Karnal got such public representatives who Had a picnic as MLA and MP and left. The father of former State Administrative Service officer Virendra Verma Maratha, who formed Haryana Ekta Shakti Party to provide justice to North Haryana at the beginning of this millennium, was also the state chief of Jan Sangh. He was a minister in the past. He left his government administrative job for public service. He struggled to give the road community in Haryana

the recognition of the warrior of Maratha history. His justice war to get justice for North Haryana continues even today. Maratha Virendra Verma, who stays away from the politics of deceit, has inherited political values from his father. Who took Jan Sangh and RSS forward for a long time. He told that there has been a change in the BJP or Jan Sangh and RSS of his father's time. Now the leaders of these organizations have become cunning and deceitful. He was betrayed by BJP and RSS leaders. He said that if the Congress does not contest elections together in Haryana, it will not be able to win even a single parliamentary constituency seat. He said that if India

## MP Deepender Hooda will be crowned Haryana CM: Pradeep

**Kaithal:** Haryana Pradesh Congress Executive Member, Bharat Yatri and former Chief Minister of Haryana Ch. Pradeep Kumar Chaudhary, a special supporter of Bhpendra Singh Hooda, said that Rajya Sabha MP Deependra Singh Hooda is the bright future of Haryana, who is raising the voice of the interests of the people of the state from Parliament to the streets. Pradeep Kumar was addressing the villagers and workers by propagating the party's policies under the Congress's 'Ghar-Ghar Congress, Har Ghar Congress' campaign in various villages of the constituency. During this, Pradeep Kumar participated in the refreshment ceremonies organized at many places and was welcomed by the villagers by garlanding them with flowers.

After this, while talking in a meeting at Panch Mukhi Chowk in the town, Pradeep Chaudhary said that MP Deependra Hooda is fighting for the interests of the people day and night and exposing the



anti-people policies of the coalition government. It is clear from the record breaking crowd gathering at Deependra Hooda's rallies that the public is with Hooda. Due to his friendly image, Hooda has settled in the hearts of people of every section. He said that in the elections to be held in the year 2024, Congress will form the government by hoisting the flag of victory and the crown of the post of Chief Minister of Haryana will be placed on the head of MP Deependra Singh Hooda. Under the leadership of Hooda, Congress is becoming stronger day by day in every district of the state and people of every section are joining the party expressing faith in the policies of

Congress. The full credit for which goes to the ability, working style, ability to work and skilled political skills of Deependra Hooda, the heartbeat of young hearts. State Congress executive member Pradeep Kumar alleged that the coalition government built on the foundation of lies and loot is a guest for a few days. The public is fully prepared to teach a lesson to BJP. The government, intoxicated with its power, is leaving no stone unturned to harass and exploit the public. Haryana has lagged behind in every field. The government is misleading the public by raising false slogans of development and employment.

## CAPSULES

### BHARTI HEXACOM LIMITED FILES DRHP WITH SEBI

**Gurugram:** Bharti Hexacom Limited, a communications solutions provider offering consumer mobile services, fixed-line telephone and broadband services to customers in the Rajasthan and the North East telecommunication circles in India, which comprises the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura has filed its Draft Red Herring Prospectus ("DRHP") with market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI"). The Public Offer comprises 'Offer for Sale' of up to 100,000,000 Equity Shares with face value Rs.5 each share by "Telecommunications Consultants India Limited". Bharti Hexacom Limited offer its services under the brand 'Airtel'. It has a distinct strategy to enhance its portfolio by acquiring and retaining quality customers and deliver an experience to them through our Omni channel approach and use of data science.

The company has gamut of digital offerings to enhance customer engagement and differentiated customised offerings through family and converged plans under Airtel Black proposition, which has resulted in the continuous improvement of its revenue market share during the last three Fiscals. Bharti Hexacom undertake prudent cost optimisation measures to improve its profitability and maintain an efficient capital structure with a comfortable leverage position. It continuously invest in network expansion, technology advancement and judicious spectrum investments. As of September 30, 2023, Bharti Hexacom had invested 203 billion in capital expenditure in its future ready digital infrastructure. Company also derive significant synergies from its relationship with our Promoter, Airtel, through the expansive digital infrastructure, digital experience and the digital services it provides to its customers.

## 25% rural kids aged 14-18 can't read Std 2 level in own tongue

**“ One rural district was surveyed in each major state with the exception of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh”**



**Delhi** Nearly 43% of children in the 14-18 age group in rural areas cannot read sentences in English, while 25% struggle to read a Class 2 level text in their respective regional language, shows the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023. More than half of the children struggle with even simple division, something they are expected to have mastered in

Class 3 or 4. The figure on reading English is, in fact, an improvement compared to 2017, when 47% of students were found to be faltering. Of those who could read sentences in English, almost three-fourths could get the meaning (73.5%) compared with 53% in 2017. The report, published by Pratham

Foundation, is based on a survey conducted in 28 districts across 26 states, reaching out to 34,745 children in the 14-18 age group.

One rural district was surveyed in each major state with the exception of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, where two such districts were surveyed.

## HDFC Bank Crosses Landmark Milestone of 2 Crore Credit Cards in Force

**Ambala/Hisar:** HDFC Bank, India's largest private sector bank, announced that it has achieved the historical milestone of 2 crore Credit Cards in Force (CIF). With this, the Bank has become the first and currently the only Bank in the country to achieve this feat. HDFC Bank started the credit card business in 2001 with the launch of its first credit card. The Bank reached the milestone of 1 crore CIF in 2017, a journey that has spanned approximately 16



years. HDFC Bank doubled this CIF count to 2 crore in exactly 6 years and 1 month. Mr. Parag Rao, Group Head - Payments, Consumer Finance, Marketing, Liability Product Group, TPP, ABCP, Non-Resident Products, GIB

and Gig Banking - HDFC Bank said, "As we achieve this remarkable milestone of issuing 2 crore credit cards, we extend our gratitude to our valued customers for their trust and loyalty. This achievement reflects

the enduring partnership between our Bank and the community we serve. Every issued card represents our commitment and our shared journey towards financial empowerment, and we are dedicated to continuing this legacy of excellence in banking services." HDFC Bank is amongst the leading card issuers in the country and has the largest market share of credit card business, totalling 28.6% as of 31st March 2023.

## 18 trains, several flights delayed as Delhi sees no respite from dense fog

**New Delhi** A layer of fog continues to shroud north and northeast India, obstructing visibility and lowering it as low as zero metres at several places, affecting air and rail traffic. A passenger train moves in early morning fog and chill in South West Delhi of dwarka. A passenger train moves in early morning fog and chill in South West Delhi of dwarka.



to severe cold wave conditions are likely to continue over northwest India for five days," it said. 18 trains running late A total of 18 trains arriving in Delhi were delayed by up to six hours due to heavy fog enshrouding the railway tracks, the India Railways spokesperson said. The visibility was reduced to only 50 metres, which impacts the flight operations. Only the CAT III-B-

compliant runaways can enable a plane to take off-landing under such conditions. Several flight operations were delayed at IGI airport due to low visibility amid the fog. Passengers stranded at the airport awaited the turn of their flights that were running late from the scheduled time. "I have come from Bahrain. My flight was delayed by one hour," a passenger told ANI.

## Smt. Sikandra Devi Memorial Sports Festival organized

**Chandigarh:** Smt. Sikandra Devi Memorial Sports Festival was organized at CL Aggarwal DAV Model School Sector 7B Chandigarh. This was the 6th Chandigarh State Gada Sports Championship organized for 2023 -24 (Women & Men). The program was inaugurated by Ravinder Talwar, Secretary, DAV College Managing Committee, New Delhi, in presence of litterateur Prem Vij, President Rakesh Sharma, famous poetess Kiran Ahuja, Jyotika Ahuja, Prakash Chander Sharma, Dr. Vinod Sharma, Chitendra Kumar, Rajesh Sharma, Ashok Arya, Mansa Ram and coaches of different sports.

Dr. Vinod Sharma honored the chief guest and guests with bouquets and mementos. In this championship, the referee-judge and technical committee included Grand Master Chitrandar Kumar, Master Sunderlal, Akshay, Avnish Kumar, Varinder Pahwa, Rohit Kumar, Harsh,



Lakshmi, Prince Dubey and Ashwini, Treasurer of Mace Sports Association Chandigarh Surjit Khara, National Treasurer. Parveen Kumar, Akshay Birla, coach Iitu Nath, Meenu Jinwal and Dilmol were also present. In the medal competition, in the boys category, Dhruv, Riyansh, Shaurya Duggal, Atul, Rohan, Bhavishya Duggal, Harjot, Abhishek,

Kunal, Viraj Bahot won the gold medal. Those who won silver medals were Vikas, Ansh, Manush, Pravanaypal, Prishu Negi, Jazz Kumar, Lucky, Harsh and Abhishek. Among those who won bronze medals were Umang, Krishna, Manish Kohli, Saksham, Karthik and Gufran. In the girls category, Nitika, Swati, Nazni, Mehak, Aarohi

Preet Kaur, Ankita, Rajni, Anjali, Disha and Priya won gold medals. Those who won silver medals were Sargun, Simran, Bhavya, Sushila, Pari, Gurpreet Kaur, Aashi, Khushpreet, Khushi and Soumya. Navneet Kaur, Khushpreet, Gurjot, Anubha, Preeti, Anshveer, Ishika Bagri, Neetu, Kritika, Gurleen and Deeksha won bronze medals.

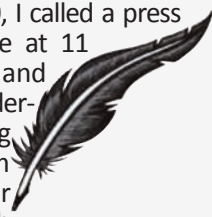


## Editorial

### Ram Mandir dream coming true

For me and for crores of Indians, this faith has been our deep reverence for Shri Ram. Shri Ram embodies the spirit of India. The true spirit of India and Indianness is discipline, truth, honesty, ethics, moral values, acceptance and celebration of diversity, respect for elders, strong family bonds and all such fine human values and Shri Ram is the epitome of all these impeccable human qualities. Hence the title 'Maryada Purushottam' (an exemplar among good human beings) by which he is known. He is an ideal for Indians' aspiration to live a life of higher values. Shri Ram was also an ideal king - the living embodiment of 'Dharma'. Hence the concept of 'Ram Rajya', the epitome of good governance, was extolled as the ideal for India. Although Shri Ram is the holy religious figure worthy of worship for the Hindus, he is a pre-eminent symbol of India's cultural heritage and national identity - which belong to all citizens alike. The story of Shri Ram's life, the Ramayana, is both a source and a carrier of the continuity of India's cultural traditions and has greatly influenced the Indian mindset generation after generation, century after century. Therefore, for the last almost 500 years, the reconstruction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya has been a deep desire for countless Indians. The Ramjanmabhoomi movement for the reconstruction of the temple at the Janmasthan of Shri Ram in Ayodhya proved to be a major watershed in the history of post-1947 India.

Its impact on our society and polity, and on our sense of national identity has been tremendous. In my own political journey, I have always said that the Ayodhya Movement was the most decisive transformational event, which gave me an opportunity to discover India anew, and in the process, rediscover myself. I feel humbled that destiny made me perform a pivotal duty in the form of the Shri Ram Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya in 1990. I believe that before any event finally occurs in reality, it takes shape and form in a person's mind. At that time, I was feeling that a befitting temple for Shri Ram in Ayodhya would indeed be a certainty one day, and that it was only a matter of time. A grand Mandir for Shri Ram at Ramjanmabhoomi had been a desire and mission for the Bharatiya Janata Party. When in the mid-1980s the Ayodhya issue rose to the centre-stage of national politics, I was reminded of the time how political stalwarts like Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad and K M Munshi had, against all odds, effectively steered the reconstruction of another landmark temple in independent India - the Somnath Temple at Prabhas Patan on the coast of Saurashtra in Gujarat. Somnath was both a witness to, and a target of, multiple foreign invasions during the medieval period. And reconstructing the Somnath temple was a proud testimony of India's determination to erase the history of bigoted alien attacks and regain its lost cultural treasure. Sadly, as in the case of Somnath, the temple at the birthplace of Shri Ram in Ayodhya had also become a target of attack by an invader, Babar, who founded the Mughal empire. In 1528, Babar ordered his commander Mir Baqi to erect a mosque at Ayodhya to make the spot a 'place for descent of angels' - hence the name Babri Masjid. It is widely believed, and later even confirmed by compelling archaeological evidence, that there was a pre-existing temple at Ayodhya which was demolished for establishing the mosque. So in many ways, the Ayodhya movement was the continuation of the spirit of Somnath. When the BJP decided in 1990 that I, as its President, should lead the Shri Ram Rath Yatra to mobilise people's support for the Ayodhya movement, it took no time for me to choose Somnath as the starting venue of this historic journey. On 12th September, 1990, I called a press conference at the party office at 11 Ashoka Road, New Delhi and announced my decision to undertake a 10,000-kilometre-long Rath Yatra, starting from Somnath on 25th September and reaching Ayodhya on 30th October to join the kar seva in Ayodhya.



# UH Minister's Amit Shah Internal Security strategy paying rich dividends

It is a mark of the present Union Home Minister's farsightedness and dedicated leadership that in his direct guidance a three-fold strategy of strengthening the internal security of the country has already produced good results. In a nutshell, this can be described as combining development with security in dealing with Maoists, taking the zero tolerance approach to terrorism beyond 'policy' to the turf of 'action' and integrating internal security with border security and law & order management to ensure total handling of the task of securing the nation. With his hands-on approach, Amit Shah has lent speed to the efforts initiated in multiple spheres towards this objective and pursued them on an untiring note. This was reflected in his prompt visit to Sukma in Chhattisgarh in April 2021 to make an in-depth examination of the circumstances in which CPI (Maoist) had ambushed security forces led by CRPF in Sukma-Bijapur road and caused the death of 22 personnel, his address at the All India Police Science Congress at Dehradun in October this year, and the follow up directed by him on Police Technology Mission earlier announced by Prime Minister Modi at the DGPs Conference held at Lucknow in 2021. The crucial details of this strategy need to be highlighted to get a



proper understanding of what all was being done. The Home Minister has formulated a comprehensive strategy for tackling Left Wing extremism. While putting down the violence with all the might at the government's command, modernising police forces, providing them with helicopters and UAVs for surveillance and upgrading some 250 police stations in the Maoist-affected regions, had been given priority. The Centre has funded the development of road infrastructure, opened post offices, bank branches and ATMs and tried to enhance the financial inclusion of people there.

To improve connectivity, mobile towers have been installed in 34 districts affected by the Maoist problem. The Ministry of Home Affairs has created a separate Left Wing Extremism Division to monitor the implementation of the new policy framework evolved by the present regime to deal

with the problem. Tribal communities and Economically Backward groups were being exploited and even threatened by the Maoists to sustain the Protracted People's War against the Indian nation. The extremists take to targeting schools, health centres, railways, roads, and bridges to thwart the development schemes of the government. The Home Minister has highlighted the need for CRPF and other security forces to adopt a people-friendly behaviour, handle welfare schemes for the locals and keep avenues for talks open wherever possible taking the help of civil society groups if available. It is the multi-prong responses combining counter-insurgency operations and development work, that have enabled the government to drastically curb the violence of Maoists and wean the population from the ideological influence of CPI (Maoist) in the Dandakaranya hinterland of the country. The

Ministry of Home Affairs has been working on a 'National Policy and Action Plan' since 2015 to deal with Left Wing Extremism through a collaborative approach between the Centre and the states and there is no doubt that the leadership of the Union Home Minister has made all the difference. Addressing the Anti-Terrorism Conference organised by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in October last, Shah perceptibly underscored the importance of dismantling not just terrorism but the entire 'terrorist ecosystem' involving cryptocurrency, hawala, terror funding, organised crime and narco-terrorism. He lauded the compilation of data regarding terrorism in the last few years and emphasised that the fight against terrorism would require collaboration from global to local levels including various states. He called upon the NIA and the IB to standardise training programmes for all Central and state counter-terrorism agencies to ensure uniformity in their methodologies. The Centre's initiative in building data finds reflection in the success of the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System in bringing over 90 lakh fingerprints on record. On the occasion of Police Commemoration Day on October 21, the Home Minister said that while main-

taining a zero-tolerance policy against terrorism, the government had framed strong laws to curb its spread. In the context of the modernisation of Police forces, he announced that a Police Technology Mission had been established with the aim of creating the "world's best anti-terror force".

The focused attention given to the task of countering terrorist activities in the country, under the direction of Shah, has already resulted in a nearly 65 per cent decline in incidents of terrorism, insurgency and Maoist violence. In what should be considered a move of great strategic importance in the area of national security, the Home Minister told the 49th All India Police Science Congress at Dehradun in October last year that internal security, border security and good law & order management were the integral components of the system that made the country secure. The Ministry of Home Affairs has taken several measures to improve law & order throughout the country. The Home Minister has made a significant observation that "as we move towards becoming a robust economic power our police and security agencies must assume a more substantial role in safeguarding our economic institutions". This is an astute understanding of the reality.

### Bilkis rapists are finally back in prison

In a scathing rebuke, the court expressed in no uncertain terms that the Gujarat government was not fit to decide on the remission plea of the 11 men convicted of a "grotesque and diabolical crime driven by communal hatred." This moment of justice, delivered in harsh, condemnatory language, serves as a beacon of hope and a reminder that the truth will always prevail over attempts to sweep heinous acts under the rug. "I have wept tears of relief. I smiled for the first time in over a year and a half. I have hugged my children. It feels like a stone has been lifted from my chest, and I can breathe again," said Bano. And one cannot help but empathise deeply with her sentiments. However, it is also crucial to under-

stand if we are truly addressing the core of the problem. A closer examination of the Supreme Court judgment reveals that it highlighted a significant technicality in the case - that of an "appropriate government". Section 432(7)(b) of The Code of Criminal Procedure, which governs the power of remission, mentions that the state where the offender is sentenced holds the authority to pass an order of remission. This location is determined by the sentencing jurisdiction, and not necessarily where the crime occurred or where the convict is imprisoned.

Considering these men were sentenced in a Mumbai special court, it is Maharashtra, not Gujarat, that holds the authority to review their remission appli-

cation. The essence of this decision revolves around defining an "appropriate government" rather than broader considerations of the "power of remission" and associated guidelines. This distinction underscores the need for a nuanced examination of legal intricacies and raises questions about whether our focus is aligned with the heart of the problem. As I tuned into the news back in 2022, I was shocked to learn that the Gujarat government had granted remission to the 11 convicts who had gang-raped Bilkis Bano and murdered members of her family during the harrowing 2002 Gujarat riots. How could a state government extend mercy to criminals who had committed such heinous acts against a woman?

### Muizzu has joined camp China. Space for diplomacy with India has shrunk

After completing his first state-visit to China with great pomp and show, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu returned to Male to take stock of the soured relations with India. The ties between the two countries were already on rocky ground, with Muizzu demanding Indian troops leave the island nation and his government not renewing an agreement allowing India to conduct hydrographic surveys in Maldivian waters.

But over the last six days, more dominoes have fallen in quick succession. The question is: will Muizzu pick up the pieces or leave them where they are? The latest controversy was triggered by disparaging remarks made by three Muizzu ministers against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indians at large. References to Indians drinking cow urine were a low blow but it wasn't until Indians on social media began encouraging a tourism boycott of Maldives that Male issued a statement distancing itself from the ministers' remarks and then suspended them. Some Maldivian MPs like Eva Abdullah suggested issuing a formal apology to India, and former vice president Ahmed Adeb told me in an interview that all of this could've been avoided if Muizzu had rang Modi. If Muizzu's latest trip is any indication, it's that he's unabashedly in China's camp. He praised China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and, in what was perceived as a slight to India, called for Beijing to reclaim its number one spot as the country sending most tourists to Maldives.

(Last year, India held the top spot with over 2 lakh tourists flocking to the island nation). Sure, Muizzu and Modi had a sit-down on the sidelines of COP28 in Dubai last month, but his interaction with Chinese First Vice-

Premier Ding Xuexiang at the same event was far warmer. China-Maldives relations will "thrive" under Muizzu's leadership, a statement from the President's Office shortly after the meeting said. With Bollywood celebrities like Akshay Kumar weighing in on the controversy, hashtag #BoycottMaldives trending on social media, Indian travel agencies cancelling flights to Male, and Indian news outlets keenly covering every facet of Muizzu's visit to China makes the island nation ThePrint's Newsmaker of the Week. By choosing China as his first official foreign visit since assuming office, Muizzu immediately set himself apart from his predecessors, most of whom picked India for their first trip. Even former president Abdulla Yameen, viewed as pro-China who even scuttled defence deals with New Delhi, had picked India as his first state visit in 2013. That said, reports indicate that Muizzu's government reached out to New Delhi in November for dates on a proposed visit.

Did New Delhi respond with radio silence? Even if it did, one may argue that a line in the sand had already been drawn at Muizzu's swearing-in ceremony, which Modi skipped. The ceremony was attended by Union Minister of Earth Sciences Kiren Rijiju instead. It was during this meeting that Male formally requested India to withdraw military personnel from the island nation, which was Muizzu's step in the "India-out" campaign. Inherited from Yameen, this campaign wasn't just election rhetoric;

Muizzu meant business. Now that he has inked 20 agreements with China, including one on grant assistance, the space for diplomatic manoeuvring with India has only shrunk.

### Plan to drop sitting MLAs, MPs backfires on Jagan; rocked by flurry of exits

The YSR Congress Party's strategy to drop several sitting MLAs and MPs in Andhra Pradesh for the forthcoming polls has triggered a spate of resignations. Machilipatnam MP Balasouri Vallabhaneni resigned from the party amid indications that he might be dropped. Balasouri is likely to join the Jana Sena Party (JSP) led by actor-politician Pawan Kalyan. This is the latest resignation to hit the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led party ahead of the simultaneous polls to the state Assembly and the Lok Sabha, likely to be held in April-May. Kurnool MP S. Sanjeev

Kumar resigned from the party. The general surgeon and urologist resigned both as MP and also from the primary membership of YSRCP. This followed the party's decision to field sitting MLA and state minister Gummanur Jayaram as the party candidate from the Kurnool Parliament seat. The MP, who remained low profile throughout his stint, alleged that there is no respect for backward classes in the party. He is likely to join the Telugu Desam Party (TDP). Two MLAs have also quit the ruling party over the denial of tickets. Last

week, Rayadurgam MLA Kapu Ramchandra Reddy resigned from YSRCP. He alleged that the party leadership betrayed him despite his loyalty to the party. Alla Ramakrishna Reddy was the first YSRCP MLA to quit the party. The MLA from Mangalagiri has declared his support to Y. S. Sharmila, who recently merged her YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) with the Congress. Sharmila, the sister of Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, will likely get a key position in the party. A couple of MLCs have also quit YSRCP in the last few days.

While MLC and senior leader C. Ramachandraiah joined the TDP, another MLC Srinivas Varma joined the Jana Sena. Earlier, cricketer Ambati Rayudu resigned from YSRCP. He quit the party 10 days after joining it. The cricketer said that he resigned from the YSRCP as their ideologies were not aligned. Rayudu met Pawan Kalyan on January 11. He claimed that he and Pawan Kalyan share the same ideologies and vision, hinting that he may join Jana Sena. The spate of resignations has come as a blow to the YSRCP.



## 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. We enable companies to prosper and individuals to stay connected effortlessly by continuously improving our networks and investing in powerful infrastructure. We've established new service bundles that are customized to the demands of various groups, providing affordability without sacrificing quality. One of our recent milestones, the Netplus Super Saver plans, represents our dedication to offering innovative solutions, not only provide affordable broadband services but are also bundled with OTT apps and live TV channels, and we are planning further to seamlessly integrate technological solutions to our existing services for our customers." shares Gurdeep.

## EPACK Durable Limited Initial Public Offer to open

### Gurugram:

EPACK Durable Limited ("EPACK" or the "Company"), shall open its Bid / Offer in relation to its initial public offer of Equity Shares on Friday, January 19, 2024. The total offer size of Equity Shares of face value 10 each aggregating up to comprises of fresh issue aggregating up to 4,000 million [ 400 crore ] ("Fresh Issue") and offer for sale of up to 10,437,047 Equity Shares. The Anchor Investor Bidding Date . The Bid/Offer will open on for subscription and close on Tuesday, January 23, 2024. The Price Band of the Offer has been fixed at 218 to 230 per Equity Share. Bids can be made for a minimum of 65 Equity Shares and in multiples of 65 Equity Shares

thereafter. The Company proposes to utilise net proceeds from fresh issue of Equity Shares to funding capital expenditure for the expansion / setting up of manufacturing facilities, repayment and / or prepayment, in part or in full, of certain outstanding loans of our Company and general corporate purpose (the "Objects of Issue"). The offer for sale of up to 10,437,047 Equity Shares ("Offered Shares") comprising up to 1,172,976 Equity Shares by Bajrang Bothra, up to 666,798 Equity Shares by Laxmi Pat Bothra, up to 748,721 Equity Shares by Sanjay Singhania, up to 748,721 Equity Shares by Ajay DD Singhania (collectively, the "Promoter Selling Shareholders"), up to 286,351 Equity Shares by

Pinky Ajay Singhania, up to 286,351 Equity Shares by Preity Singhania, up to 442,905 Equity Shares by Nikhil Bothra, up to 442,905 Equity Shares by Nitin Bothra, up to 379,633 Equity Shares by Rajat Kumar Bothra (collectively, the "Promoter Group Selling Shareholders"), up to 4,630,284 equity shares by India Advantage fund S4 I and up to 631,402 Equity Shares by Dynamic India fund S4 US I (collectively, the "Investor Selling Shareholders", and together with the Promoter Selling Shareholders and the Promoter Group Selling Shareholders, the "Selling Shareholders", and such offer for sale of Equity Shares by the Selling Shareholders, "the Offer for Sale").

## Apple overtakes Samsung as world's top smartphone seller

Delhi: Apple has overtaken Samsung as the world's top smartphone seller, ending the Korean tech firm's 12-year run as industry leader. The iPhone took the top spot in 2023 with 234.6m units sold, according to figures from the International Data Corporation (IDC), overtak-

ing Samsung's 226.6m units. IDC said the crowning of Apple, which released the iPhone 15 in September, was due to trends including the increasing popularity of high-end devices, which now account for more than 20% of the market. "The last time a company

not named Samsung was at the top of the smartphone market was 2010, and for 2023 it is now Apple," IDC said. "A sort of shifting of power at the top of the largest consumer electronics market was driven by an all-time high market share for Apple and a first time at the top."

## CAPSULES

### India Slaps 50% Export Duty on Sugar's Molasses

Delhi: The Indian government has implemented a 50% export duty on molasses due to concerns about a potential decrease in domestic sugar production this season. The export duty, effective from January 18, 2024, aims to address the situation, as per an official notification from the Ministry of Finance. Molasses, a by-product of sugar, is crucial for ethanol production, contributing to a greener economy. Cane juice-derived ethanol comprises 25-30% of the total ethanol production, while over 60-65% comes from B heavy molasses. Ethanol from C-heavy molasses and grains makes up the remaining share. Earlier in December, the Food Ministry instructed sugar mills not to use cane juice or syrup for ethanol production. However, in mid-December, the central government permitted the use of both juice and B-heavy molasses for ethanol production, with a capped diversion of sugar at 17 lakh tones for the current marketing season. India has already introduced 20% blended fuel, E20, in a phased manner starting April 2023, with wider availability anticipated in the coming days. The introduction of E20 blending in petrol aims to reduce the country's oil import costs, enhance energy security, lower carbon emissions, and improve air quality. The government has advanced the target for E20 fuel adoption from 2030 to 2025.

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

● Buying or selling high-end US chips is not illegal in China and the publicly available tender documents



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 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.

## Infosys, results, experts suggest Indian IT sector rebound

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 report. Although IT companies showed little improvement in market confi-



dence 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 comments 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 revenue. 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.

## Adani 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. Dharavi Redevelopment Project Pvt Ltd (DRPPL), a collaboration between the Adani Group and the government of Maharashtra, announced that eligi-

ble 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 projects in Mumbai, as stated by the developer. In November 2022, Adani Properties, the real estate develop-

ment 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 government of Maharashtra holds the remaining 20%. Previously, informal settlement dwellers in Maharashtra.

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

● 56 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 294 crore for the third quarter ended December 2023 compared to the previous quarter

### 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, is engaged in the business of investing and financing, insurance broking, payment bank and payment aggregator and payment gateway services. The company and BlackRock have agreed to form a joint

venture to enter into the asset management industry. Accordingly, the JV company made an application to the Securities and Exchange Board of India on October 19, 2023, for starting a mutual fund business. The company also has plans to enter the insurance segment. With regard to new products, it said, loans against property and home loans are in the pipeline. It also plans to launch leasing business and supply chain financing.

## UltraTech Cement Q3 Results: Net profit rises 68% to Rs 1,777 crore

Delhi: Cement manufacturer Ultratech declared its highest-ever profit of Rs 1,777 crore for the quarter ended December, up 68% from Rs 1,058 crore last year. Revenue from operations climbed 8% YoY to Rs 16,740 crore from Rs 15,521 crore in the third quarter of last year. Profit and revenue results were in line with ET Now poll forecasts of Rs 1,725 crore and Rs 16,705 crore, respectively. With 77% capacity utilization, the company's volumes climbed 5% YoY in the reporting quarter. Grey cement domestic volumes rose 5% to 25.44 million tons, while white cement rose 18% to 0.48 million tons. December quarter consolidated sales (including foreign) rose 6% to 27.32 million tons.



## The apex body to regulate legal education and profession in the country



**Delhi:** A bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta pointed out that the 2008 Rules envisaged the Bar Council of India - the apex body to regulate legal education and profession in the country. The Supreme Court has asked all the state bar councils to explain if they have prepared a list of senior advocates willing to train law students when the courts are on vacation, observing that the 2008 Rules of Legal Education ought to be complied with the bar councils across the country. A bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta

**"A bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta pointed out that the 2008 Rules envisaged the Bar Council of India (BCI) - the apex body to regulate legal education and profession in the country"**

pointed out that the 2008 Rules envisaged the Bar Council of India (BCI) - the apex body to regulate legal education and profession in the country, to publish the lists prepared by the state bar councils for the benefit of law students. "There has to be compliance with your own rules. When your own

rules provide for it, you must publish these lists and put them on your website. What have you done?" the bench asked advocate Radhika Gautam, who appeared for the BCI. Gautam responded that the BCI is committed to abiding by the regulation, adding it is for the state bar councils to ready the lists of senior advocates and share with them. At this, the bench sought to know if the state bar councils are parties to the public interest litigation (PIL) raising this issue and proceeded to seek their replies. "Let the state bar councils enter appear-

## Diplomatic row over the killing of a Khalistani terrorist in Canada

**Delhi:**

Study permits for Indians aspiring to pursue an education Canada nose-dived in the Oct-Dec 2023 quarter to 14,910, an 86% drop from the 1.1 lakh during the same months in 2022, when Canada aced the charts as the number one study abroad destination for Indian students. Canadian immigration minister Marc Miller, who shared the data in an interview, said the numbers were unlikely to rebound anytime soon. He attributed the sharp fall to

Canadian diplomats who would process the permits being ejected from India and fewer Indian students applying due to a diplomatic row over the killing of a Khalistani terrorist in Canada, a Reuters report said. Scarcity and cost of accommodation have also deterred many students from opting for India. Canadian government paper which flagged the "urgent need" to look at students' well-being and housing shortage in Ontario, which hosts a record number of international students, especially Indians. In Dec, Ottawa doubled the cost of living requirement, mandating international students to hold more dollars in their bank account. These factors led to an 86% drop in study permits issued to Indians in the fourth quarter of last year from the year-ago period, to 14,910 from 108,940, according to official data that has not been previously reported and not yet released by the IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada), which monitors visas issued.

## Coaching centres may face action for exorbitant fees

**Delhi:** Coaching centres can be made to pay up to Rs 1 lakh or have their registration cancelled for charging exorbitant fees that causes undue stress, leading to student suicides, or for other malpractices. New guidelines issued by the education ministry bar centres from

hiring any tutor who has been convicted of any offence involving moral turpitude.

Also, each branch of a coaching institute will now be treated as a separate entity. An institute will not be registered unless it has a counselling system as per the require-

ment of these guidelines. "Information about the names of psychologists, counsellors and the time they render services may be given to all students and parents. Trained counsellors could be appointed," the guidelines said.

## CAPSULES

### It found a significant gap across gender in accessibility to digital devices

**Delhi:** Over 90% of rural children in the 14-18 years' age group have a smartphone in their home (as compared to 73% in 2017) and are on social media, according to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023 released. The survey conducted by Pratham Foundation in 28 rural districts across 26 states also set out to explore post-Covid digital awareness scenario among the rural children of this group and found that only 9% of them had a computer at home and 85% of them know how to use it. It found a significant gap across gender in accessibility to digital devices. Of those who can use smartphones or have access to them, males (43.7%) are twice as likely than females (19.8%). The survey explored two components: access of children to digital devices and their online habits and an assessment of their digital skills performing a set of tasks in front of the survey team using an available smartphone. On communication and online safety, the survey found that nearly half of all surveyed males have an email ID, compared to 30% among females. The survey found that as high as 90.5% of the children in the age group reported having used social media in the reference week, with a slightly higher proportion of males (93.4%) than females (87.8%). "Of all children who used social media, only about half are familiar with the online safety settings that were included in the survey," the report said. In 2017 when such a survey was last conducted, use of internet and computers was much lower with 28% having used the internet and 26% had used computers, while 59% had never used a computer. Nearly two-thirds of the children.

## "The children were surveyed on four points - basic

● "The children were surveyed on four points - basic reading, mathematics and English abilities; application of basic skills to every-



**Delhi**

Interestingly, the survey found that 90.5% of the teenagers in this age group said they had used social media in the reference week, with a slightly higher proportion of males (93.4%) than females (87.8%). However it observed that "of all youths who used social media, only about half are familiar with online safety settings that

were included in the survey". The children were surveyed on four points - basic reading, mathematics and English abilities; application of basic skills to everyday calculations; reading and understanding written and real-life financial calculations. Nearly 43% of children in the 14-18 age group in rural areas can-

not read sentences in English, while 25% struggle to read a Class 2 level text in their respective regional language, shows the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023. More than half of the children struggle with even simple division, something they are expected to have mastered.

## HC has come to the rescue of three primary teachers

**Delhi:** Gujarat HC has come to the rescue of three primary teachers whose promotions were reversed because they pursued higher studies to obtain graduate and postgraduate degrees. A bench of Justice Nikhil Kariel ordered status quo, meaning Magan Dodiya, Savji Parmar and Hareesh Rajyaguru would continue to serve as head teachers until further orders. The court has issued notice to the authorities and posted further hearing. Dodiya, Parmar and Rajyaguru



have been singing in Bhavnagar city's municipal board's schools since the 1980s and 1990s. The qualification required then for the post of a primary teacher was only secondary schooling with a certificate course in pri-

mary teaching. After the state government introduced certain qualifying criteria for promotions, the three cleared a test called Head Teachers Aptitude Test (HTAT) required to become a head teacher and they were promoted to the

post in 2012. On December 8, 2023, the Bhavnagar town education committee cancelled their promotions and demoted them to their original post of primary teachers. The punishment was for the "misconduct" of pursuing higher education without due permission from the department. All three rushed to HC, where their advocates Shalin Mehta and Shikha Panchal submitted that these teachers had sought permission to pursue higher studies.

## The government is considering the issue of the revision of remuneration

**Delhi:** The government is already considering the issue of the revision of remuneration, the official added. Shoaib Rana, general secretary of All India Guest Teachers Association, however, claimed, "The salary bills of guest teachers for Dec have been pending with the principal accounts office (PAO) since January 1." Usually, the salaries come within a week of the bill being issued, he said. Guest teachers claimed that PAO officials had told them that the office had been facing a problem in the server since Jan 4 and its work had been affected for 12-13 days. The letter, which has also been sent to the lieutenant governor, the chief minister and the principal secretary of edu-



cation, stated that the remuneration rates were last revised in 2017. The Loktantrik Adhyapak Manch Delhi, representing guest teachers working at Delhi government schools, has alleged in a letter to education minister Atishi that "no guest teacher of Delhi government schools has received any salary for Dec". The letter has also requested for a revision of remuneration rates, which,

according to it, does not align with the guest teachers' vital role in the education system. Each guest teacher currently gets around Rs 33,000 every month. A Delhi government official said, "It is imperative to acknowledge that guest teachers in Delhi receive one of the highest remunerations nationwide, with no outstanding dues. Nevertheless, should any specific case come to light, we shall thoroughly,

## The city's playschools will soon have to register with government

**Delhi:** "The NCPCR has had a meeting with the department and mentioned that some playschools were found to be violating the guidelines laid down for them and it was important that there was some kind of control or supervision over them," said a Delhi government official. "On the directions of the child body the department of women and child development is going to start the registration process," the official added. The information that the play schools will have to provide in the self-declaration and registration form include the number of students in different age groups, number of classrooms, teacher-student ratio, details of pantry and play area, availability of



basic things such as soap, towel, wash-basins and sinks easily accessible for small children, fire safety measures, CCTV cameras, first aid and medicine kits, and provision for audio-visual and learning aids. The playschools will also have to provide the details of academic and professional qualifications of teaching staff, classes assigned

to them and their date of appointment. Officials said the registration form has been made based on the regulatory guidelines prepared by the NCPCR. The guidelines were prepared with the objective of bringing "inclusiveness and uniformity" in all private educational institutions imparting pre-school education, to prevent violation of

## Centre issues guidelines for regulation of coaching centres

**Delhi:** Addressing the need for a legal framework and managing the unregulated growth of private coaching centres, Centre has prepared model guidelines for states to implement to regulate coaching centres in India. The proposed Guidelines for Regulation of Coaching Centre 2024 released by the Centre suggest that students younger than 16-year-olds should not be enrolled in coaching centres. The guidelines also suggest that coaching centres should not make misleading promises or guarantee ranks to parents and students. Tutors with qualifications less than graduation should not be allowed to teach in coaching institutes either, the guidelines propose. "The number of unregulated private coaching centres in the country continues to grow in the absence of any laid down policy or regulation.



## IPL schedule is dependent on the dates of the General Election



**NEW DELHI:** As mentioned by the Cricbuzz website, the BCCI has discussed the tentative Women's Premier League (WPL) schedule with its stakeholders, and it will run from February 22 to March 17. The report adds that the IPL will begin five days after the conclusion of the WPL. However, any confirmation about the IPL schedule is largely dependent on the dates of the General Election in the country, and the BCCI hopes that it will manage to host the

league in India only. In case the March 22 to May 26 schedule gets the nod, it will give the Indian team just five days to get together and sync up for the T20 World Cup in the US and the Caribbean, beginning June 2. But India's opening fixture, against Ireland, is scheduled for June 5. The report adds that "the BCCI has received assurances from most cricket boards that their players will be available until the (IPL) final". The confirmation of the IPL schedule heavily relies on

the general election dates in the country. The BCCI is optimistic about hosting the league in India, contingent upon the election schedule. If the proposed schedule from March 22 to May 26 is approved, it will provide the Indian team with only a five-day window to assemble and synchronize for the T20 World Cup in the US and the Caribbean. The Indian Premier League's (IPL) upcoming 17th season is likely to be held from March 22 to May 26, according to a report.

## We have one more...': Rohit eyes T20 World Cup glory

**NEW DELHI:** The dejection was clearly evident on Rohit Sharma's face when the broadcasters asked the Indian skipper about the ODI World Cup loss. India, who were the only unbeaten team till the final in the quadrennial event, held in India, had lost to Australia in the title clash at the jam-packed Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad in November last year. Following a triumphant 3-0 victory in the three-match Twenty20 International (T20I) series against Afghanistan, Rohit faced questions from the broadcasters regarding the ODI World Cup setback.



To this, Rohit, who looked emotional, said: "I don't want to think about it now (World Cup loss). For me, 50 over World Cup is the biggest World Cup. It's not like I don't give that importance to the T20 World Cup and World Test

Championship. We have been brought up seeing the 50-over World Cup. And when it is played in India, it's quite big." India went into the semi-finals after winning all their group matches. They defeated Australia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh.

## Uzbekistan hand leaky India second Asian Cup defeat

**NEW DELHI:** India fell to a second straight defeat at the Asian Cup on Thursday in Doha, losing 3-0 to Uzbekistan, all the goals coming in a torrid first half for Igor Stimac's men. The result put Uzbekistan in pole position to qualify along with Australia from Group B

with one round of matches to go. Against the central Asian nation at Ahmed bin Ali Stadium, India's performance was a far cry from their display against Australia, where the team went down 0-2 in the opener. Uzbekistan scored

Abbosbek Fayzullaev (4th minute), Igor Sergeev (18th) and Nasrullaev (45+3) to register their first win in the competition after being held to a stalemate by Syria in their tournament opener. Hoping to start on a positive note.

## Rohit Sharma starts practicing ahead of Test series against England

**NEW DELHI:** In anticipation of the much-anticipated five-Test series against England, Indian skipper Rohit Sharma has plunged into rigorous net sessions, showcasing his determination and readiness for the challenge ahead. The series, set to kick off on January 25 in Hyderabad and culminate on March 11 in Dharamshala, has cricket enthusiasts buzzing with excitement. The Mumbai Indians, the reigning five-time Indian Premier League champi-



ons and Rohit's franchise, took to social media platform X to provide a glimpse into the 'Hitman's' intense training regimen, posting images from his recent net session. Rohit boasts an impressive record against

England, having accumulated 747 runs in nine Tests at an average of 49.80, including two centuries and three fifties. His prowess in Indian conditions is undeniable, with 2,002 runs in 24 Tests at an average of 66.73, featuring eight

centuries and six fifties. In a recent T20I series against Afghanistan, Rohit faced initial setbacks with two ducks but roared back with a spectacular 121\* in 69 balls, showcasing his ability to bounce back with resilience. The Indian Test squad for the first two matches sees the inclusion of wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel, earning a maiden call-up. However, the squad will miss the services of the recovering Mohammed Shami, and the rested Ishan Kishan.

## Daniil Medvedev wins Australian Open match at 03:40 in morning

**NEW DELHI:** World no.3 Daniil Medvedev battled back from the brink of defeat to make the Australian Open third round in a contest which finished at 03:40 on Friday. Two-time runner-up Medvedev advanced to the next round after a thrilling five-set win over Emil Ruusuvuori. Battling back from two sets down, Medvedev triumphed 3-6, 6-7 (1/7), 6-4, 7-6 (7/1), 6-0 in a contest that lasted more than four hours and 20 minutes on court. Medvedev had been just two points from defeat when trail-



ing his 53rd-ranked Finnish opponent 4-5 in the fourth set. However, he recovered to sprint through the

tie-break to level at two sets all and then swept the decider as Ruusuvuori struggled with a right shoulder

injury. Medvedev, the 2021 and 2022 finalist, will face Canadian 27th seed Felix Auger-Aliassime.

## Sri Lanka clinch T20I series after record low Zimbabwe total



**NEW DELHI:** Skipper Wanindu Hasaranga led from the front with his four-for as Sri Lanka cruised to a nine-wicket win in the series deciding third and final T20I in Colombo. Hasaranga registered superb figures of 4 for 15 as he ran through Zimbabwe's lower order with the tourists succumbing to their lowest-ever T20 total. With the lop-sided win

that came inside 11 overs, the Lankans clinched the series 2-1. Pathum Nissanaka (39 not out) and Kusal Mendis (33) added 64 runs in 46 balls before a deceptive turner from left-arm spinner Sean Williams took the latter off-stump for Zimbabwe's sole breakthrough. Nissanka sealed Sri Lanka's win by launching Sikandar Raza for six over long-

on when the scores drew level. Zimbabwe had a creditable start with 56-3 after the first six overs of power play but struggled to score boundaries once fielding restrictions eased. Number three batsman Brian Bennett top-scored with 29 off just 12 balls, including four boundaries in the second over, before a Hasaranga catch off Angelo Mathews.

## Indian women's hockey team fails to qualify for Paris Olympics after loss to Japan in FIH Qualifiers

**NEW DELHI:** In a major heart-break, the Indian women's hockey team on Friday failed to qualify for the upcoming Paris Games after suffering 0-1 loss to Japan in FIH Olympic Qualifiers in Ranchi. Kana Urata's sixth minute strike from the penalty corner turned out to be the winner for Japan as the wheels that were set in motion for the Indian women's team, following a momentous fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, seemed to have come off after the utterly disappointing show in one of its hubs in recent years. The top three sides from this tournament qualified for the Paris Olympics. By finishing third, Japan, booked their berth. Germany and USA, who will play in the final later in the evening, are the other two sides to have sealed their places. Japan were the early aggressor as they exerted pressure on the Indian defence and, in the



process, had the first scoring chance, but an alert Indian skipper Savita in front of the goal came out rushing to kick away the loose ball in the second minute. The Indians played catch-up as they failed to threaten the Japanese goal despite making some fine circle penetrations. Japan kept up the pressure and secured their first penalty corner minutes later but the Indians defended well. Two minutes later, India conceded another soft penalty corner and this time Urata found the back of the net through the

legs of Savita with a grounded flick. The Indian backline was put under tremendous pressure by the Japanese with some defence-splitting dangerous crosses but the hosts somehow managed to hold on. In the 12th minute, India had their first real chance. Monika created the opportunity with a fine cross from the right flank but Lalremsiam's deflection went over the bar. As has been the case in this tournament, the Indians were guilty of not using both the flanks. It was predictable hockey.

## He's got a big ego...': England pacer opens up on Kohli challenge



**NEW DELHI:** When facing India, opposing teams prioritise strategising against the run machine Virat Kohli. Teams chalk out plans and bowlers employ various tactics and strategies, aiming to thwart Virat's prolific batting and prevent him from unleashing his full potential on the field. With India are set to face England in the five-match series, the visiting team's lethal weapon Ollie Robinson said Virat has got a big ego and the star batter is going to dominate the red-ball series.



## CAPSULES

## Government is committed to protect cow wealth: JP Dalal

**Loharu: Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Minister JP Dalal** said that new schemes are being implemented in the state to increase the income of farmers and animal husbandry and bring prosperity in their lives. Farmers and cattle herders should take advantage of these schemes. He called upon the farmers to use nano urea and DAP prepared by IFFCO through drones and do poison-free farming. He said that for spraying by drone, the farmer will have to pay only Rs 100 per acre, the rest of the expenses will be borne by the government. He said that the state government is committed to protect the cow progeny, hence the budget of the Cow Service Commission has been increased from Rs 40 crore to Rs 400 crore. Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Minister JP Dalal was addressing the programs organized at Bidhwan and Sohasanda cow sheds of Loharu Halke village of the area on Sunday as the chief guest. During the holy festival of Makar Sakranti, the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Minister donated generously to the cow shelters. He also called upon the villagers to cooperate in the cowsheds as per their faith.

He announced to give Rs 11 lakh to village Tigdana and Sohasanda Gaushala and a tractor to Mitathal Gaushala. Agriculture Minister announced to give Rs 11 lakh and a water tanker to village Bidhwan Gaushala. He said that the government is making every possible effort to ensure that the lives of farmers and cattle herders become happy and their families prosper. For this, there are many schemes by the government based on subsidy in animal husbandry, horticulture and fisheries, which farmers and cattle rearers should take advantage of. The Agriculture Minister said that subsidy up to Rs 25 lakh is provided on polyhouses and net houses. A grant of up to Rs 50 lakh is being given for sheep and goat rearing. Subsidy of up to Rs 1 crore is provided for factories to make green fodder bales in cowsheds.

He said that new mandis are being run for the convenience of farmers and all basic facilities are being provided in them. For the convenience of farmers, a loan of Rs 2700 crore has been taken from Japan.

, through which pack houses can be opened, which will directly benefit the farmers.

He said that farming will not be allowed to remain a loss making business. Animal Husbandry Minister JP Dalal said that soon ambulance service will start for animals as well as humans. For this, the government has purchased 70 vehicles and 130 will be purchased soon. After this service, in case the livestock gets injured or becomes seriously ill, the veterinarian will go to the spot and treat the sick or injured animal with just one phone call. Earlier in the programs, the Agriculture Minister was warmly welcomed with a turban and flower garlands. Agriculture Minister JP Dalal met Chief Minister Manohar Lal and assured to fulfill the demands put forward by the villagers in all the villages.

## CHANGE THE WORLD, DON'T LET IT CHANGE YOU

A man saw a snake being burned to death and decided to take it out of the fire. When he did, the snake bit him, causing excruciating pain. The man dropped the snake, and the reptile fell right back into the fire. So, the man grabbed a metal pole, took the snake out of the fire and saved its life. Someone who was watching approached the man and said, "That snake bit you. Why are you still trying to save it?" The man replied, "The nature of the snake is to bite, but that's not gonna change my nature, which is to help." Do not change your nature simply because someone hurts you, or you perceive that they hurt you. Do not lose your good heart! Often in our lives we make a quick decision about how something made us feel and respond in kind. Often this response is not the same response we would have had if we didn't let our emotions get the best of us. In the heat of the moment, it is easy to let the situation briefly change your usual nature because you are upset. It is also easy to, over time, let situations wear you down. The truth is you do that, not the situation. You have a choice, especially when you are faced with a situation over and over again that upsets you where that situation is outside your control. You are the person in control, you are the one who needs the deep breath, the quiet moment, the fresh air... you are the one who knows what calms you and will help you to make a rational thought. Try not to speak in haste and you will find that you are better equipped to deal with stressful situations.

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## CM Yogi reaches ground zero, takes charge of their safety & convenience

### Ayodhya

As devotees of Lord swarmed Ayodhya on the first day of the public opening of the magnificent Ram Temple on Tuesday to have darshan and offer their prayers, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reached ground zero himself and took charge of their safety, convenience and comfort. The Chief Minister sent the officials first, then reached Ayodhya himself again on Tuesday, conducted an aerial survey to take stock of the situation and held a meeting with district administration officials, giving them necessary directions for controlling the crowd as well as ensuring fool-proof security arrangements and convenience



of devotees. Meanwhile, the Chief Minister has appealed for patience and cooperation from the devotees coming from different parts of the country. Assuring

devotees of a seamless darshan of Lord Shri Ram, the Chief Minister has urged them to exercise patience and cooperate with Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth

Kshetra Trust, local police and administration officials to avoid inconveniences. He has said that the government, trust and administration are trying to facilitate darshan of Lord Ram to every devotee. Rampath, Dharmapath and Janmabhoomi Path remain overcrowded. As the Ram Temple opened its doors to public, lakhs of devotees thronged the streets of Ayodhya to have darshan of Ram Lalla braving the bone-chilling cold. All the routes leading to the temple, Dharampath, Ram Path and Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Path were flooded with swarms of people. The crowd of devotees started coming for darshan from 3am.

## Spectacular 'Deepotsav' illuminates Ayodhya in unprecedented grandeur following consecration

### Ayodhya

Ayodhya witnessed a remarkable Deepotsav celebration following the consecration of Shri Ram Lalla in the divine grand temple. The spectacle was nothing short of amazing, supernatural, and unforgettable – an unimaginable beauty that captivated all who beheld it. Residents of Ramnagar Ayodhya, along with devotees from remote corners of India, lit Ram Jyoti. The echoes of "Ram-Ram"

resonated throughout homes, creating an atmosphere of devotional jubilation. Even in front of Hanumangarhi temple, a grand celebration took place. This Deepotsav in Avadhपुरi was truly unique, with a distinct excitement, enthusiasm, and joy in everyone's hearts, marking the end of a 500-year struggle. The Deepotsav celebration in Ayodhya infused the city with an unprecedented fervour. Joy and intimacy were

palpable as countless lamps illuminated the banks of Saryu, Ram Ki Paidi, Maths-Temples, and other public places. The entire Avadhपुरi was adorned for the grand festival of Shri Ram, featuring elaborate lighting on temples, small streets, and main roads, as well as all government and religious buildings. City residents celebrated the presence of their beloved Ram by illuminating lamps in their homes. Saryu Aarti

was performed with heightened enthusiasm, involving many dignitaries, sages, and saints at the ghats. Since Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took office in 2017, the concept of a grand Deepotsav celebration was envisioned, growing in grandeur each year. The second Deepotsav of the Yogi government's second term in 2023 set unprecedented records, with 22.23 lakh lamps illuminating Ayodhya.

## Theme of Uttar Pradesh tableau on the occasion of Republic Day Viksit Bharat

### Ayodhya

Hence the beautiful statue of Ram Lalla installed on a temple-like base has been taken in the front of the tableau. Trailer: First of all, the trailer features two sadhus with the Kalash symbol, emblematic of the upcoming Magh Mela in Prayagraj and the Mahakumbh to be held in 2025. Below, just above the frill displays the Festival of Lights, symbolizing the auspicious arrival of Prabhu Shri Ram in

Ayodhya. The subsequent image showcases Jewar Airport, the fourth-largest international airport in the World. Serving as a symbol, Asia's largest mobile manufacturing factory in Noida represents Uttar Pradesh's ascent as a prominent hub for mobile production. In LED Screen Additionally, the depiction of the state's transformation into an "expressway state" with 6 operational and 7 under construction expressways. Rapid

Rail is placed after Sadhus on tractors, first time in the country, the high-speed rail service (RRTS) is operational connecting Ghaziabad to Duhai. To conclude, the trailer highlights the Brahmos missile emerging from the top of the Rapid Rail-a product exclusively manufactured in Uttar Pradesh, establishing the state as a hub for such advancements in North India. Finally, the emblematic lion of Make in India signifies Uttar Pradesh'

## Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose is a symbol of bravery and valor of India: CM Yogi

### Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Tuesday, said that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is a symbol of bravery and valor of India, who energised the youth and inspired them to unite and join the country's struggle for independence. Offering floral tributes at the Netaji's statue at the Parivartan Chowk, he said, "Netaji motivated the youth to unite against the British rule and fight in a new spirit. He prepared a strategy both within the country and abroad to advance the freedom struggle. That's why we

see many places connected to Netaji when we travel overseas." CM Yogi further said that Netaji formed the Azad Hind Fauj, giving the slogan of "Tum mujhe khoon do, mai tumhe azadi dunga" (give me blood, and I will give you freedom). Inspired by this mantra for the country's independence, lakhs of youth became ready to sacrifice everything. He mentioned that the youth and every Indian became part of the fight led by the Azad Hind Fauj. Netaji worked to intensify this fight not only in India

but also in many countries of the world including Myanmar and Singapore. This is why every Indian holds a deep sense of respect and admiration for Netaji, the Chief Minister pointed out. The CM said that it's a matter of good fortune that PM Modi decided to celebrate Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's sacred birth anniversary as Parakram Diwas (Valour Day) and link it with the weekly event. "As we remember Netaji on his 127th sacred birth anniversary today, India stands as a country.

### Ayodhya

It was a colourful evening in Ayodhya on Monday when artistes from within Uttar Pradesh and across the country mesmerized the audience with their musical and dance performances showcasing diverse shades of Indian culture following the consecration ceremony. As many as 200 artistes from regional cultural centres of the Ministry of Culture as well others from within UP and from different parts of the country performed on over 100 stages put up across Ayodhya, introducing the audience to the diverse colours of culture through outstanding performances.

## Yogi govt to honour eminent scientist Dr Ritu and entrepreneur Naveen with 'UP Gaurav Samman' on UP Day

### Lucknow

The Yogi government will honour two personalities, who have brought laurels to the state, on Uttar Pradesh Day. The government will confer the 'Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman' on eminent scientist Dr Ritu Karidhal Srivastava, who played a crucial role in the Chandrayaan Mission as the Mission Director of Mission Moon at Lucknow's Mission Directorate, and Naveen Tiwari, noted entrepreneur from Kanpur, who is regularly featured on covers of magazines like Forbes and Fortune. Dr Ritu Karidhal Srivastava, who resides in Lucknow, played a crucial role in the development of India's Mars Orbiter Mission, Mangalyaan. She also served as the Deputy Operations Director for this mission. Mangalyaan was one of ISRO's greatest achievements, making India the fourth country in the world to reach Mars. Dr Ritu completed her B.Sc. in Physics from Lucknow University. She was a research scholar at Lucknow University for six months. During the Annual Convocation in 2019, Lucknow University presented her with the prestigious D.Sc. (Honorary Doctorate) degree. Karidhal has been working for ISRO since 1997. She also obtained a Master's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. Eminent entrepreneur Naveen Tewari, a resident of Kanpur, who is regularly featured on the covers of magazines like Forbes and Fortune, has created two unicorns and given India its first unicorn. He has established the world's largest independent mobile ad tech platform, connecting local businesses in Uttar Pradesh and India with national and international audiences. His lock screen software is present on more than 40 crore smartphones globally. Entrepreneur Naveen has established his presence in 26 countries.



## Ayodhya Mandir inauguration: What adorns Lord Ram

A look at what the Ram Lalla idol has been adorned in.

Crafted in North Indian tradition, the crown is made of gold and adorned with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. At the centre of it is an emblem of Surya Dev. On the right, strands of pearls are woven.

**Tilak**  
The forehead bears a traditional tilak, made of diamonds and rubies.

**Kundal**  
Designed to complement the mukt, these earrings follow the same design and are adorned with peacock motifs.

They are also embellished with gold, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds.

**Kantha**  
The neck is graced by a crescent-shaped necklace, intricately studded with gems. It features floral designs symbolising good fortune, with an image of Surya Dev at its centre. It is crafted from gold and inlaid with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. Strands of emeralds hang below, enhancing its appearance.

**Padika**  
A necklace worn below the throat and above the navel, significant in

divine ornamentation. It is a five-stranded necklace made of diamonds and emeralds, featuring a large, ornate pendant.

**Mudrika**  
Rings adorned with gems and featuring dangling pearls are worn on both hands.

**Kangan**  
Beautiful gem-studded bangles are worn on both hands.

**Kanch or Kardhani**  
Adorned around the waist is a gem-studded waistband, made of gold and decorated with diamonds, rubies, pearls, and emeralds. It also features small bells symbolising purity.

## Diverse colours of Indian culture on ample display in Ayodhya

### Ayodhya

This moment was not only a matter of pride for the residents of Ayodhya but also a moment of honour for the visitors who came from outside. The morning chill did not dampen the spirits of the artistes, who dressed in colourful attire, presented their performances. One of the highlights of the cultural soiree was the melodious presentation of songs by Padma Shree Malini Awasthi and Kanhaiya Mittal. Malini Awasthi performed at Tulsī Udyan, Kanhaiya Mittal performed at Ram Katha Park. The consecration ceremony was not just limited to Ayodhya but encompassed the entire Uttar Pradesh. The tradi-

tion of 'Atithi Devo Bhava' was introduced to the guests through 'damru' and 'conch blowing'. Various folk dances were performed including Dhobiya, Faruwahi, Bam Rasia, Mayur dances, Rai dance, tribal dances, and many more. The audience was specially delighted to see the tribal folk dance by members of the Vantangiya community of Gorakhpur. In addition, the guests were warmly treated with dances from Awadhi and Uttarakhand. From Dharma Path to Ram Path, Janmabhoomi Path, at the airport, near Lata Chowk, and many other places.