

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Friday 09 February, 2024

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

UPA's policy mess & scams caused lost decade, says govt white paper

NEW DELHI: Government on Thursday tabled a white paper in Parliament to back up its charge of economic mismanagement under UPA by listing an entire array of what it called failures — from public finances to external sector and banks allowing multiple frauds, that led to India "losing a decade".

The paper flagged non-transparent auction of coal blocks and telecom spectrum, retrospective taxation, unsustainable demand stimulus (post 2008 global financial crisis), poorly targeted subsidies and reckless bank lending "with undertones of favouritism", as the defining features of UPA's "decade of governance (or its absence)" and "policy misadventures and scams". Govt threw down the gauntlet to Congress by scheduling a full-scale debate on Friday, in a clear indication of intent to highlight its economic man-



agement during the 2024 LS poll campaign. In contrast to UPA's performance, the Modi govt argued that it has taken a series of steps to fix the economy and initiated procedural and behavioural changes to make India the fastest growing major economy and the fifth largest in the world. The finance ministry document accused the UPA of bringing public finances to a "perilous state" with very high levels of fiscal deficit, which a committee headed by for-

mer finance secretary Vijay Kelkar pointed out was higher than what was shown. Based on an analysis of budget documents, the paper estimated fiscal deficit being understated by up to 1.8 percentage points due to special bonds being issued by Manmohan Singh govt, which were not clearly shown in the books. As a result of its "fiscal mismanagement", the UPA government's fiscal deficit ended up being far higher than it had expected, and it subsequently ended up borrowing 27% more

from the market than what it had budgeted for in 2011-12, it said. "While investors across the world sought ease of doing business, the UPA govt provided policy uncertainty and hostility," it said, adding that this forced several domestic investors to move overseas. The paper blamed a crisis of leadership in the regime and argued that UPA floundered the opportunity created by the Vajpayee government and the leadership abandoned the 1991 reforms.

FM counters opposition, says no cut in funds for farmers

NEW DELHI: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday rejected the opposition's claim that govt has "cut allocation" for farmers, poor and tribals in the 2024-25 Budget Estimate (BE), on a day the Rajya Sabha returned the Finance Bill 2024 and relevant appropriation bills to Lok Sabha, paving the way for passage of the 2024-25 Interim Budget. The House also returned the appropriation bills related to J&K. In her reply, the FM



asserted there is no reduction in budgetary allocation for flagship and welfare schemes, and allocation for capital expenditure has been increased. She said Centre has released more funds to Kerala and Tamil Nadu as per the 15th Finance Commission

norms in the past 10 years compared to UPA period. Earlier, Congress MP Randeep Surjewala countered govt's claim of its farmer welfare track record citing the NCRB data on the number of farmers and farm labourers taking their lives. He said while 1.5

lakh farmers and farm labourers died by suicide between 2014 and 2021, and in 2022 their number stood at 11,290. He also cited the govt's NSSO report which shows that farmers daily income was Rs 27 per day and the total debt on farmers was Rs 27,000 crore debt. Quoting agriculture ministry data, Surjewala said the ministry has surrendered Rs 1 lakh crore allocated to it in the past five years. "What type of govt is this?"

UBT neta shot dead on Facebook Live, body of killer, a bizman, also found

MUMBAI: In a shocking incident of firing in the midst of a Facebook Live session on Thursday evening, former Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator Abhishek Ghosalkar from Borivli-Dahisar was shot dead by Mauris Noronha, a local busi-

nessman who called himself a social worker and aspired to contest civic elections, in the latter's office in IC Colony in Borivli (West). Noronha, who fired five bullets at Ghosalkar, was then found dead and is believed to have shot

himself. Ghosalkar was rushed to Karuna Hospital in Borivli West and died after attempts by doctors to revive him failed. People close to Ghosalkar said Mauris and Abhishek had a history of disputes over

several issues, and tensions had been brewing over the past couple of years. Abhishek was the son of veteran Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Vinod Ghosalkar. The father-son duo have been known to hold court.

BJP's receipts in 2022-23 up by 23% to 2,361 crore

NEW DELHI: BJP's total receipts during 2022-23 rose by 23% to around Rs 2,361 crore, 54% of which came via electoral bonds, from Rs 1,917 crore in 2021-22. Its expenditure, meanwhile, surged by 59% to Rs 1,361 crore in 2022-23 from Rs 854 crore in the previous year.

As per BJP's annual audit report for 2022-23 made public by Election Commission on Thursday, electoral bonds brought in Rs 1,294 crore for the party, up 25% from Rs 1033.7 crore received in 2021-22. Other contributions, including donations from individuals, corporates and electoral trusts, totalled Rs 648 crore, down from Rs 721.7 crore in 2021-22. Receipts from Aajiwani Sahayog Nidhi rose to Rs 177.2 crore in 2022-23 from barely Rs 19.9 crore in 2021-22. Interest from banks totalled Rs 237.3 crore in 2022-23, way beyond the Rs 133.3 crore interest earned the previous year. On the expenditure side, 80% of the total spending in 2022-23 was on poll and general propaganda. Over Rs 1,092 crore was spent on this head, up from Rs 645.8 crore spent in 2021-22. This included Rs 844 crore spent on advertisement and publicity and Rs 132 crore on travel. In comparison, Congress's total receipts during 2022-23 fell to Rs 452 crore from Rs 541 crore in 2021-22, while its expenditure rose to Rs 467 crore from Rs 400 crore a year ago. Its contribution receipts via electoral bonds in 2022-23 were down to Rs 171 crore, making up 63% of its total donation receipts and 38% of its overall income, from Rs 236 crore in 2021-22. As per the audit reports for 2022-23 filed by other parties, CPM's receipts totalled Rs 141.6 crore.

Farmers' Parliament march halted, thousands face traffic heat

NOIDA: A moderate gathering of protesting farmers and a stringent police response to stop them from reaching Delhi brought traffic to a crawl or a standstill for much of Thursday on Noida Expressway and its connecting roads, with a combination of heavy barricading, diversions, road closures, border checks and a sit-in demonstration cascading to



create a day of commuting nightmare for thousands of people. At the heart of the gridlock was a 4km stretch from Mahamaya flyover to Noida Gate, affecting traffic for kilometres on both sides of the border. "It felt like I was marooned in a sea of cars," said Remya Singh, who was on her way to Delhi to pick up her son in the afternoon and was stuck for more

than two hours. In the afternoon and evening, the drive between Noida and Delhi took 3-4 hours. The effects of the Noida protest were also felt in central Delhi - which saw jams amid heavy police deployment after inputs from Delhi Police's special branch about "splinter groups of 5-10 farmers" trying to reach Parliament.

Centre, states unite to push for sub-classification of SC quota

NEW DELHI: The Centre and state govt on Wednesday set aside their differences to unanimously tell Supreme Court that sub-classification of Scheduled Caste communities would enable needy and weakest groups to get a bigger share of reservation and prevent those who bet-



tered their social standing from cornering the lion's share of the quota. Attorney general, solicitor general Tushar Mehta, sen-

ior advocate Kapil Sibal and states represented by senior advocates sought review of the SC five-judge bench's E V Chinniah judgment, which in 2004 had ruled that all SC communities which suffered ostracisation, discrimination and humiliation for centuries represented a homogeneous

class, incapable of being sub-categorised. The show of unanimity stood out not just due to the backdrop of partisan feuds but also because, until recently, the political class had appeared wary of acknowledging the reality of all Scheduled Castes not being similar.

Kejriwal, Mann & Farooq join Pinarayi protest in Delhi

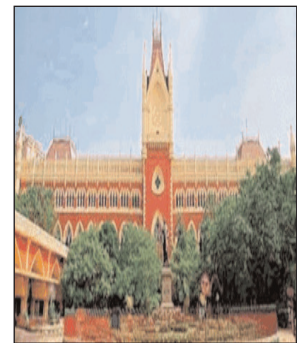
NEW DELHI: Amid murmurs that opposition's pre-poll alliance is tottering on the brink, a clutch of INDIA bloc leaders rallied around Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday as he led protests against the "crippling of democracy" and attack on India's federal structure by the Modi govt. Vijayan's

protest, which came on the heels of a similar protest by Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah a day earlier, saw Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann extend their support. Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin was represented by DMK leaders Tiruchi Siva and Palanivel Thiagarajan, aside

from National Conference patriarch Farooq Abdullah, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal, CPM chief Sitaram Yechury and CPI general secretary D Raja, among others. Siddaramaiah had alleged that the Union govt was unjust to Karnataka in devolution of taxes, giving the state less than its due.

Women getting pregnant in West Bengal jails, 196 babies born, HC told

KOLKATA: An amicus curiae of Calcutta HC Thursday sought to ban male staff of Bengal's correctional homes from entering women's enclosures, saying women prisoners were getting pregnant. The report by amicus Tapas Bhanja does not make it clear how the women got pregnant. It also does not specify the timeframe of these pregnancies.



As many as 196 births took place inside jails, which "thoroughly lack" medical infra-

structure, the report says. The court had ordered Bhanja to inspect the state's jails and submit a report on the conditions prevailing there. As per the order of the bench of chief justice T S Sivagna nam and justice Supratim Bhattacharya, a division bench will take up the matter on Monday. The report also seeks court's directive for pregnancy tests on all women before they are jailed and suggests monitoring by chief judicial magistrates. In his report Bhanja states he found 15 children - 10 male and five female - inside Women Correctional Home at Alipore.

Cabinet OKs spectrum sale, fixes reserve price at Rs 96,000 crore

NEW DELHI: As digital consumption grows at a breakneck speed across the country, govt on Thursday approved the sale of spectrum across eight frequencies with a reserve price of Rs 96,318 crore. The cabinet also decided to allot spectrum for safety of railway and metro passengers, apart from re-farming of the airwaves for better utilisation of the natural resource. To improve consumer mobile services, govt has been looking to make spectrum auctions an annual feature as telecom companies expand their high-speed 5G services across metros and other parts of the country. Spectrum auctions will be held across the frequencies of 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz, and 26 GHz.

RBI holds repo 6th time in row at 6.5%

MUMBAI: RBI on Thursday kept rates on hold for the sixth successive time in line with expectations but surprised markets by projecting 7% growth for 2024-25 as against 6.7% earlier. RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said the transmission of the 250-basis-point increase in the policy rate between May 2022 and Feb 2023 was not complete. While half of bank loans, including home loans, are linked to the repo rate, the other half are linked to the cost of deposits or are fixed and yet to fully reflect the market rates. RBI projected 4.5% inflation for FY25, and trimmed price forecasts for the first and third quarters of the next financial year. In his monetary policy statement, Das said

that the battle against inflation was far from over. "The last mile of disinflation is always the most challenging and that has to be kept in mind," he said. Das said that RBI would persist in maintaining a scarcity of money to control prices. The monetary policy committee voted with a majority of 5:1 to keep the repo rate (at which RBI lends to banks) unchanged at 6.5%. The other rates at which RBI lends to banks - the standing deposit facility and the marginal standing facility - remain at 6.25% and 6.75%, respectively. The MPC also decided by a majority of 5 out of 6 members to remain focused on withdrawing accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns.

Perform transplant first, charge patient later, panel tells hospital

MUMBAI: Patients awaiting an organ transplant for years often turn down the chance when a donor finally becomes available, all because of insufficient funds on the very day the organ becomes available. Now for the first time, the Zonal Transplant Coordination Committee (ZTCC), which distributes cadaver organs, has persuaded Jaslok Hospital, Pedder Road, to proceed with the kidney transplantation of a 12-year-old boy, urging it to perform the surgery first and raise the funds from various sources later. The young recipient, the son of a mechanic who was not prepared with the requisite funds, would have been passed up for another patient on the wait-list if not for the ZTCC intervention. The ZTCC now intends to encourage more hospitals to adopt a similar approach, ensuring that individu-



als in need of organs are not overlooked solely due to financial constraints. The cost of a transplant can range from Rs 7 lakh to Rs 30 lakh, depending on the organ involved and the centre where the surgery is being performed. "This issue is prevalent nationwide, where patients frequently find themselves unprepared financially on the day when an organ becomes suddenly available," S K Mathur, president, ZTCC, said. In situations where funds are anticipated from trusts or government schemes, hospitals can be confident that the necessary finances will eventually materialise. In the state, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jan

Arogya Yojana (MJP-JAY) pays Rs 2.5 lakh for kidney transplants. The new version of scheme will increase it to Rs 4 lakh. The CM's Relief Fund also supports transplant patients. Mathur said Jaslok Hospital cooperated in the case of the 12-year-old boy, Aditya Chaudhary, and made the surgery possible. Recipients may face wait times ranging from months to eight or nine years and often receive short notice, sometimes just hours, to come for the transplant once an organ becomes available. Chaudhary, who had been waiting for a kidney for months, suddenly found a rare paediatric donor last week.

ED attached two immovable assets worth over Rs 26.1 crore

ED on it has attached two immovable assets worth over Rs 26.1 crore of JD(U) MLC Radha Charan Sah, as part of its probe of money laundering linked to in alleged illegal sand mining in the state, reports Madan Kumar. The case stems from 19 FIRs filed by Bihar police under various IPC sections. "Probe showed illegal sale of sand and its mining was controlled by a syndicate," it said. Sah, being a syndicate member, generated huge proceeds of crime through Broadsons... which he used to acquire the properties. The case stems from a total of 19 FIRs regis-



tered by state police under various IPC sections and the Bihar Mineral (Concession, Prevention of Illegal Mining, Transportation and Storage) Rules, 2019 against Broadsons Commodities Pvt Ltd and others.

HC refuses to quash '22 case, Sidda fined 10k

BENGALURU: In a major setback for Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, Karnataka high court on Tuesday refused to quash proceedings against him and his senior cabinet colleagues Ramalinga Reddy and MB Patil, Randeep Surjewala,



Congress general secretary in charge of Karnataka, and KPCC

working president Saleem Ahmed in a case of unlawful assembly registered against them. HC also slapped Rs 10,000 fine each. The case relates to a protest march in the city that Congress functionaries had participated in on Aug 14, 2022.

CAPSULES

ED officials knocked on the doors of govt officials and office-bearers of zila parishads and panchayats

KOLKATA: ED officials knocked on the doors of govt officials and office-bearers of zila parishads and panchayats in four districts of Bengal on Tuesday and seized what it said were incriminating documents linking some of them to anomalies in MGNREGS payments and issuance of fake job cards. The coordinated search of homes across six locations included an embarrassing moment for the agency when a team deputed to search the premises of a Hooghly panchayat functionary identified as Sandip Sadhukhan mistakenly raided the Chinsurah home of a namesake. CM Mamata Banerjee's TMC questioned the "pre-poll ED raids", saying it was too much of a coincidence that the crack-down followed opposition leader Suvendu Adhikari's "action-reaction" remark after meeting Union home minister Amit Shah and finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Odisha minor tried as adult, gets 20 yrs jail

BHUBANESHWAR: An Odisha children's court on Tuesday sentenced a 17-year-old minor to 20 years of jail after trying him as an adult under the amended Juvenile Justice Act of 2015 for alleged rape and murder of a five-year-old in Nayagarh district in 2020, re.



This is the first instance in Odisha of a minor being tried and found guilty under the amended law. The 2015 amendment empowers juvenile justice boards to treat as adults those minors who are accused of heinous crimes. It came about after the 2012 Nirbhaya case where one of the suspects was a juvenile and

escaped the gallows. In Odisha, the teenager was a neighbour of the deceased and his crime had triggered outrage across the state. The child went missing while playing outside her house on July 14, 2020. Her skeletal remains were found near a pond 500 metres from her home nine days later. As the death mystery deep-

ened a nd Nayagarh police failed to unravel the truth, her parents attempted self-immolation outside the assembly in November that year, drawing the govt's attention. Four days later, the govt constituted an (SIT) led by an ADG, Arun Bothra, to probe the case under the supervision of the Orissa high court. The

minor was detained in December 2020.

"We placed adequate evidence, backed by scientific and forensic investigations, against the accused. The murder motive was sexual assault. We had found semen stains on the girl's dress," an SIT officer said. According to public prosecutor Chittaranjan Kanungo, 31 witnesses were examined during the trial. "Had the accused not been a minor, he would have been sentenced to life imprisonment or capital punishment," Kanungo said. Defence lawyer Bijay Mishra said he would challenge the verdict in the high court.

HC confirms bail granted to Kochhar couple last Jan

Mumbai: Bombay high court on Tuesday confirmed an interim bail granted last Jan to Chanda Kochhar, former CEO and MD of ICICI Bank, and her businessman husband Deepak Kochhar. Last Jan, in a major interim relief to the couple, HC had held as "unacceptable" their Dec 23, 2022, arrest by Central Bureau of Investigation in an alleged corruption case over high value loans, and had directed their release on cash bail of Rs 1 lakh each. The final reasoned order pronounced on Tuesday by a division



bench of Justices Anuja Prabhudessai and NR Borkar will be made available later. Stating that the grounds for arrest flouted criminal procedural law, an HC bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj Chavan had last Jan, in the interim relief to the couple, said:

"Courts have time and again reiterated the role of courts in protecting personal liberty and ensuring that investigations are not used as a tool of harassment." CBI's reasons for arrest are "casual, mechanical, perfunctory, clearly without application of mind," the interim order had

said. CBI arrested the Kochhars based on a Jan 2019 FIR about alleged offences of corruption, cheating and causing loss to ICICI Bank by sanctioning Rs 3,200 crore loans to the Videocon group when she was at the helm. Last month, Justice Prabhudessai-led bench had closed for orders the petition filed by the Kochhars for quashing of their arrest. The Kochhars, represented by senior counsel Amit Desai, argued that the arrest was illegal as the offences alleged were punishable by jail time of less than 7 years.

Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra enters Odisha

BIRMITPUR: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra entered Odisha on Tuesday after Jharkhand. The Yatra was accorded with a grand welcome in Biramitrapur, a small industrial town in Sundergarh district. On this occasion, Jharkhand Congress President Rajesh Thakur handed over the national flag to Odisha Congress President Sarat Patnaik. Biramitrapur was decked up with banners, cut-outs and hoardings of Gandhi before the yatra entered the town. "We have taken up the flag of justice to fight injustice. Together we have decided that we will keep moving forward until we get our right to justice. Many thanks to the people of Odisha for the enthusiastic welcome," the Bharat Jodo Nyay



Yatra's handle posted on X. Although the Biramitrapur assembly seat is now represented by the BJP, it had earlier elected Congress and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha candidates. The Yatra will be in Sundergarh district, including Rourkela City, Congress General Secretary of Communication Jairam Ramesh said. "Today the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra bid goodbye to Phase I of its Jharkhand leg. We will return to the State for Phase II on 14th

and 15th February. We'll be setting up camp in Rampal, Odisha tonight. Tomorrow, the Yatra will be in Sundargarh district, including Rourkela City, land of historic locations associated with India's industrialisation that began in the 1950s," he said. He further said that on February 8, the Yatra will go through Jharsuguda district before entering Chhattisgarh and setting up camp in Darramuda, Raigarh District.

Uncle Sam expects the maximum increase in visitors from India over the next four years

NEW DELHI: Uncle Sam expects the maximum increase in visitors (over pre-Covid 2019 levels) from India over the next four years. The US commerce department Monday released its official forecast of international visitation to the country — 7.7 crore in 2024, up 15.4% 2023, and reaching 8.5 crore in 2025, surpassing pre-pandemic 2019 visitation of 7.9 crore. While the average overall visitation from all foreign countries is expected to be 115% of 2019 levels in 2027, the increase for India is the highest among the top 20 source countries at 126% over 2019 levels. The forecast for 2023-2025 shows India



reaching the highest share of 2019 levels for overseas countries (that does not include Canada and Mexico which share a land border with the US). US commerce department's International Trade Administration (ITA) data shows 14.7 lakh Indian visited the country in 2019. This number then fell to 3.4 lakh in 2020 and then marginally rose to 4.3 lakh in 2021 before reaching 12.5 lakh in 2022 (actual numbers). While the actual number for 2023 are awaited, ITA

forecast shows Indian visitors touching 14.2 lakh, 15.6 lakh, 16.3 lakh, 17.3 lakh and 18.6 lakh in 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026 and 2027, respectively. In comparison with 2019 visitation, the number of expected visitors from India in 2027 is the highest at 126%. The US Embassy in India in 2023 had processed the highest ever number of visa applications in a year at 14 lakh.

And the increased staffing along with other innovative means used to cut the

backlog has led visitor visa appointment wait times here dropping by 75% — from a 2022 high of an average of 1,000 days to 250 days last year, the US embassy in New Delhi had recently said in a statement.

"Demand across all visa classes was unprecedented, with a 60% increase in applications compared to 2022. Indians now represent one out of every 10 US visa applicants around the world.

Visitor visas (B1/B2) have rebounded to represent the second highest number of applications in the US mission's history — over 700,000," the embassy statement had said.

Suspicious boat found near Mumbai coast, police launch probe

MUMBAI: Mumbai police have launched a probe after a fishing boat was suspiciously found roaming near the city's coast area on Tuesday, officials said. According to police, a suspicious boat named "Abdullah Sharif" was found roaming near the Gateway of India. The boat had three people on board, all of them hailing from Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari, and they are being questioned. However, for now, nothing suspicious has been found from the suspects. "The boat has arrived from Kuwait and has been impounded. The three people are being questioned. Colaba Police is present at the spot," officials said. Further investigation is underway, they added.

Lekhi criticized the audience in Kerala for not chanting the slogan "Bharat Mata Ki Jai"



NEW DELHI: Union minister Meenakshi Lekhi criticized a section of the audience in Kerala for not chanting the slogan "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" despite repeated requests. Speaking at a youth conclave in Kozhikode, Kerala, the BJP leader concluded her speech by saying "Bharat Mata Ki Jai," further asking the audience to repeat it. As the request was met with silence from the crowd, Lekhi retorted, "Is Bharat

only my mother or your mother as well? Tell me... Tell me... Is there any doubt? No doubt?" Emphasizing the need to express 'enthusiasm' for the nation, Lekhi repeated the slogan, noting that the response from the left side was poor. Asking a woman from the audience 'in a yellow dress' to stand up, the minister said, "I am going to ask you a straight question. Is Bharat not your mother? Why this attitude?"

Lekhi chanted "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" once again, but the woman remained standing without participating. "I think you should leave the house," she said.

Expressing disappointment, the minister said that individuals who do not take pride in their nation or feel embarrassed to talk about India need not be part of the youth conclave. The youth conclave was organized by certain right-wing groups.

CII strongly backed the concept of 'one nation, one election'

NEW DELHI: The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) strongly backed the concept of 'one nation, one election' in its presentation given to the high-level committee, headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind, in Delhi on Saturday. A CII delegation, comprising its president R Dinesh, his successor Sanjiv Puri and director general Chandrajit Banerjee, during the presentation told President Kovind that though synchronised elections to local bodies, state and parliament may be a challenge, but it would lead to saving of cost and benefit to the economy.



It impressed upon the panel that a nation always in election mode affects infrastructure and capital expenditure related projects due to delays in project implementation for lack of approvals and clearances during the model code of conduct. Elections also put constraints on govt staff capacity during this period.

It further said that the

private sector is reluctant to invest months before and after the elections. "So is the case for public investment which affects economic activity, overall development and jobs and livelihoods," it added. Simultaneous elections will reduce the delays and we believe the costs of delay by about half of what it is currently, CII said.

Bhujbal ups ante on quota, says quit Shinde govt on Nov 16

NASHIK: Upping the ante against state govt over Maratha reservation, cabinet minister and NCP (Ajit Pawar) MLA Chhagan Bhujbal on Saturday claimed he had resigned from the ministry on Nov 16 last year, a day before he started addressing OBC

rallies from Jalna district. Addressing a rally in Ahmednagar, the first one since state govt came out with the draft on Maratha quota, Bhujbal said, "For my detractors, both within and outside the govt, who are demanding my

resignation, I want to tell them that I handed over my resignation to CM Shinde last year." He claimed that deputy CMs Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar knew about his decision, but he kept silent "since all suggested I don't speak about it".

Crime branch officials visited the residence of Delhi minister Atishi

NEW DELHI: Crime branch officials visited the residence of Delhi minister Atishi on to deliver a notice related to accusations that the BJP was attempting to lure Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs. According to sources, Atishi was not at home during the visit. Nevertheless, the minister instructed her office staff to accept the notice, as per AAP sources. A senior officer from the Delhi police crime branch stated, "The team will



make another attempt to serve the notice to Atishi. She was not present at her residence this morning." This development follows a notice served by crime branch officials to Delhi chief minister Arvind

Kejriwal the previous day, asking for a response within three days regarding his claims that the BJP tried to attract seven AAP MLAs. Later in the day, Kejriwal and Atishi are scheduled to lay the foundation

stones of two schools in Rohini.

On January 27, both Kejriwal and Atishi alleged that the BJP was attempting to lure AAP MLAs with offers of Rs 25 crore each and a ticket to contest in the upcoming assembly polls, aiming to overthrow the AAP government. The BJP dismissed these allegations as "false" and "baseless," challenging the chief minister to provide evidence supporting his claims.

Offenders must pay for public property damage to get bail

NEW DELHI: Law Commission on Friday recommended to the government amendments to existing laws that aim to prevent frequent blockades of national highways or public spaces and impose heavy penalties, equivalent to market value of damages caused to public/private properties, on any individual or organisation responsible for such acts. Compelling offenders to deposit the estimated value of the public property damaged by them as a condition for getting bail will work as



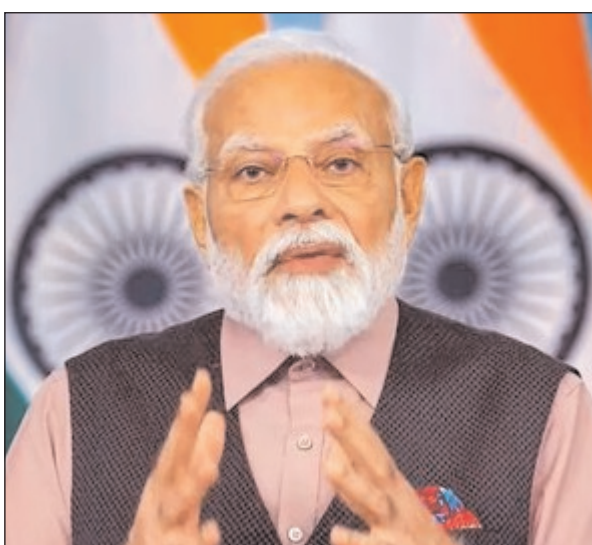
a deterrent against such acts, the Law Commission said. The law panel's report is significant, particularly in view of the repeated blockades in the national capital caused by opposition parties and rights groups calling for frequent

protests. Taking cognisance of such blockades at regular intervals, causing damages to public/private properties and putting the public at inconvenience, the law commission has recommended amendments in laws while holding responsible

office bearers of such organisation "deemed to be guilty of the offence of abetment of an offence" punishable with penalty. "Fine shall mean and include the amount which shall be equivalent to the market value of the public property damaged or where the value of the property damaged is not capable of being assessed in terms of money, such amount as the court may fix taking into account the facts and circumstances of the case," the law panel noted.

Delighted to meet religious leaders in Parliament, says PM

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed delight at meeting religious leaders from various communities in Parliament on Monday. In a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, PM Modi said, "Delighted to meet a delegation of religious leaders in Parliament today. I thank them for their kind words on the development trajectory of our nation." PM Modi also posted multiple photographs with the religious leaders on X.



A delegation of 24 religious leaders under the aegis of Indian Minorities Foundation met PM Modi and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar in the new parliament. They said that they wanted to send out the message

of interfaith unity in India to the outside world. The delegation, representing Sikh, Jain, Christian and Parsi communities, included chief Imam of All India Imam Organization, Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasi and founder president of Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Bhikkhu Sanghasena. Ilyasi said "Paigaam-e-mohabbat hai, paigaam desh hai." He praised the leadership of PM Modi and said that the country is moving closer to becoming a 'Vishwaguru' (world leader) once again.

"I spend almost my entire day around mortuaries and crematoriums"



NEW DELHI: "I was someone who ran away at the sight of a cockroach. If someone died nearby, I was afraid to pass by that house for days. Yet today, I spend almost my entire day around mortuaries and crematoriums performing the last rites for unclaimed bodies," says Pooja Sharma. Sharma, 26, does spend a lot of time now with the dead. Giving them a dignified farewell is an obsession with her. After she had to step in the absence of other males in the family at her murdered brother's last rites, the thought of what happened to those who had no family or kin for the final ritual gnawed at her. She took up the mission and claims that since 2022 she has provided 4,000 unclaimed bodies a proper goodbye. "Soon after my mother's death in 2022 due to illness, my elder brother was killed in a brawl in our area. My father could not bear the shock and went into a coma.

5-month-old branded with hot iron, dies

BHOPAL: In what could be a fifth such case within two months in Madhya Pradesh, a five-month-old infant who was allegedly branded with hot iron in a superstitious belief to cure pneumonia, died in Shahdol district. Health officials are however saying that it could not be conclusively said whether the infant was branded or not as there were three marks on the child's abdomen but were unlike in the other cases, the infant who was suffering with pneumonia also developed septicaemia. The deceased identified as Hrishabh Kol, son of Ramdas Kol resident of Pathra village was admitted to district hospital on Monday and later referred to medical college, where he died during treatment late on Wednesday. "Doctors are not able to conclude whether the kid was branded or not as the marks on abdomen are confusing. The toddler was suffering from pneumonia and had developed septicaemia. The malpractice of branding infants with hot iron is prevalent in the region and several measures to create awareness are being taken," chief medical and health officer, Shahdol, Dr AK Lal told.

BJP's Gaikwad vs Sena's Gaikwad: Festering conflict comes to a boil

KALYAN: A bitter political feud has been festering in Kalyan between BJP MLA Ganpat Gaikwad and Shiv Sena Kalyan unit chief Mahesh Gaikwad for the past few years. They have also been locked in a dispute over land in the village that both hail from, which is within the KDMC limits.



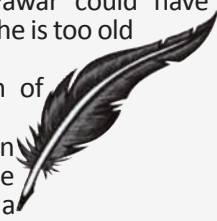
BJP sources said senior leaders of the Sena-BJP alliance had also given instructions to the two leaders not to target each other, but the attempt to control the situation failed. Local leaders of both BJP and Sena held senior leaders of the two parties responsible for Friday night's incident, saying they had not taken the matter seriously enough and failed to settle the dispute. Sources said BJP's Kalyan district president Nana Suryavanshi had once demanded intervention of CM Eknath Shinde and Dy CM Devendra Fadnis to stop the fight. Mahesh Gaikwad is known to be close to the CM's son Shrikant Shinde, who is Kalyan MP. Sources said Ganpat Gaikwad and other BJP leaders had on several occasions complained about Mahesh Gaikwad to senior leaders but in vain. According to those in the know of developments in Kalyan, both the Gaikwads were in the cable business before their entry into politics. So their fight pre-dates their jump into the political arena.

Editorial

I.N.D.I. Alliance is falling apart

Bharat has seen more than 60 coalition governments since 1967, when the first non-Congress government in Uttar Pradesh was formed by the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal alliance with Charan Singh as the chief minister. The first experiment lasted a little over 10 months. Coalitions emerged and have existed in India mainly to keep a strong party or formation out of power. They come up when a political force becomes very strong. Earlier, coalitions were formed against the Congress, now parties come together against the BJP. Quite often, complete ideological strangers have come together to pull the plate from under a bigger dog. In 1977, Bharatiya Jana Sangh and Leftist-socialist forces came together as part of the Morarji Desai government to defeat the Congress after the Emergency. In 1989, the Left and the BJP came together to support the VP Singh government to keep the Congress out. In 2019, the Shiv Sena betrayed the mandate it got going into the elections with the BJP as partner and formed the Maha Vikas Aghadi government with the party's bitter ideological opponents, the Congress and the NCP. FirstUp: Budget Session in Parliament, ED to question Hemant Soren... News today On an average, coalition governments in India have lasted for 26 months. West Bengal's Left Front regime was a glaring exception. It was the longest serving coalition government which ruled for 34 years between 1977 and 2011. The 9-10 parties were tethered by a convergent Communist-socialist line, and they ruled without the anxiety of having to keep a bigger enemy out. It ruled with such absolute power that for long, the enemy was almost nonexistent. Now, let us look at what is happening to the Opposition I.N.D.I. Alliance. Nitish Kumar has ditched it and gone with the BJP, BRS has deserted it too, Mamata Banerjee has launched a vicious attack on Rahul Gandhi and Congress over the Bharat Jodo Yatra entering Bengal without her knowledge, Udhayanidhi tirade against Sanatan Dharma has made DMK's non-South partners squirm, Akhilesh Yadav is fuming at the slights from Congress leaders like Kamal Nath, more than half of NCP is with NDA while the patriarch Sharad Pawar and his daughter Supriya Sule are nominally with the Opposition, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren has been arrested for corruption, Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal may follow him soon, and RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav reluctantly prepares to cool his heels for some more months in the slammer. The alliance is in royal disarray, if not dead already. There are broadly five reasons for this. First, the Congress is the elephant in the room. It still thinks it is bigger than what it currently is, and certainly weightier than others. Both could be misplaced, and 2024 general election results might be the only, albeit unpleasant, way the party rightsizes itself in its own estimation. Second, the Congress's success could come at the cost of regional parties. Its allies are already alarmed by its success in Karnataka and Telangana feel their space is shrinking or could be cannibalised by the Congress later. Third, there are too many 'secular' parties scrambling for the '20 per cent' minority pie. Mamata has spelt it out in as many words, accusing the Congress of trying to steal her Muslim votes. Fourth, the Congress does not have enough heft to carry an ideological hotchpotch. The BJP may get away with breaking a section of the NCP because its otherwise robust Hindutva subsumes the odd minority-leaning ally. The Congress cannot afford either a Shiv Sena trying to ride the Ram wave or a DMK continuously humiliating Hindus. And fifth, the I.N.D.I. Alliance does not have a deft backroom organiser like Harkishan Singh Surjeet of the '80s and '90s who brought disparate forces together. Pawar could have played that kind of a role, but he is too old and unwell.

, besides having the burden of succession to worry about. The Congress's communication department, led by an irascible Jairam Ramesh, cannot forge a coherent coalition between the party's goal and its messaging, forget taking allies along.



Temple entry ban non-Hindus but non-respectful

Before the pandemic skewed foreign tourist inflows, India got around 11 million annually, including desis holding other passports. But the number of Indians who visited pilgrimage places within the country in 2022 stood at a whopping 1.43 billion, which means they travelled to several such destination in a year, accounting for the largest segment of domestic tourism. And according to Statista, this faith-based tourism in India generated US\$902 million in 2022. So, in addition to local Hindus frequenting nearby temples, the chances are that tourists visiting them from elsewhere in India are mostly of the same faith too. And though customs and practices do differ from place to place and even temple to temple, there are some universally followed principles. The high court was right to point out that reasonable restrictions for conduct to ensure respect are more conducive to peaceful inter-community relations than a free-for-all.

As the case in question arose amid reports of "non-Hindus" using a certain Tamil Nadu temple's premises as picnic spots—and eating non-vegetarian food there—rather than being mindful of the sanctity of the place, the court's caution is timely. Other incidents of "non-Hindus" bringing their "holy book" to temples and



attempting to conduct their religious practices within its precincts were also mentioned in the court's judgment and probably prompted the final order. In fact, the High Court aptly pointed out that if a non-Hindu who declines to follow customs is allowed inside the temple, it would affect the sentiments of the large number of Hindus there who practice the faith. And that in turn would affect the religious right of those Hindus guaranteed under the Constitution. The 'secular' Tamil Nadu government was also reminded that its HR & CE Department is mandated to protect the Hindu religion, its temples, customs and practices. The plea that "Non-Hindus not allowed" boards hurt the religious sentiments of those who would like to visit the temple did not stand to reason either. Given that exceptions will be made for those who sign an undertaking, the court rightly averred that if a non-Hindu is denied entry

because he does not have faith and declines to follow customs, "there is no question of hurting his sentiment." If there is no reverence for the deity, denial will hurt egos, not sentiments. Non-Muslims are not allowed inside Mecca much less the Kaaba itself. There has been no protest about hurt sentiments on that count from visitors to Saudi Arabia who are not of the Islamic faith. Many Orthodox churches do not allow lay people, especially women, into the sanctum sanctorum, the equivalent of the garbha griha of temples. While many formerly prohibited places of Abrahamic faiths are now accessible, respect is a reasonable precondition for entry. Ignorant Indians could, of course, presume important Hindu temples, especially in south India, are actually picnic spots as these are managed by respective state governments by virtue of controlling their endowments or funds

through a series of legislations. Some state governments are deliberately lax about ensuring the decorum of the temples under their charge as the primary interest is controlling the use of the money collected in the hundi, so picnics are possible. Curiously, government control of places of worship applies only to temples, not places of worship of any other religion, no matter how prominent and wealthy those may be. Corruption is also rife among government employees controlling the temples. How states and centre are involved in religious matters—financial administration of temples cannot be wholly secular—given the separation of powers principle is strange too. That, however, is a separate debate. Why anyone would think that a functioning temple is an appropriate place for a picnic is hard to understand, although the Church of England has resorted to even parties inside some cathedrals in the hope that people drawn there by the food, alcohol and pop music would be captivated enough to come back to the Church, literally and figuratively. Nothing of the sort happened, and those who attended such parties did not even end up thinking more positively about religion. Tourists are not allowed to whatever they please within

functioning mosques. Managements of Sikh gurdwaras around the world insist and ensure that all those who enter the premises cover their heads, male or female irrespective of faith—or even lack of it—and follow customs. No exceptions are allowed but nor has anyone protested against this "imposition". No one is "caught" picnicking in gurdwaras and mosques with hampers of forbidden food items either.

That a high court had to actually state that temples are not "picnic spots" speaks volumes about the attitude of the few who are unwilling to accept this simple fact without judicial muscle-flexing. Being mindful of devotees' sentiments in any place of worship should be natural. The current issue is not about barring non-Hindus (as those of all faiths can still enter temples after giving an undertaking to follow customs) but the disrespectful. **Earlier** this month the Madras High Court directed the state government's Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) department to install boards in Palani Dhandayuthapani Swamy Temple (and all other Hindu temples), stating that non-Hindus are not permitted beyond the Kodimaram (flagstaff).

Gyanvapi: Truth, reconciliation and the way forward

Recently, the pristine land of Ayodhya saw the Pran Pratishtha ceremony and the returning of Ram Lalla to the temple built at the historical site. While the event was rightfully celebrated by all, irrespective of faith and politics, it also led to many sharing the Preamble to the Indian Constitution on social media as a mark of protest to the 'injustice' committed on the Indian soil. The possible connotations ranged from 'India subverting its Constitution' to 'a nation polarised by communalism' against a particular section of the society. This needs to be understood that neither the Preamble nor the Constitution exists in a vacuum, the progressive values embedded in the Constitution are themselves a culmination of

thousands of years old tradition of learning and re-learning. The laws and the Constitution are meant for the people and not the vice versa. The truth and reconciliation within any society should always be supreme. The Gyanvapi Mosque-Kashi Vishwanath temple issue is another instance where we, as a society, need to move towards better sense and better communal harmony. In a pivotal development in the legal dispute over Varanasi's Gyanvapi Masjid, a district court has granted permission for members of a family of priests to offer prayers in one of the cellars within the mosque complex. This particular cellar, known as Vyasji ka Tehkhana, was unsealed last night, and

a puja ceremony took place around 3 am. The Gyanvapi mosque, constructed in the 17th century, features four cellars, with 'Vyas ji ka Tehkhana' being one of them. Situated in the southern area of the mosque's fortified complex, it stands opposite a statue of the Nandi bull within the adjacent Kashi Vishwanath temple premises. The cellar, measuring about 7 feet in height and covering an area of 40 square feet, allegedly contains idols that were worshipped before its sealing in 1993, as claimed by petitioner Shailendra Pathak Vyas. The Muslim side refuted this assertion in court, stating that the petitioner failed to provide evidence of prayers being conducted there and denying the presence of

Interim Budget 2024 provides an outlook for Vikisit Bharat 2047

The interim budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is an important validation of the need for fiscal prudence and discipline, even as India gets increasingly ambitious with its developmental targets. It follows the same set of rules that have worked in the past: Enhanced Capex spending and an invigorated renewable energy push with focused impetus on youth, women, the poor, and farmers. The budget doesn't try too hard; rather, it tends to keep things consistent and balanced while exuding confidence and clarity. Each group in society has its own wishes and hopes for something specific out of the budget. The budget has stood up to the expectations of all groups and taken care not to disappoint anybody.

The Middle Class and Taxpayers

This budget shows the path to transform and make the Indian economy stronger, and the middle class and taxpayers are important pillars of the economy. In the Interim Budget 2024, the Indian government has made significant announcements across various sectors. For housing, the plans include the construction of 2 crore additional houses under the PM Awas Yojana (Gramin) in the next 5 years. In an

effort to empower the middle class and provide them with housing security, a new scheme is set to be introduced to assist the middle-class people who are residing in rented houses, slums, chawls, and unauthorised colonies in fulfilling their dream of owning a home. This initiative aims to provide support and opportunities for individuals in these diverse living situations to either purchase or construct their own houses, fostering increased accessibility to homeownership within the middle-class demographic.

In a significant move to provide relief to taxpayers, the government announced the withdrawal of old, minor, non-verified, non-reconciled, or disputed outstanding Direct Tax demands. This initiative covers amounts up to ₹25,000 for the period up to FY 2009-10 and up to ₹10,000 for financial years 2010-11 to 2014-15. This decision is expected to benefit approximately 1 crore taxpayers, fostering both ease of living and ease of doing business. By alleviating the burden of these relatively small tax demands, the government aims to simplify the tax system, making it more convenient for individuals and businesses and promoting a conducive environment for economic

Empowerment of Annadatas and Sabka Vikas

This government has always tried to focus on Yuva, Gareeb, Kisan, and Mahila. Promoting farmer interest, the budget talks about promoting private and public investment in post-harvest activities, including aggregation, modern storage, efficient supply chains, primary and secondary processing, and marketing and branding. Nano-DAP (fertiliser) on various crops will be expanded in all agroclimatic zones. A comprehensive programme for supporting dairy farmers will be formulated. Apart from this, expanding on the initiative introduced in 2022, the government is planning a strategy to attain sufficiency (Atmanirbharta) in oil seeds like mustard, groundnut, sesame, soybean, and sunflower. This comprehensive plan involves conducting research to develop high-yielding seed varieties, promoting the widespread adoption of modern farming techniques, establishing strong market linkages, ensuring effective procurement, adding value to the products, and providing crop insurance. By addressing these key aspects, the government aims to strengthen the oilseed sector.

China and a challenge to India's soft power diplomacy

The Maldives' overture towards China for a new identity seems like a miscalculated hara-kiri it has inflicted upon itself. The move, refusing support from India and seeking the same from China, undermines its double-fronted foreign policy concerning India. India needs to help the country correct its miscalculations in geopolitics. The world should consider two clear aspects in the Maldivian moves: First, it is possible that, like Pakistan, it will procure weapons from China for potential use against India, ostensibly to reduce the Indian "influ-

ence" it complains about. Second, it may evolve into a base for transnational terrorism, similar to Pakistan, potentially reinforcing Chinese anti-India rhetoric. Maldives has already obtained military drones from Turkiye, citing the need to monitor its coastal skies. The next destination for the Maldivian president is likely to be Pakistan. By behaving in this manner, Maldives aligns with the Chinese structural realist plan, which aims to encircle India in the Indian hinterland. Simultaneously, it boosts the morale of Pakistani terrorists, currently invisible on

the scene. Although Pakistan is now off the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list, with India's consent, it may adopt a low-profile policy for some time, apart from occasional anti-India rhetoric. **Aware of Chinese spy vessel** Will be extremely detrimental: Maldives opposition parties warn President Muizzu over his 'anti-India' stance. Historically, India has consistently supported Maldives in various aspects, from national development to security and economy. India has provided assistance ranging from daily necessities to education, security, and

healthcare, including the supply of COVID-19 vaccines. Despite India's significant soft power contributions, the recent shift in Maldivian preferences towards communal alliances is evident. India has always nurtured a symbiotic relationship with the Maldives for economic development and progress. India has never dominated but worked collaboratively, offering technological know-how and training personnel instead of imposing loans. India prioritises participatory exchanges over military-shadowed soft power tools, fostering.

BSV collaborates with FOGSI for Raising the Importance of Spreading Health Tips Through Academic (RISHTA) initiatives 2024.

GURUGRAM : Bharat Serums and Vaccines Limited (BSV) a leading biopharmaceutical company in India, has collaborated with the Study on Female Breast Committee, Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI) to increase awareness towards breastfeeding and post-partum care through the RISHTA initiative 2024. The RISHTA initiative endeavours to foster a conducive and supportive ecosystem for breastfeeding by educating the paramedics on the health benefits of breastfeeding, while taking care of the emotional and mental well-being of the new mothers. RISHTA 2024 focuses on two formats of training: One program focuses on educating medical practitioners through "Train the Trainer" program and will run



as a pilot in six cities in its first phase. These sessions will be taken by experienced gynaecologists and the cities covered include New Delhi, Bareilly, Patna, Lucknow, Faridabad and Dehradun. The second program covers the Online Training for paramedics on techniques for breastfeeding and will be carried out in vernacular languages over seven webinars. Dr Jaideep Tank, President, FOGSI points out, "In line with FOGSI's strategy to enhance the quality of intrapartum and newborn care, we have laid a strong

emphasis on the continuous training and skill development of healthcare professionals. With RISHTA 2024, we are glad to collaborate with BSV, a leading women's healthcare company, to provide continuous education and keep healthcare providers updated with the latest advancements and best practices for delivering superior newborn care. This initiative is a clear reflection of our commitment towards advancing maternal and neonatal health through excellence in medical education and safe motherhood practices.

Jio-bp launches "You-Deserve-More" campaign

Panipat / Hisar: Jio-bp (the operating brand of Reliance BP Mobility Limited, fuel and retailing joint venture of Reliance Industries and bp), a leading mobility solution provider, today launched their You-Deserve-More campaign showcasing their unique customer propositions to elevate India's fuelling experience.

Marching through the Amrit Kaal towards the 100th anniversary of Independence, India will continue to remain the bright spot for global energy. Offering "More" to India, the You-Deserve-More (YDM) campaign highlights the



unique customer propositions on offer from Jio-bp, focusing on three pillars of performance, service, and cutting-edge technology. The YDM campaign touches upon diesel delivering up to 4.3% higher mileage and petrol that keeps engines up to 10X cleaner through internationally developed bespoke 'ACTIVE' technology at

no extra cost along with a rapidly growing Jio-bp pulse EV charging point network. Also highlighted is the 24x7 shop for snacks, confectionery and travel need items, along with signature coffee under an international on-the-move brand Wild Bean Café, amongst other propositions at the country-wide network of Jio-bp Mobility Stations. In line with their vision of reimagining mobility for the country with low carbon solutions, Jio-bp also retails a bouquet of energy offerings including compressed biogas, ethanol based E20 petrol, and EV battery charging and swapping.

Dollar slips, Fed policy path on interest rates in focus

NEW YORK: The dollar slid against major currencies on Tuesday, a day after it rose to its highest level in almost three months, as strong economic data and a hawkish stance on interest rates by Federal Reserve officials bolster the US currency. Robust

US economic data, including a blowout unemployment report on Friday, and recent remarks from Fed Chair Jerome Powell have quashed speculation about early and steep rate cuts by the US central bank that the market had widely anticipated.

Cleveland Fed President Loretta Mester said on Tuesday that if the US economy performs as she expects, it could open the door to rate cuts. But Mester said she was not ready to provide timing for easier policy amid ongoing inflation uncertainty.

CAPSULES

Statement by Mr. Abheek Barua, Chief Economist – HDFC Bank on RBI MPC's announcement

AMBALA/HISAR: The RBI's policy statement was fairly balanced, remaining upbeat on growth and marginally bringing down its inflation forecasts. Although, the central bank highlighted that risks around its inflation projections due to any global or domestic supply shocks continue to linger. The RBI pegged growth at 7% for FY25 and inflation at 4.5%. The central bank kept both its policy rate and stance unchanged. The RBI left little room for any imminent policy pivot and therefore we do not expect rate cuts to happen before the August 2024 policy. On liquidity, the central bank seemed to suggest that liquidity deficits were broadly frictional and durable liquidity remained more comfortable. It did not announce any new measures and said that it would continue to manage liquidity through its fine-tuning operations including tools like the variable rate repo and reverse repo auctions.



Renowned authors M. T. Vasudevan Nair and Vinod Kumar Shukla will be honored with the 'Aakashdeep,' the lifetime achievement award

HISAR / KARNAL :

Esteemed Hindi writer Vinod Kumar Shukla and celebrated Malayalam author-filmmaker M. T. Vasudevan Nair will be honored for their exceptional contributions to literature, culture, and society with the highest honor 'Aakashdeep' established by leading Hindi News group Amar Ujala.

Yashwant Vyas, Group Advisor to Amar Ujala and coordinator of Shabd Samman, stated that the Amar Ujala Foundation celebrates the power of Indian languages and their collective dream. The 'Aakashdeep' Award,



the highest honor in this category, includes a cash prize of five lakh rupees, a certificate of commendation, and a symbolic Ganga statue. The 'Aakashdeep' Award, previously bestowed upon luminaries in Kannada

(Girish Karnad), Marathi (Bhalchandra Nemade), Bengali (Shankh Ghosh), and Oriya (Pratibha Rai), has chosen Malayalam as the language of honor for the current year.

AAP workers will expose the employment policy of Khattar government: Gajjan Gobindpura

Kaithal: Aam Aadmi Party Kaithal District President Sardar Gajjan Singh Gobindpura said that Aam Aadmi Party will hold a district level demonstration on Friday, February 9, in which Aam Aadmi Party workers will stand at the main squares in the district and promote employment for the youth. We will raise our voice and expose the employment policy of Khattar government. Addressing a press conference at the AAP



office in Siwan, the District President said that last Wednesday, the Aam Aadmi Party surrounded the Chief Minister's residence in Karnal and demonstrated demanding employment for the youth. Aam Aadmi Party officials and workers will not be

afraid of police lathicharge for employment of youth and will not shy away from even going to jail. He said that today under the BJP government, every youth of the state is on the streets and is suffering due to unemployment. Due to unemployment,

youth are becoming victims of drug addiction and depression, but the government is not paying any attention. The situation is so terrible that even the parents in every house are worried because due to unemployment, the light of their house has turned to drugs, crime and has started thinking about suicide. Due to lack of employment, youth are forced to migrate abroad illegally, where they are even losing their lives.

Anmol India Ltd. Reports Robust Earnings for 9MFY24, EBITDA Grows 29% YoY

CHANDIGARH:

Commenting on the Q3FY24 Performance, Management added, "We are delighted to report the robust financial performance of our company for the first nine months of fiscal year 2024. Revenue from Operations increased by 5.60% to Rs. 1098.36 Cr from Rs. 1040.10 Cr in the corresponding period last year. This growth is a testament to our resilient business model and effective execution of strategic initiatives. Further, our EBITDA increased by 29.28% to Rs. 34.75 Cr from Rs. 26.88 Cr in the same period last year. We are committed to operational excellence and optimizing profitability across all of our busi-

nesses with this significant enhancement. Further more, our Profit After Tax (PAT) exhibited healthy growth, rising by 19.40% to Rs. 16.99 Cr compared to Rs. 14.23 Cr in the previous year's corresponding period. Our business fundamentals are strong and resilient, despite the current market challenges. In alignment with our long-term growth strategy, we are pleased to announce the approval to raise capital from Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) for working capital needs and strategic acquisitions. In the next five years, these initiatives will be integral to our organic and inorganic growth plans. In addition to strengthening our

market position, these strategic investments will drive sustainable value creation for our stakeholders. We continue to execute our growth initiatives while navigating an evolving market landscape. We are grateful for the continued support of our shareholders, customers, and employees, and we are committed to delivering sustained value and excellence in all our endeavors." Anmol India is led by Shri Vijay Goyal who has 37 years of experience in industry and Mr. Chakshu Goyal, an ISB Alumnus, who has recently joined the board of directors and since then launched various digital initiatives to steer the growth of the company.

Tata AIA appoints Venkatachalam H. as Chief Executive officer and Managing Director

ROHTAK/FARIDABAD

Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Limited, one of India's fastest growing life insurance companies, announced today that its Board has appointed Venkatachalam H. as the new Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, subject to regulatory approval from IRDAI. Venkatachalam H. will take over from current Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Naveen Tahilyani who moves to another role in the Tata Group and has been elevated as a Non-Executive Director of Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Ltd. Venky as he is fondly known, has over 27 years' experi-



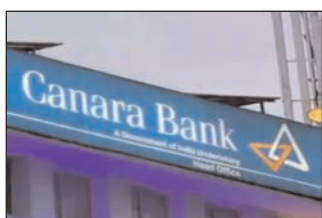
ence spanning Life Insurance, Asset Management and Custodial Services. He has expertise in Sales & Distribution, Strategy, Business Development and Key Account

Management. He joined Tata AIA in 2016 and was President and Chief Distribution Officer in his previous role. Venky has also led several initiatives in areas such as marketing, strategy, analyt-

ics, and direct digital business.

Naveen has been a visionary leader, spearheading the transformation of Tata AIA into a market-leading and digitally enabled multi-channel business. Tata AIA has consistently outperformed the market, with VONB increasing by three and a half times between 2018 and 2022. Under Naveen's leadership, Tata AIA has risen to become number 3 company on retail weighted new business premium and is ranked number 1 in retail sum assured among private sector life insurers. Tata AIA has been awarded the Kincentric Best Employer seven times in a row as well as certified.

Canara Bank board to consider stock split on February 26



NEW DELHI: Canara Bank on Wednesday said it is planning split of the equity shares of the state-owned bank to boost the stock's liquidity. The decision in this regard will be taken by the bank's Board of Directors in a meeting, which is scheduled on February 26, Canara Bank said in a regulatory filing. The meeting's agenda is "to seek in principle approval from the board of directors for sub-division/split of the equity shares of the bank, subject to prior approval of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and other statutory/regulatory/Government of India approvals, as may be required," it said.

GAIL and ADNOC sign a deal to ensure the supply



Delhi: The largest natural gas company in India, Limited, has successfully completed a long-term LNG purchase agreement with ADNOC Gas to purchase about 0.5 MMTPA of LNG. This is in accordance with an agreement between GAIL and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) P.J.S.C. dated October 30, 2022, wherein the parties agreed to investigate potential areas of collaboration, including the purchase of LNG by GAIL from ADNOC for a duration that can be short, medi-

um, or long term. GAIL and ADNOC's noteworthy partnership will strengthen the strong cultural and commercial ties that exist between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to this arrangement, deliveries will start in India in 2026 and last for ten years. Sanjay Kumar, Director (Marketing), GAIL, highlighted the agreement's wider implications by saying that the long-term LNG transaction will assist India in achieving the goal of the Indian government to

increase the country's natural gas consumption to 15% of its total energy consumption. Additionally, this agreement will assist GAIL in expanding its quite sizable LNG portfolio to better meet the needs of its wide range of customers. It is expected that the long-term LNG purchase deal between GAIL and ADNOC Gas will strengthen India's energy security, promote economic cooperation, and advance both companies into new areas of strategic partnership.

RBI advises against KYC fraud, provides guidelines

Delhi: Scammers posing as customer updaters have been warned by the RBI. The central bank advised scam victims to report them to the cybercrime hotline (1930) or the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (www.cybercrime.gov.in). RBI also lists dos and don'ts. The central bank has warned twice. RBI published a note in 2021 after online KYC scams increased during the Covid lockdown, where users were misled into providing their banking information. Fraudsters took advantage of the pandemic when many banks warned consumers they may not be able to



utilize their accounts until December 2021. RBI relaxed the deadline and KYC. RBI stated KYC fraudsters utilize calls, SMS, and emails to get clients to reveal personal information, account/login information, card details, PIN, or OTP. Fraudsters use

links in messages to get users to install unapproved KYC apps. These messages may threaten account freezing, blocking, or closure. RBI warned that criminals can access customers' accounts and commit fraud if they share information.

Asia Pacific businesses are sprucing up investments

NEW DELHI: Asia Pacific businesses are sprucing up investments in generative AI (GenAI) and projected to nearly triple spends on this technology to USD 3.4 billion in 2024 across Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, India, and Singapore, according to

Infosys Research. While the spending trails North America, APAC's adoption, effectiveness, and growth are among the highest globally, it said. "Companies across Asia-Pacific are quickly ramping up investments in generative AI and entering a higher stage of

maturity," the IT major's research arm, Infosys Knowledge Institute (IKI), said in the research. While APAC companies currently lag behind their North American counterparts in GenAI spending, the research forecasts

CAPSULES

Govt, RBI measures have kept inflation in 2-6% range: Finance minister

NEW DELHI: Finance ministry on Monday said the Indian economy has remained resilient amid global headwinds on the back of robust domestic demand, an investment-led strategy due to a transformed climate and high level of public spending, macro-economic stability, apart from a spate of reforms initiated by government over the last 10 years.

A review of the Indian economy released by the ministry said inflation has been reigned in within 2-6% band because of steps taken by government and RBI.

It, however, warned of risks to the external sector from sticky inflation, sluggish growth and fiscal pressures in the global economy, with the tension around Red Sea seen as a potential threat. "Potential risks are expected to emanate from ongoing geopolitical tensions and the recent surge in shipping costs due to re-routing to avoid security risks in international waters, which contains the potential for triggering inflation, especially in terms of energy costs," the 63-page document released ahead of the interim Budget said. When it came to India, it appeared upbeat on the overall prospect. "Ten years ago, India was the 10th largest economy in the world, with a GDP of \$1.9 trillion at current market prices. Today, it is the 5th largest with a GDP of \$3.7 trillion (estimated FY24), despite the pandemic and inheriting an economy with macro imbalances and a broken financial sector. This ten-year journey is marked by several reforms, both substantive and incremental, which have significantly

Zee spent 700 crore to meet Sony's stipulations

Delhi: Zee spent 700 crore to meet Sony's stipulations, according to legal documents acquired by the business line. Zee will argue at the National Company Law Tribunal that it has spent around 700 crores on divestment, frivolous claims, guarantees, tail insurance, and business discontinuation on Sony's instructions. Zee will contest Sony's termination notification asking \$90 million in damages for alleged breaches. Zee denies any meaningful detrimental effect on the merger agreement, per Sony's termination notification. Legal sources said Zee would establish that it had many meetings with Sony, including



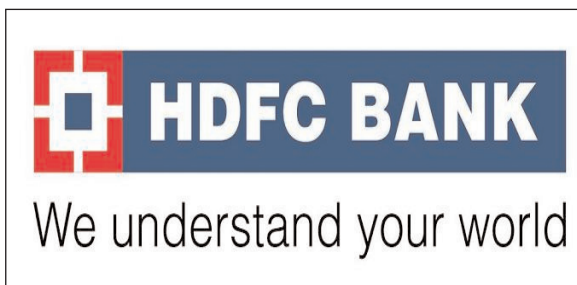
on the joint business plan, where Sony received month-by-month profit and loss and cash flows. Zee and Sony discussed the combination for a long time. Sony repeatedly recom-

mended Zee to take specific steps to finalize the deal quickly, and Zee did so. Zee spent a lot of time and money to please Sony, according to a legal document. It also stated

that Zee notified Sony that divestments, which are necessary to meet these conditions, are permanent, irrevocable, and irreversible moves done solely for the merger.

HDFC Bank raises \$ 300 million through maiden Sustainable Finance Bond Issue

Chandigarh: HDFC Bank Limited announced that it has raised \$ 300 million through its first ever sustainable finance bond issue. This is part of an overall raise of \$ 750 million through Regulation S Bonds. While \$ 300 million has been raised for a tenure of three years with a 95 basis points spread over US Treasury, another \$ 450 million has been raised for a tenure of 5 years, with a spread of 108 basis points over US Treasury. These are the tightest credit spreads achieved by an Indian



issuer for a three-year sustainable bond and five-year senior unsecured bond for a similar size of USD Reg S issuance. The proceeds of the sustainable finance bond will be utilised for funding green and social loans in accordance with the sustainable finance

while the rest of the proceeds will go towards financing general banking activities. "The funds raised through the sustainable finance bonds will be prioritised for lending towards electric vehicles, SMEs and affordable housing. We are strongly committed

towards building a green and social portfolio even as we continue adhering to the Bank's risk philosophy," said Mr Arup Rakshit, Group Head-Treasury, HDFC Bank. The bonds will be listed on India International Exchange (India INX) in GIFT IFSC. The paper was rated Baa3 (stable) by Moody's and BBB- (stable) by S&P. The bank had mandated Barclays, BofA Securities, J.P. Morgan, MUFG and Standard Chartered Bank as Joint Global Coordinators and Joint Lead Managers.

Growth in home loans is shifting from the affordable segment to higher-value homes

Growth in home loans is shifting from the affordable segment to higher-value homes. The average size of home loans has increased by 22% to Rs 24.7 lakh in FY23 from Rs 20.2 lakh in FY20, according to data analyzed by CRIF High Mark. Loans above Rs 75 lakh accounted for nearly 30% of new mortgage originations in April-June 2023. Home loans see shift from affordable to higher value. There are signs that growth in home loans is shifting from the affordable segment to higher-value homes. The average size of home loans has increased by 22% to Rs 24.7 lakh in FY23 from Rs 20.2 lakh in FY20. According to data on home loans analysed by credit bureau CRIF High Mark, there is a shift in



originations, both by value and volume, from the ticket size range of Rs 5 lakh to Rs 35 lakh to Rs 35 lakh to Rs 75 lakh. The data shows that loans above Rs 75 lakh accounted for nearly 30% of new mortgage originations during April-June 2023, while loans between Rs 35 lakh and Rs 75 lakh constituted 31.4% of new loans. Less than 37% of the mortgages were for loans below Rs 35 lakh. In comparison, in FY20, only 19% of loans were above Rs 75 lakh, while 28%

were between Rs 35 lakh and Rs 75 lakh. The bulk of the loans (53%) were below Rs 35 lakh in FY20. According to the "How India Lends" report released by the credit bureau. the portfolio of home loans outstanding stood at Rs 30.7 lakh crore as of June 2023 - a growth of 15% over the previous year. While the value of new loans originated in FY23 at Rs 9.1 lakh crore was 18% more than the previous year, the number of loans grew by only 13% to 37 lakh.

GlobalLogic eyes \$5 billion in revenue by 2028

BENGALURU: Hitachi group company GlobalLogic has set its sights on becoming a \$5 billion enterprise by 2028 that underscores the demand for digital engineering services. Its CEO Nitesh Banga said the company is close to a \$2 billion revenue run rate, ahead of Hitachi's forecast of \$1.7 billion for the 2023-24 financial year, which is a 22% jump compared to the corresponding period last year. "We stick to our lane and excel in our lane. We've moved from outsourced product development to design-led digital engineering and we're now advancing toward intelligent engineering. Every enterprise will continue to need this kind of expertise," he said. "I often say that software has evolved from being a third-

class citizen in an enterprise 20 years ago to a second-class citizen in the last decade, and in the next decade, software will become the enterprise itself. In that sense, we have headroom to grow because we are very small, we are highly specialized, and the demand for our services will persist," he said. However, Hitachi's integrated report 2022 has estimated GlobalLogic's revenue to touch \$2.8 billion for the 2023-24 financial year. Banga's excitement in digital engineering is palpable. Combined with Hitachi's advanced digital solutions Lumada, and GlobalLogic's capabilities, it provides a range of services spanning solutions, design, system integration, connected products, and managed services. The Japanese conglom-

erate completed the \$9.6-billion acquisition of GlobalLogic in 2021, one of the biggest acquisitions in the digital engineering services space. GlobalLogic has closed its first \$100 million account last year and it's signing up another one soon. "The key focus for us is the supersizing of our top accounts." GlobalLogic counts BMW, Volvo, and Continental as some of its key customers. Hitachi has a "sell together" approach with GlobalLogic where they co-create and collaborate to stitch solutions for clients unlocking cross-selling and upselling opportunities. GlobalLogic has over 30,000 employees and over 500 customers. Piyush Jha, MD and head of India and APAC in GlobalLogic said the

company is betting big on working alongside global capability centres (GCCs). "It's a partnership of equals. We have grown our GCC business by 60% in the last one year. The game is transitioning from cost arbitrage to a value arbitrage model. Products are being designed, developed, and stored in the cloud end-to-end from here, and that is where we come into play. Removing the cost per dollar per developer from the equation, whether it is GCCs operating for the parents in the US, or we are doing the work for the GCCs, the cost per dollar per developer becomes irrelevant," Jha said. Banga said GlobalLogic's value capture lies in GCCs having deep domain expertise in their own enterprise.

Medical devices can become Tamil Nadu's next growth story

Chennai Medical devices can become Tamil Nadu's next growth story in manufacturing. The sector's market size in India is projected to hit \$50 billion by 2030, though at present 75-80% of medical devices are imported from the US, China and Germany. It's this huge potential for growth that is drawing the attention of companies in Tamil Nadu with expertise in mechanical engineering, electronics, and information technology. There is a natural synergy between auto and electronic component sectors and the smart medical equipment industry. And with Tamil Nadu being the country's largest exporter in electronics, among the top three players in the IT sector, and an automotive hub, an ecosystem already exists. State industries secretary Arun Roy says multinational companies in medical devices.

Messi expressed uncertainty about his participation in Inter Miami's pre-season

NEW DELHI: Two days ago, furious fans in Hong Kong voiced their disappointment as Messi remained on the bench during a sold-out friendly, prompting calls for refunds.

Messi addressed the media ahead of Inter Miami's match against Japanese champions Vissel Kobe on Wednesday, stating, "I don't know if I can (play) or not, but I feel a lot better and really want to do it." The eight-time Ballon d'Or winner acknowledged that his leg injury is "getting better," and he expressed eagerness to contribute on the field.

Despite the excitement building for the friendly at Tokyo's National Stadium, Messi's availability remains uncertain. He mentioned, "This afternoon we're going to practice, we'll try again. I have a good feeling, compared to how I was." The recent controversy in



Hong Kong, where fans booed Messi and co-owner David Beckham, has drawn attention. Messi explained, "It was really bad luck that I couldn't play in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, this happens in football, in any game it can happen that you can't play." Messi played down the disappointment, emphasizing his desire to participate, especially in games where the team travels extensively, and fans are eager to watch. He expressed hope for a future opportunity to

play a game in Hong Kong. The ongoing pre-season tour has seen Inter Miami draw attention and excitement, with the team's pink colors adorning parts of Tokyo's Shibuya district. The crowd in Hong Kong, which paid premium prices for tickets, jeered as Messi did not take the field during their 4-1 win against a local select XI. The 36-year-old Messi had previously played as a substitute in Miami's match in Saudi Arabia, but a subsequent MRI scan.

NEW DELHI: An air of mistrust and allegations of murky dealings hang heavy in the corridors of Football House if details within an internal mail from the legal department of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) to the AIFF president, Kalyan Choubey are anything to go by. The mail sent to the AIFF president's office on Sunday morning, a copy of which is with TOI, has Nilanjan Bhattacharya, nodal legal officer of the AIFF, alleging "massive breach of privacy against the interest of the AIFF" by "not sharing any legal contract and/ or take legal opin-

ion in any matter concerning the federation." "It is important to know and place on record, that any contract as of now are not being vetted or signed by me in my capacity as the nodal legal officer in the AIFF but shared with certain professionals who neither the AIFF legal is aware of, nor any ratification or engagement has been acted upon by any office in the AIFF," the lawyer wrote. In the mail, Bhattacharya alleged that the president's office had wanted him discharged from his position and "advised for the termination of my services". "It is dis-

heartening and insulting to know that your good office has expressly given instruction to not release my contractual monthly retainership but also above all, not share with me any (legal) contract or take legal opinion concerning the federation," said Bhattacharya. He added: "Several personal attacks regarding my family and faith were also made to coerce me into giving my consent all of which has caused tremendous harassment and mental agony to me. I would request you to release my lawful dues so that I may sustain through this current hardship."

Vishal Aditya Singh Plays Lord Parashuraam

Delhi: Actor Vishal Aditya Singh, who will play the lead in 'Bhagwaan Parashuraam', shared that he is excited to delve into the unexplored, saying the show aims to bring viewers closer to Indian history

and culture. 'Bhagwaan Parashuraam' starring Vishal, Ishita Ganguly, and Navina Bole, tells the unknown story of a God whose presence is recognised but not entirely explored. The devotional series will showcase the journey of

Lord Parashuraam, the sixth avatar of Lord Vishnu. Talking about the show, Vishal, who plays the character of Bhagwaan Parashuraam shared: "India has deep roots in mythology, and the Indian entertainment industry.

Sandeep Reddy Vanga to team up with Salman Khan for a dark thriller?

Delhi: Sandeep Reddy Vanga, who is currently riding high on the mega success of the Ranbir Kapoor starrer 'Animal', might soon work with superstar Salman Khan for a dark thriller. The director is currently in talks with Salman Khan regarding the same. Vanga is presently collaborating with Allu Arjun and Prabhas on his other projects. However, there has been no confirmation on his project with Salman yet. Earlier, Vanga had revealed that Ranveer Singh called him after the release of the movie and spoke to him for 40 long minutes on the phone. Vanga expressed his own surprise, mentioning that the actor spoke to him for almost 40 minutes over the phone. He found the lengthy message from Singh enjoyable, having read it multiple times. While the specific details of the message couldn't be disclosed, Vanga noted that Singh highlighted aspects of Animal that made him realize, "Oh, this is also in my film." In the interview, director Sandeep Reddy Vanga discussed a media report that referred to a statement he made. He mentioned the context where the second ex-wife of a superstar criticized films like Baahubali 2 and Kabir Singh for allegedly promoting misogyny and endorsing stalking. Addressing the assertion, Sandeep conveyed his opinion that the individual making the claim might not grasp the distinction between pursuing someone and approaching them respectfully.

Ricky Ponting has been named as the head coach of Washington Freedom

NEW DELHI: Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting has been named as the head coach of Washington Freedom ahead of the upcoming second season of Major League Cricket (MLC), marking a significant development in American cricket. The franchise made the announcement on X, expressing excitement about Ponting's leadership and the transformation he is set to bring to American cricket. Ponting replaced Greg Shipperd, under whose guidance Freedom finished third in the inaugural season of



MLC. Ponting, eager to embark on this new cricketering journey in the United States, expressed his enthusiasm in a statement, highlighting the rising popularity of cricket in the country. Ponting

praised the efforts of everyone involved with Washington Freedom and emphasized his readiness to build on Shipperd's groundwork for the coming season. Michael Klinger, CNSW head of male T20 cricket

and general manager of cricket at Washington Freedom, emphasized the significance of Ponting's arrival, believing it will have a substantial impact on MLC and cricket in the US. Klinger lauded Ponting's reputation as a respected coach with a keen eye for talent, expressing confidence in his ability to bring out the best in players. Freedom owner Sanjay Govil reflected on the success of MLC's inaugural season and articulated the franchise's aspirations to elevate cricket in the USA. Govil emphasized the

Saregama Talent launches with Maahi, and Arjun as its three next-gen

Delhi: Saregama, an RPSG group company, is excited to unveil 'Saregama Talent,' a vertical for budding artists. After this thrilling move, the business introduced Maahi, Arjun, and Pragati, its first three next-gen performers. These three performers' creative music style captivates listeners of all ages. The launch introduces promising musicians and shows Saregama's commitment to nurturing, promoting, and showcasing new talent. Greeting Maahi,

Pragati, and Arjun, Saregama India Ltd. MD Vikram Mehra said, "The launch of Saregama Talent marks a strategic move

Pragati, and Arjun, Saregama India Ltd. MD Vikram Mehra said, "The launch of Saregama Talent marks a strategic move to enhance our non-film content offering, a crucial step toward delivering diverse and comprehensive entertain-

ment experiences to our audience. Maahi, Pragati, and Arjun have exceptional talent and music passion. We will work with them on many audio and video projects. Saregama Talent will soon include non-Hindi performers. We believe that with

Saregama, this trio will make waves in the music industry and win over music fans worldwide." The year-long training, grooming, and mentoring Maahi, Arjun, and Pragati received from Saregama sets this launch differently. Instead of just singing, they study acting, stage presence, fashion, persona, and more. They become well-rounded musicians and entertainers eager to leave a memorable impression with this holistic approach.

Jasprit Bumrah expressed his appreciation for fast bowling, stating,

NEW DELHI: After India's resounding victory in the second Test against England, Jasprit Bumrah took a moment to pay tribute to England's James Anderson, emphasizing his admiration for quality fast bowling. In a post-match interview, Bumrah expressed his appreciation for fast bowling, stating, "Before a cricketer, I'm a fast bowling fan. If somebody's doing well, kudos to them. I look at the situation, at the wicket and think what are my options. I should not be a one-trick pony." Acknowledging his role as a leader in India's evolving Test bowling lineup, Bumrah recognized the transition phase the team is going through. With stalwarts like Mohammed Shami and Ravichandran Ashwin nearing the end



of their Test careers, Bumrah sees himself as the link between the old guard and the new generation of Indian bowlers. "We're going through a transition so I feel it's my responsibility to help them in any way I can," Bumrah remarked, reflecting on his leadership role. Despite playing fewer Test matches in India, Bumrah has impressive statistics, particularly on pitches not traditionally favorable to

fast bowling. His ability to excel in challenging conditions showcases his adaptability and skill. Reflecting on his growth as a bowler, Bumrah revealed, "As a youngster, that is the first delivery I learned (yorker). I used to think that it was the only way to get wickets." Bumrah also highlighted his rapport with skipper Rohit Sharma, with whom he shares a longstanding camaraderie.

Legend Geoffrey Boycott accused the England team of "losing the plot"

NEW DELHI: Boycott, writing in his column for The Telegraph, lambasted England for what he perceived as a reckless pursuit of attacking cricket, particularly in the fourth innings chase of 399 runs. He argued that England's "Bazball" mentality, epitomized by Brendon McCullum and Ben Stokes, led to their downfall. "Bazball is great entertainment when it comes off. But once you believe in an ideal over substance then you have lost the plot," Boycott wrote, highlighting England's propensity to prioritize aggression over solidity. Pointing to Joe Root's frenetic innings of 16 off ten balls, Boycott lamented the departure from Root's usual composed approach, attributing his dismissal to an ill-advised attempt at aggressive strokeplay. "Joe Root was dancing down the pitch trying to hit over the top and very soon swiped it up in the air. He only scored 16," Boycott observed, emphasizing the failure of England's aggressive mindset.



Boycott also criticized England's broader batting philosophy, suggesting that the influence of Twenty20 cricket has led to a mindset where every ball must be attacked aggressively, akin to cricket's answer to baseball. "Twenty20 cricket seems to have got in their head and made them think that every ball must be scored off with an aggressive stroke, sweep, swipe or cross-batted shot," Boycott remarked, highlighting the team's departure from traditional Test cricket principles. Despite England's valiant effort in the fourth

innings, Boycott questioned the team's approach, emphasizing the importance of substance over style in Test cricket. He referenced England's previous struggles in the Ashes series, where a similar approach led to defeat. "You would have thought England had learned from giving away the Ashes last summer. The 'gung ho' batting at Edgbaston and Lord's gave two Test matches away," Boycott recalled, urging England to prioritize building substantial innings over aggressive shot-making.

Disney+Hotstar streams

"Miss Perfect"

Delhi: Hotstar has revolutionized online shows. Featuring the lovely Lavanya Tripathi, Miss Perfect has become the talk of the film industry due to its diverse story about society. Characters in the series appeal to everyday viewers. Miss Perfect follows the lives of Miss Lavanya (Lavanya Tripathi), Mr. Rohit, their close neighbors, society, and a maid with pleasant humor and thought-provoking issues. Young director Vishwak Khande Rao directs. This comic series stars Telugu superstar Lavanya Tripathi, famed for Andala Raakshasi, Bhale Bhale Magadivoy, and others. Her character, Lavanya, is a clean freak who denies OCD and will break any rule if it's not flawless. The plot revolves around how her drive for perfection gets her into humorous situations she tries to escape. Harshvardhan, Jhansi, Mahesh Vitta, Abhijeet, Abhigna, Harsh Roshan, Sunayana.

We freed UP from the status of BIMARU state: CM Yogi

Lucknow
Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, said that labeling UP as BIMARU was a "political mindset." He highlighted the transformative shift in perspective, noting that Uttar Pradesh has now become the second-largest economy in the country. "Our current objective is to propel UP into the position of the leading economy in the nation," Yogi emphasized. Addressing the curtain raiser ceremony of the second edition of the International Trade Show held at Lok Bhavan, the Chief Minister said, "Traditional craftsmen, artisans, and young entrepreneurs in the state who were once



disappointed now have enthusiasm on their faces. UP's ODOP scheme has now become the foundation of a self-reliant India." On this occasion, he inaugurated 13 projects of industrial estates and ODOP CFCs. He also honored traditional artisans and craftsmen from various

districts. During his address, CM Yogi expressed gratitude to the MSME department, extended congratulations to new entrepreneurs, and bestowed honors upon skilled craftsmen and artisans in the state. He highlighted the success of last year's International Trade Show in Greater

Noida, which set a new record and served as a robust platform to showcase Uttar Pradesh's potential. He said, "For the first time, more than 500 foreign buyers participated, and it engaged around 70,000 people with a footfall of 3 lakh." He announced that the second edition of the

International Trade Show will take place in Greater Noida from September 25 to 29. Through this event, Uttar Pradesh is once again going to demonstrate its capabilities to the global community. CM Yogi mentioned that artisans, craftsmen, and young entrepreneurs in Uttar Pradesh had the capability, but they lacked encouragement from the government and a suitable platform. The state had numerous units of MSMEs for centuries, but due to continuous government neglect and 'Inspector Raj,' entrepreneurs were distressed and forced to migrate. "In 2018, we initiated the ODOP scheme, enabling traditionS.

Yogi govt to foster skill development in 47 ITI and Polytechnic Institutes through PSP Module

Lucknow
With a steadfast commitment to bolstering the technical education system, the Yogi government has turned its attention to the operations of 47 ITI and Polytechnic institutes across the state, while also enhancing the training processes for the students. In line with Chief Minister Yogi's vision, the Directorate of Training and Employment (Training Block) has taken a decisive step to engage private companies in the operation of ITI and

Polytechnic institutes spread across various districts of Uttar Pradesh. Their role will be crucial in ensuring the seamless implementation of training and skill development programs for the trainees. The selection process for these agencies is being conducted based on the Private Sector Partnership (PSP) module. It is noteworthy that upon completion of this process, it will pave the way for smoothly carrying forward all the educational processes and activities

including short-term vocational courses in all these ITI and Polytechnic institutes. The Directorate of Training and Employment (Training Block) has commenced the process of identifying suitable agencies to advance education and training programs through the implementation of the PSP module. Under this procedure, the PSP will cover the payment of employees essential for the proper functioning of these institutions, along with expenses.

Delhi govt to expedite sewer link in unauthorised colonies



Delhi: The submission, dated January 31, said that around 82% of Delhi was covered by a proper sewerage network and the remaining 18% area, mainly comprising unauthorised colonies and JJ clusters, is solely reliant on septic tanks. "Sewer lines were laid and commissioned in 747 of 1,799 Unauthorized Colonies in Delhi for treatment of sewage in sewage treatment plants by laying down a sewerage network. In a submission made to NGT, Kumar said that out of the 1,799 unauthorised colonies in the Capital, 1,031 were already provided a proper sewerage network and 296 more such colonies will be included by November 2024.

He said that 284 such colonies were connected with STPs last year. The submission,

dated January 31, said that around 82% of Delhi was covered by a proper sewerage network and the remaining 18% area, mainly comprising unauthorised colonies and JJ clusters, is solely reliant on septic tanks. "Sewer lines were laid and commissioned in 747 of 1,799 Unauthorized Colonies in Delhi for treatment of sewage in sewage treatment plants (STPs) or decentralised STPs (DSTPs) in January 2023. During the last year, a sewerage network has been provided to 284 more unauthorised colonies, and now 1,031 of 1,799 Unauthorized Colonies have sewerage networks. Works of providing sewerage network in remaining 768 Unauthorized Colonies are at various stages," said the submission by Kumar.

Yogi govt's zero-tolerance policy results in punishment for over 23,000 criminals

Lucknow
Under the zero-tolerance policy of the Yogi government, a robust crackdown on crime and criminals is underway in the state. Within the last seven months, over 23,000 criminals have been punished for their crimes in more than 17,000 cases due to the effective advocacy of the Prosecution Directorate in various courts across the state. Notably, ten districts of the state have excelled in securing convictions for criminals. A significant number of such criminals have been effectively dealt with in court with the strong support of the police. UP's Prosecution Directorate is playing a crucial role in this. Unlike in previous governments where the

Prosecution Directorate was sidelined, the Yogi government has given it special attention. Death penalty to 19 criminals ADG of the Prosecution Directorate, Dipesh Juneja, mentioned that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had directed to launch a campaign in the state to effectively prosecute criminals in court and obtain 100 percent witness testimony to ensure strict punishment for criminals in July 2023. Under this, Operation Conviction was launched from July 1, 2023 to give harshest punishment to the criminals. Through this campaign, 23,971 criminals were punished in 17,657 cases till January 25, 2024. Through effective

advocacy in the court, 19 criminals were given the death penalty while the maximum number of 9,139 criminals were given punishment of less than 5 years. Under Operation Conviction, from July 1, 2023 to January 25, 2024, a total of 2213 criminals were given life imprisonment, 432 criminals were sentenced to 20 years or more, 30 criminals were sentenced to 15 to 19 years, 1405 criminals were sentenced to 10 to 14 years, 2154 criminals were sentenced to 5 to 9 years of imprisonment. Juneja said that a total of 8,579 criminals served their sentences in jail. The majority of these criminals received punishment in 1,482 POCSO cases.

Provide anti-rabies serum at PHCs

Delhi: Anti-rabies serum must be made available at all sub-health centers, primary health centers, and urban primary health centers, per a directive from the Center to all states and Union territories. According to the National Health Mission, financial assistance would be given for the purchase of the anti-rabies serum. When there is a possibility of serious exposure following contact with a rabid animal or when an animal is thought to be rabid, anti-rabies serum is given. In severe cases, it should be administered in addition to the rabies vaccine. According to experts, the majority of primary health centers do not carry it, and each dose costs more over Rs 10,000. In a recent letter to the states and UTs, an NHM official said that rabies is a fatal viral infection and that having access to medications for both prevention and treatment is crucial to preventing the financial and psychological toll that rabies has on families.

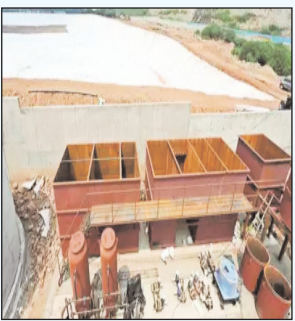


Over 66K youth gain employment in 2023-24 through Vocational Education and Skill Development

Lucknow
Committed to enhancing the skills of youth and fostering employment opportunities, the Yogi government has achieved significant milestones during the financial year 2023-24. Specifically, the government has successfully facilitated the employment of 36,843 trained candidates from industrial training institutes. Additionally, through the Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission, a total of 29,354 trainees have been placed in various companies. As a result, more than 66,000 youth across the state have gained employment opportunities through vocational education. Notably, these employment opportunities have been extended to students from all 75 districts across the 18 divisions of Uttar Pradesh. This information was provided in response to a question asked during the budget session of the UP Vidhan Sabha. During a session at the assembly, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Vocational Education and Skill Development, Kapil Dev Aggarwal, informed that, in accordance with directives from the Chief Minister, significant efforts are underway to seamlessly integrate youth into vocational education across the state. The overarching objective is to facilitate easier employment opportunities for them. He further elaborated that training is currently offered in 84 trades across industrial training institutes statewide, aligning with the curriculum standards and criteria set by the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVT) of the Government of India. Additionally, through the Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission, skill training is being imparted in 386 short-term courses in various sectors. These courses include traditional trades as well as contemporary ones such as ITES, Electronics, Aerospace and Aviation, Telecom and Healthcare, reflecting the inclusion of new-age courses, he added. Students from all 75 districts received employment. The department presented details about successfully employed students in the legislative House. Notably, students from all 75 districts of the state have secured employment opportunities following their training in industrial training institutes and skill development courses. Regarding candidates trained from Industrial Training Institutes, the highest number, 4,824 candidates, have been selected from the capital, Lucknow. Following this, 1,901 candidates have been selected from Kanpur city, 1,523 from Gorakhpur, and 1,414 candidates from Jhansi. Similarly, among the candidates trained through the Skill Development Mission, the highest number, 1,448 students, have been selected from Gorakhpur. This is followed by 1,298 from Ghaziabad, 1,168 from Shahjahanpur, 1,141 from the capital, Lucknow, and 1,009 from Bijpur.

MCD's first designed landfill may open shortly

Delhi: The first MCD properly constructed landfill in Tehkhand is ready. The 25-acre, Rs 42.3-crore project is funded by MCD (53%), Centre (35%), and state (12%). On 15.5 acres, the landfill was established. All permissions are in place, so the project can start this month. 9.6 lakh tons of waste-to-energy plant leftovers will power the facility for



six-and-a-half years. An official said we'll cover the spot as required after seven years.

The city council has instructed contractors operating waste-to-energy (WTE) plants to provide ash in small quantities to make bricks. The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) directed MCD to identify a long-term, sustainable ash disposal strategy instead of depositing it in low-lying regions or constructed landfills.

Nirmala Sitharaman lights up rooftop solar scheme with free power pledge

Delhi: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman put people at the centre stage of energy

transition by packing the Interim Budget with financial booster shots and policy outlines to promote unconventional energy sources. Building on PM Modi's announcement of rooftop solar for one crore households, the Budget put Rs 10,000 crore on the table as seed money and promised 300 units/month of free power as well as hope for annual savings of Rs 15,000-18,000 in energy bill for each beneficiary household of the Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana. Additionally, the scheme opened additional income avenues for households.

Small dispute amnesty for income-tax payers

Delhi: Income tax, wealth tax, and gift tax notices for over 10 million taxpayers, largely small salary earners, will be withdrawn. On Thursday, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an amnesty plan for over 10 million taxpayers, mainly small salary earners, to remove pending notices for income tax, wealth tax, and gift tax dues. The plan will remove dues of up to 25,000 for cases prior to the 2009-10 financial year and up to 10,000 for cases between then and 2014-15. As she presented the Union interim budget for 2024-25, the minister said it was part of the government's attempts to make life and business easier. "I



propose to withdraw outstanding direct tax demands up to ₹25,000 for 2009-10 and ₹10,000 for 2010-11 to 2014-15. This should benefit approximately a crore tax-payers, she said in her Parliament Interim Budget speech. Sitharaman said many "petty [amounts], non-verified, non-reconciled or disputed direct tax demands, many of them dating back as far as 1962, continue to remain on the books,

causing anxiety to honest tax payers and hindering refunds of subsequent years". Officials said the goal is to decrease the numerous old lawsuits that take up tax department time and energy. These demands include "pending income tax, wealth tax and gift tax notices," according to revenue secretary Sanjay Malhotra. Some of these demands are as ancient as 1962... Many of

these ancient requests are unreconciled due to structural issues." Before centralizing tax information in 2010-11, missing tax payment records caused disputes.

He stated that the government calls it notice withdrawal, not tax waiver. Naveen Wadhwa, vice president, research and advisory at Taxmann, said: "It is a significant relief for taxpayers, who have been burdened with anxiety and uncertainty due to these outstanding demands, and the courts, who have been overburdened with pending litigation. The estate duty and banking cash transaction tax are also addressed. The move will put a lot back into circulation.