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

370 seats for BJP, NDA to go 400 paar in Lok Sabha polls: PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched an all-out attack on Jawaharlal Nehru during his speech in Lok Sabha on Monday and even cited an old Independence Day speech in which the country's first prime minister described Indians as "lazy and of low intelligence".

Replying to the debate on the motion of thanks on President's address in Lok Sabha, PM Modi said that Congress and Gandhi family "never trusted India's potential".

"The Congress got stuck in one family. They could never see and would never be able to see people's aspirations and achievements. The Congress never trusted India's potential. They always considered themselves rulers and belittled people," PM Modi said.

PM Modi recalled an Independence Day speech made by Nehru in 1959. "Nehru had



said 'we [Indians] do not work as hard the Europeans, Japanese, Chinese, Russians or the Americans. Do not think that these communities became prosperous by some magic. They have achieved this by hardwork and smartness'."

"He (Nehru) is giving a certificate to those people to belittle Indians. This shows that Nehru ji's thinking about Indians was that they are lazy and of low intelligence. He did not trust their potential," the prime minister

said. PM Modi added that Nehru's daughter, former prime minister Indira Gandhi, did not think differently either. "Indira ji had said from (the ramparts of) Red Fort, 'Unfortunately, it is our habit that when a good work is approaching completion, we become complacent. And when an obstacle comes, we lose hope. Sometimes it seems the whole nation has accepted defeat'. Looking at Congress party today, it appears that Indira ji may not have been

able to assess the people of the country correctly, but she had done an exact evaluation of the Congress," he said.

PM Modi said that this was the thinking of the "royal family of the Congress" about Indians.

He added that a similar thinking is visible even today, adding that he has immense faith in the ability of the country and its people.

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor later hit back at PM Modi's remarks on Nehru.

Kriya Yoga is a comprehensive science, practice of which solves all problems: Former DGP

Prayagraj

On Monday, former DGP of Uttar Pradesh Vijay Kumar ji reached the Kriyayoga camp located at Akshayvat Marg and while talking about Kriyayoga, said that when a man gets engaged in the service of the world, then the hidden power and knowledge within him starts awakening, and his All the facilities related to pass service start coming automatically. Now the time has come that man should engage in the service of



all the creations of the world with his full capacity. I have been following the activities of Kriyayoga Ashram since the time when there were only Kriyayoga Ashram and Prabhudatta Brahmachari's ashram in Jhansi. Kriyayoga is a comprehensive science,

with systematic practice of which all problems go away. - The above idea was expressed by former DGP of Uttar Pradesh Vijay Kumar ji in the Kriya Yoga camp located on Akshayvat Marg in Magh Mela. On this occasion, Swami Shri Yogi Satyam ji, while conducting

Kriyayoga practice, clarified that through the practice of Kriyayoga, the entire existence of human being gets connected with the existence of all the animals, plants, planets, constellations etc. along with the human race. When one goes into the full depth of the practice, the power of truth and non-violence present within man starts spreading to all the creations of the universe. As a result everyone gets happiness and peace.

Can't tweak rules as per my whims & fancies': Sitharaman counters Adhir

NEW DELHI: Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman firmly rejected allegations that Centre is discriminating against non-BJP states during allocation of funds and called the Karnataka government's charge a "politically-vitiated narrative".

The finance minister was replying to a question by Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in the Lok Sabha on the Karnataka government's claim that the Centre is not releasing funds due to it.

"This apprehension that some states are being discriminated against is a politically-vitiated narrative which, I am sorry to say, vested interests are happy to go about saying," Sitharaman said. She added that such a situation cannot

happen since the "system is well placed" and the central government works according to recommendations of the Finance Commission. Chowdhury was referring to a proposal backed by the Congress government.

Nijjar killing: India will not aid probe till Canada gives evidence, says Indian envoy

NEW DELHI: India is not going to aid Canadian investigators in their probe into the killing of pro-Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar till the time Ottawa shares all the evidence it has gathered into the alleged slaying, said a report by Canadian newspaper The Globe and Mail. This comes just days after Canadian national security advisor Jody Thomas claimed there was "evolution" in India's position on the Nijjar probe and that New Delhi "is now cooperating with the investigations".

In an interview to The Globe and Mail, India's High Commissioner to Canada Sanjay Kumar Verma said Ottawa has not shown New Delhi any evidence that ties it to Nijjar's slaying, adding that this was the pre-condition to any cooperation. "We need relevant and specific evidence for us to help the Canadian authorities," Verma said, adding: "Unless we see something relevant and specific, it would be extremely difficult for us to do anything to help the Canadian authorities." Verma further said his office has yet to received a formal request from Ottawa to cooperate with the probe. Nijjar was gunned down in Vancouver on June 18 last year. Three months after the killing, prime minister Justin Trudeau stunned the world when he alleged that there were credible allegations of a link between Nijjar's assassination and Indian agents.

While India launched a probe into information shared by US about alleged similar involvement of an Indian official in a plot to assassinate another Khalistani terrorist, Gurpatwant Pannun, it hasn't so far announced any probe in the Canadian case.

'We will not allow democracy to be murdered': Supreme Court

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday sought entire record of election process including ballot papers, videography and other material through Registrar General of Punjab and Haryana HC of the Chandigarh mayor elections.

The top court also ordered indefinite deferment of Chandigarh civic body's first meeting scheduled for



February 7. The apex court was hearing a plea filed by AAP councillor Kuldeep Singh challenging the Punjab and Haryana high court order that refused to grant any interim relief to the party seeking fresh

voting right. BJP candidate Manoj Sonkar got 16 votes, while the AAP-Congress alliance candidate Kuldeep Singh got 12 despite having 20 councillors. In a hard-hitting critique of the process in which the returning officer cancelled eight votes of AAP-Cong combine, a bench led by CJI D Y Chandrachud said that the RO (returning officer) appears to have defaced the ballots.

Contest Lok Sabha polls from Telangana: CM Reddy appeals to Sonia Gandhi

NEW DELHI:

Telangana chief minister and TPCC president A Revanth Reddy on Monday appealed to senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi to contest from Telangana in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Reddy said that the people of Telangana consider Sonia Gandhi as their 'mother' for granting



them statehood. While paying a courtesy call, CM Revanth Reddy informed Sonia Gandhi that the PCC had already adopted a resolution urging Sonia Gandhi to contest from Telangana. In response, Sonia Gandhi told Reddy that she will take the decision when the right time comes.

Telangana CM also briefed Sonia Gandhi on the progress of the implementation of the promises made by government in the state. Reddy explained that two of the six guarantees- free bus travel for women and the enhancement of the Arogyasri limits to Rs 15 lakh from Rs 5 lakh are already implemented

Nikhil Gupta's extradition suspended as matter reaches Czech Constitutional Court

The Czech Republic has halted the extradition proceedings for Nikhil Gupta, an Indian national indicted by the US in connection with the thwarted attempt to assassinate Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. This decision was made after Gupta appealed to the Constitutional Court to block his extradition to the US.

Czech Justice Ministry spokesperson Vladimir Repka confirmed the suspension. Czech Republic suspended the extradition proceedings of Indian national Nikhil Gupta, who has been indicted by the US for his involvement in the foiled bid to assassinate Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun,

after the accused approached the Constitutional Court to prevent his extradition to the US. "I can confirm the information. Extradition proceedings are suspended until the Constitutional Court decides on the Constitutional complaint," Czech justice ministry spokesperson Vladimir Repka .

'Not like chapati, but puri': US official on India-US trade ties

NEW DELHI: United States assistant secretary of state for energy resources Geoffrey R Pyatt on Monday used some choice words to describe the nature of US-India trade relationship. While admitting that US and India are not currently engaged in any kind of Free Trade Agreement negotiations, Pyatt said: "Nobody today characterises their trade relationship as flat as a 'chapati'." It has become big and



puffed up like a big 'puri' ... we have ongoing and important negotiations about how to facilitate a further deepening of our trade relationship." He went on to say that

US and India have very strong focus on energy transition and there is a lot synergy between the nations to ensure alternative supply chain, especially for renewables. During a virtual press briefing on Monday, Pyatt said that India is one of the US's most important energy relationships in the world, adding that US-India ties for the energy sector is important to create alternative supply chains, especially in renewables.

BGMI maker announces pre-registration for its first India-themed game

Krafton India in partnership with Alchemist Games is set to announce its new game -- Garuda Saga, its first Indian-themed game. Pre-registration for the game is now live and players can pre-register via app stores. Rewards and benefits are offered to pre-registered users. The game is based on Indian-theme and offers rogue-like adventure gameplay where the main character, Garuda, helps King Allu escape hell. Krafton and Alchemist Games are excited to bring Garuda Saga to the Indian gaming community, offering an immersive and captivating experience.

'Secessionist' call result of poor articulation but rooted in injustice: Congress

NEW DELHI: With Karnataka Congress pushing for an idea of "southern India front" amid attacks from ruling BJP, Congress defended itself against any charge of contradiction between promoting a region and Bharat Jodo. Congress said the controversy about a "separate country" was the result of poor articulation, but the idea was rooted in "economic injustice". Key leaders of Karnataka Congress are looking to bring together Kerala, Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana together on one platform to fight the Centre for "justice". They said a similar proposal was made by Kerala in 2018, as it coincided with complaints of then chief minister Siddaramaiah, who is also in the chair now, that terms of reference of the 15th



Finance Commission over tax devolution were unfair. Karnataka Congress will hold a protest in the national capital on Wednesday which, it is reported, will be followed by protests by the ruling parties of Kerala and Telangana. The south-centric push comes amid Rahul Gandhi's ongoing Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, a contrast that BJP seized upon when Congress MP from Karnataka D K Suresh reacted to the Interim Budget by claiming "economic injustice" and warned that BJP's policies were pushing towards creation of a "southern country".

Kerala among most financially unhealthy states, Centre tells SC



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Centre has termed Kerala one of the most financially unhealthy states with multiple cracks diagnosed in its fiscal edifice. In its counter against the original suit filed by Kerala in SC, Centre has stated the financial stress the state is facing is purely due to its own financial mismanagement and the demand to increase borrowing limits is not for any productive purpose but for managing its day-to-day affairs. In its reply, Centre has stated the outstanding

liability as a percentage of the state's gross state domestic product (GSDP) is increasing consistently from 31% in 2018-19 to 39% in 2021-22, whereas the average of all other states is 29.8% in the same period. "One of the major consequences of having a high outstanding liability ratio is enhanced outflow in terms of interest payments, which increases the state's deficit and may result in a debt trap," Centre said. The committed expenditure as a per cent of revenue receipts has also

increased from 74% in 2018-19 to 82.40% in 2021-22, which is the highest for any other state in the country. "High levels of committed expenditure squeeze out the space for productive govt spending, which negatively impacts the state's growth in the long run," it said. The state has a high revenue deficit, which implies state govt is not borrowing to invest in productive schemes, but to meet its day-to-day expenses such as salaries, pensions and interest payment.

Karnataka Congress netas plan to mobilise South against Delhi

BENGALURU: Days after Congress MP DK Suresh's "nationhood for south India" remark, like-minded parties have mooted a proposal to form a forum of southern states to ensure equitable distribution of resources from the Centre, including individual tax share from the divisible pool. Basavaraj Rayareddi, economic advisor to Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, said the proposal to form an "Economic Alliance of Southern States" was already on the table for discussion, and the stakeholders wanted Karnataka to take the initiative. Those advo-



ating the forum argue that the move would strengthen the federal fabric while ensuring a say for southern states. "The objective of the proposed forum is in line with the idea of federalism, where all states are assured of equitable rights and opportunities. The southern states need a powerful platform since their voices are not being heard," said

Rayareddi. A similar proposal was made in 2018 by Kerala govt, coinciding with Siddaramaiah's previous tenure as CM. Saasasa The Karnataka CM had then complained about the terms of reference of the 15th Finance Commission over tax devolution being unfair. Kerala's then finance minister, T M Thomas Isaac, called for a meeting of his counterparts in other southern states that year to take a unified stand on the issue. The idea didn't take off as the Karnataka assembly polls were announced before the stakeholders could take a concrete step.

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".

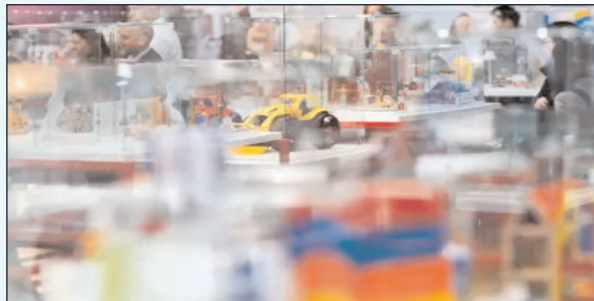
CAPSULES

Bengaluru, Pune among top 10 world cities with most congested roads

PUNE: Last year, commuters in Bengaluru spent an average of 28 minutes and 10 seconds for a 10km ride, while Pune took 27 minutes and 50 seconds, New Delhi 21 minutes and 40 seconds, and Mumbai 20 minutes and 20 seconds for the same distance. Pune and Bengaluru were among the top 10 most congested cities in the world in 2023, according to a report by TomTom Index, a Dutch multinational developer of location technology. Bengaluru ranked sixth globally, Pune seventh, New Delhi 44th, and Mumbai 54th. In 2022, Bengaluru ranked second with a travel time of 29 minutes and 10 seconds for 10km, New Delhi ranked 34th with 22 minutes and 10 seconds, while Mumbai, ranking 47th, took 21 minutes and 10 seconds. According to the TomTom report for 2023, a commuter in Pune spent an average of 256 hours driving during rush hour, with 128 hours lost due to traffic congestion, emitting approximately 1,007kg of CO₂, of which 265kg was due to congestion. Commuters in New Delhi spent 191 hours, Mumbai 198 hours, and Bengaluru 257 hours driving during peak hours, losing 81, 92, and 132 hours in traffic jams, respectively. The study, conducted in 387 cities across 55 countries, revealed London as the most congested city with an average travel time of 37 minutes and 20 seconds, followed by Dublin with 29 minutes and 30 seconds, and Toronto with 29 minutes. The traffic situation in cities has deteriorated over the years, attributed to ongoing development work and insufficient infrastructure. Experts suggested promoting public transport and implementing management policies like parking and decongestion to alleviate traffic congestion.

Indian toy makers receive orders worth crores at German fair

NEW DELHI: Indian toy makers, who participated in the five-day international toy fair in Nuremberg, Germany, have received huge orders worth crores as they had showcased high-quality products, exporters say. According to the toy exporters, buyers from countries such as the US, UK, South Africa, and Germany showed interest in their products and placed a good number of orders.



The Nuremberg International Toy Fair concluded on February 3. Over 2,000 exhibitors from over 65 countries participated in one of the world largest toy fairs. Greater Noida-based Little Genius Toys Pvt

Ltd CEO Naresh Kumar Gautam said: "Our products received huge appreciation. Be it wooden education toys or soft toys. There was a strong anti-China sentiment for Chinese toys and Indian toys were

appreciated. About 60 firms participated." He said that two-Chinese firms have expressed keen interest to set up joint ventures with Little Genius in India for toy manufacturing. "The JV would cater to both national and international markets," Gautam said, adding that in the fair, foreign buyers suggested Indian companies to become more competitive in pricing to compete with Chinese firms.

Gatling gun declared obsolete in 1911, but Army has last one that still fires

NAGPUR: Finding a Gatling isn't easy, a functioning one even tougher. World's first rapid-firing multiple-barrel machine gun, invented way back in 1862 by an American doctor, was declared obsolete by US army in 1911. Lighter, even deadlier machine guns were invented. Those Gatlings that survived being melted down became collectors' items. Less than 20 authentic Gatlings survive, according to Gunmagwarehouse.com. Only one is still func-



tional. And it's in India, cared for by Indian Army. In 1986, GOI had turned down an American govt request to sell the Gatling, for any price, say Army officers. Last Friday, it was on display in Nagpur's Mankapur sports stadium, a display item in the

'Shourya Sandhya' event. Army chief Manoj Pande was in attendance. Jabalpur's ordnance corps museum is this Gatling's home, where it is cared for so well that its mechanical parts all work, and it can, just as other Gatlings did in the

late 19th and early 20th century, fire hundreds of rounds (.45 calibre bullets) – but not at the pull of a trigger. When not on show, Gatling kept under heavy security. Unlike its later cousins, Gatlings were hand-cranked. As army personnel at the Nagpur stadium explained to TOI, the machine gun has 10 barrels and 10 breech blocks. Every time a gunner revolves the shaft to a 7 o'clock position, bullets are fired in rapid succession from a foot-long magazine.

Army's 'new' knowledge corps to now focus on cyber, infotech

NEW DELHI: The Army Educational Corps (AEC) will now be rechristened the Army Knowledge & Enablers Corps with the mandate to specially focus on cyber, infotech, perception management and linguistics, including specialisation in Mandarin, Burmese and other languages, as part of the overall "transformation" drive under way in the 12-lakh strong force. The restructuring of the AEC, which has been approved by the defence ministry, will provide the Army with "dedicated specialists" in these niche domains to exploit their potential in meeting "emerging operational needs", senior officers on Sunday. The thrust on linguistics comes at a time when the Army has already been taking some steps to address "capability voids" in Mandarin proficiency and sector specialisations on Chinese issues and Tibetology, amid the ongoing four-year military confronta-



tion with China in eastern Ladakh, as earlier reported. With China now the primary front, which has seen the Army "rebalance" additional forces and firepower to the northern borders from the western front with Pakistan, there is certainly an urgent need to boost expertise in Chinese language, culture, behaviour and thought at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. "Restructuring and reorientation of AEC, which was raised in 1921, will propel the ongoing efforts. A framework has been instituted to ensure availability of the requisite pool of trained linguists. In addition to the in-service lin-

guist school, engagements are being carried out with reputed universities across the nation to conduct advanced linguistic training," an officer said. Only 21% of AEC personnel will now be engaged in the conventional human resource development efforts, with the rest being deployed in the newly-identified domains. "Since the AEC is mandated to recruit only graduates and above, this restructuring provides an opportunity to directly recruit professionals with these skills. Fresh guidelines have been formulated for recruiting and commissioning professionals with these skills," another officer said.

Governments are not bound to give old-age pension, rules Supreme Court



NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday said governments are not bound under law to provide old-age pensions and said the judiciary cannot direct the states to provide old-age pensions to more than one person in a family. A petition was filed challenging Andhra Pradesh government's decision to provide old-age pension to only one person per family, with the exception of a supplementary old-age pension would be given to a family if the additional person in the family belonged to disabled category. A bench headed by CJI D Y Chandrachud said, "Ultimately we have to take into account the paying capacity of the state govts, who incur expenditure on so many social welfare schemes. These are purely policy decisions. The govts are not bound to give old-age pensions." The state govt on December 21 last year issued a notification enhancing the pension amount for old persons.

PM's speech shows arrogance, lack of confidence: Opposition

NEW DELHI: Accusing the Prime Minister of hypocrisy for opposing the enumeration of backward castes, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said Narendra Modi in the Parliament called himself the "biggest OBC" after spending months claiming that the only two castes in the country are "rich and poor". Rahul's reference was to Modi's "only rich and poor" counter to his demand for caste census during the assembly election campaign. "It is important to change this mentality of considering someone small and someone big. Be it OBC, Dalit or tribal, economic and social justice cannot be provided to them without counting them. When Modi speaks so much of inabilities, why is he afraid of counting," he said. The opposition slammed the PM's speech in Lok Sabha, replete with claims of his government's achievements and of BJP set to win 370 seats in the coming elections, as a rhetoric which betrayed lack of confidence. Congress MP Manickam Tagore said, "Will Modi not take oath if BJP doesn't touch 370? He should answer first."

DRDO successfully conducts four flight trials of 'ABHYAS'

NEW DELHI: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted four flight trials of the high-speed expendable aerial target 'ABHYAS' from the integrated test range at Odisha's Chandipur. The trials, which took place between January 30 and February 2, achieved four different mission objectives using a revised robust configuration. The single booster, designed by the Advanced systems laboratory in Hyderabad, provided reduced launch acceleration. The objectives, including the safe release of the booster, launcher clearance, and attaining the required end-of-launch velocity, were successfully met. The flight trials validated various parameters such as endurance, speed, manoeuvrability, altitude, and range. According to sources, ABHYAS, designed by the Defence research and development organisation's Aeronautical development establishment (ADE), serves as a realistic threat scenario for practicing weapon systems. It incorporates an indigenous autopilot system developed by the ADE. The aerial target is equipped with a radar cross-section, visual and infrared augmentation system for weapon practice. The laptop-based ground control system allows for easy integration of the aircraft and enables pre-flight checks, data recording during the flight, replay after the flight, and post-flight analysis. ABHYAS boasts minimum logistics requirements and is a cost-effective alternative to imported equivalents. The recent flight trials were carried out in collaboration with Hindustan aeronautics limited (HAL) and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) defence. With the support of these production agencies, ABHYAS is now ready for production.

A huge crowd gathered in the Congress Sandesh Yatra rally organized by Neeraj Jadaula

Neeraj Jaddaula along with his supporters gave a warm welcome to Kumari Shailja and Randeep Surjewala

Kaithal: Congress National General Secretary Kumari Selja alleged that new dimensions of corruption have been established in the coalition government in Haryana. Many scams have been carried out including liquor scam, paddy scam, paper scam, job scam, registry scam. Kumari Shailja was addressing a huge rally late night during the Congress Sandesh Yatra organized by senior Congress leader and former Sarpanch Neeraj Kumar Jadaula at the sports stadium of village Pabnawa. On reaching the rally, Neeraj Jadaula gave a grand welcome to the villagers and workers along with Kumari Shailja, MP Randeep Singh Surjewala and other MLAs by garlanding them with flowers and honored them by wearing a turban as a symbol of respect. Encouraged by the huge crowd gathered in the rally, Kumari Shailja while congratulating



Neeraj Jadaula said that it has become clear from the crowd gathered in the rally that the people of the state are with the Congress and in the upcoming elections, Congress will win on the basis of the blessings of the people and the hard work of the workers. It is certain that the government will be formed. Kumari Shailja alleged that instead of giving priority to the youth of the state in government jobs in Haryana, youth from other states are being given preference. Haryana has become the number one state in unemployment in the country under BJP rule. The youth are risking their lives by selling their houses and moving to foreign countries, but the Khattar government is paying no attention.

Kumari Shailja alleged that the government lathicharges when they demand their rights, and sometimes the voices of every common man including farmers, laborers, sportspersons, youth, Anganwadi workers, Asha workers etc. have been suppressed by lathicharge. BJP's Beti Bachao Beti Padhao slogan is just a hoax. The days of BJP rule are over. Kumari Shailja said that under the BJP rule, all the things used daily in the kitchen of the common poor have become victims of inflation. Why is the government not listening to the voice of the people groaning due to skyrocketing inflation?

The wrong economic policies of the BJP government are responsible for the rising inflation.



He said that today the young generation in Haryana is facing the highest unemployment rate. Through Skill Corporation, the government converted permanent jobs into raw jobs. Due to which, out of frustration, the youth of Haryana are getting trapped in the clutches of drug addiction. Today Haryana is at the forefront in corruption, crime, unemployment and drug addiction. Thousands of villagers and workers were present on this occasion.

National General Secretary of Congress and Rajya Sabha MP Randeep Singh Surjewala, while addressing the Congress Sandesh Yatra in village Pabnawa, said that he has set out on the Jan Sandesh Yatra with Kumari Shailja and Kiran

Choudhary, their fight, roar and slogans have led to record breaking inflation, terrible situation in the state. It is against unemployment and corruption. Lakhs of farmers continued to agitate against the three agricultural laws. 700 farmers lost their lives. But, where were those whom we had voted for? The BJP-JJP government placed big stones in front of the farmers going for the protest. They are not waiving off the loans of farmers and laborers, but loans worth Rs 14 lakh 50 thousand crores of some industrialists have been waived off. This is the first government which has imposed tax on agriculture also. 12 per cent GST has been imposed on farming equipment and 18 percent GST on pesticides.

CAPSULES

Delighted to meet religious leaders in Parliament, says PM Modi



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.

Grand event of Shri Hanuman Kripa Mahotsav organized at Shree Cement

KARNAL : The giver of Ashta Siddhi Navnidhi, the mother of Asbar Deen Janaki. The simple meaning is that by the blessing of Mother Sita, Lord Hanuman ji is the giver of Ashta Siddhi Navnidhi. He has every kind of accomplishment. If we take the name of Hanuman ji then all the obstacles go away. By reciting this couplet, even the biggest problems can be solved. A similar scene was seen in Beawar on Saturday where the annual festival of Shri Sankat Mochan Hanuman is being organized located in the Shree Cement complex. This event, which started from February 1, will continue till February 4. On this occasion, Shri BG Bangar, Chairman Emeritus of Shree Cement said that the blessings



of Sankat Mochan Hanuman ji have been on us since the beginning.

Ever since we installed the Hanumanji statue in the courtyard, we have been making continuous progress. Shri HM Bangar, Chairman of Shree Cement, discussed in detail the blessings of Shri Hanuman ji. Vice Chairman of the company, Shri Prashant Bangar explained

the objectives of organizing the festival. Managing Director of the company, Mr. Neeraj Akhouri welcomed all the guests. On this occasion, apart from all the members of the founding family of Shree Cement, company employees and distinguished guests, a large number of devotees from other states including Rajasthan were present here.

Tata Salt's mission against counterfeit orange pack salts

Ghaziabad : Tata Salt, a market leader in India's salt segment since last 40 years, has initiated the "Har Narangi Pack Tata Namak Nahi Hota" campaign as part of its ongoing efforts to combat the explosion of counterfeit salt products in Uttar Pradesh. In the salt market of Uttar Pradesh, the rampant existence of counterfeit brands with identical names and colors to Tata Salt poses a significant challenge. Against this backdrop, the "Har Narangi Pack Tata Namak Nahi Hota" mission not only under-



scores the superior quality of Tata Salt but also highlights the company's unwavering dedication to safeguarding consumers' interests. Tata Salt's slogan "Har Narangi Pack Tata Namak Nahi Hota" serves as a crucial awareness initiative cautioning consumers against counter-

feit orange salt packs resembling Tata Salt. Instead, Tata Salt stands as a dependable choice, ensuring the correct iodine content and actively contributing to India's nutritional objectives. Deepika Bhan, President, Packaged Foods-India, Tata Consumer Products, affirmed, "In a recent lab test of 100 different salts across India, it was proven that Tata salt is higher on purity. Despite the strong preference for Tata Salt among consumers in Uttar Pradesh, the presence of visually similar counterfeit brands with matching names creates confusion and poses a potential threat to their well-being. Through the "Har Narangi Pack Tata Namak Nahi Hota" campaign, we aim to not only reassure consumers but also emphasize our commitment to their households' welfare.

Fortis Healthcare and Harley Owners Group unite for 'Ride for Cancer' to Raise Cancer Awareness

Gurugram : In an endeavor to create awareness about cancer, Fortis Healthcare today flagged off the 'Ride for Cancer' bike rally from Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram, at 7:00 am. The flag off ceremony was led by Mr. Anil Vinayak, Group COO, Fortis Healthcare amidst the presence of cancer survivors, Fortis Senior Clinicians and Senior Leadership. Over 70 enthusiastic Harley Davidson Riders, comprising of cancer survivors, participated in the 'Ride for Cancer' rally, emphasizing early detection, treatment options and the resilience needed to conquer the disease.



Following the flag-off from Fortis Gurugram, the riders embarked on their journey to Fortis Mohali. Here, they were warmly received and acknowledged by senior oncologists, hospital staff, and Fortis management, underlining the hospital's commitment to cancer care. The ride continued from Fortis Mohali to Fortis Ludhiana, where the bikers conducted a tour of the hospital premises

before heading to Amritsar, where the rally concluded. This remarkable journey covered a total distance of approximately 600 kilometers in just one day. The event brought together esteemed senior oncologists from the Fortis Group, who shared their insights and perspectives on the significance of cancer prevention and care. Dr. Ankur Bahl, Senior Director, Medical Oncology, Fortis.

Hazoor Multi Projects Ltd. Approves Allotment of Equity Shares to FIIs

CHANDIGARH: Hazoor Multi Projects Ltd. (HMPL) (BSE: 532467), a leader in Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contracting services, has announced that it has approved the allotment of 35,00,000 equity shares to FIIs/FPIs, amongst other non-promoter group entities. The company will allot shares to FIIs - Vespera Fund Ltd., Aries Opportunities Fund Ltd., Elara India Opportunities Fund, Kiftar IN LLC, amongst other individuals and body corporates. The company had obtained members' approval at the EGM on January 02, 2024, in addition to an in-principle approval being obtained from the stock exchange. Hazoor Multi Projects Ltd. (HMPL)



(BSE: 532467) stands at the forefront of India's rapidly evolving infrastructure landscape, having strategically ventured into the development of a business vertical dedicated to providing high-quality and reliable Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contracting services. Responding to the escalating demand in the nation-building process, HMPL has swiftly emerged as a key player in the industry. Over the past few years, HMPL

has achieved remarkable milestones by successfully undertaking leading projects for the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation (MSRDC), utilizing both EPC and Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) execution methods. Notably, the successful completion of the Wakan Pali highway in 2019, despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, marked a pivotal moment for HMPL. The company further solidified its presence by tak-

ing on Package 11 of the prestigious Samruddhi Expressway and contributing to the NH 48 highway project, demonstrating a commitment to excellence in project execution. The journey thus far has been characterized by HMPL's ability to forge successful partnerships, essential for the triumph of the projects undertaken.

A robust management team, proficient in both technical and commercial aspects, has been instrumental in steering the company toward consistent growth and success. The foundation of HMPL was built on a commitment to meeting timely schedules, maintaining high-quality standards, and prioritizing safety - principles that have guided every endeavor.

Liver institute in Mohali will be fully operational shortly: Punjab health minister

CHANDIGARH: The Punjab Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (PILBS) in Mohali is expected to be fully functional shortly, Punjab health minister Dr Balbir Singh said here on Monday. The health minister on Monday launched the website of the institute www.pilbs.punjab.gov.in, for the convenience of the Public. Dr Balbir Singh said the institute, which had been running OPD services for the last eight months at Mohali, was expected to get fully functional soon as all the latest ultra-modern equipment had been installed. The recruitment process of super-specialist doctors and other paramedical staff has also been completed, he said. "Once the institute gets fully functional, people will be able to avail first-class medical care for patients with liver and biliary diseases at this institute," he said.

Editorial

China is unfazed by the Red Sea crisis. India must look into the reasons why

Less than four months after Hamas' aggressive assault on Israel, the conflict has dangerously spilled over into the Red Sea, posing serious economic and security challenges for India and the world. The Houthis, allegedly backed by Iran, had already aligned with Hamas against Israel. Their attacks on Israel-bound commercial ships started on 19 October 2023. Soon, the US Navy became involved, playing an instrumental role in intercepting Houthi missiles launched against Israel. Houthi spokesperson Yahya Saree publicly threw down the gauntlet, took responsibility for the attacks and said that they would continue. While he initially claimed to have only attacked Israeli ships, other ships were also targeted. Soon, Houthi attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea became prevalent. The Red Sea is a crucial global maritime route. Technically, it is a seawater inlet of the Indian Ocean between Asia and Africa. This sea passage is confined between two crucial points – the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula in the north and the Bab el-Mandeb strait in the south toward the Gulf of Aden (old name for Yemen) Houthi militants lately have been targeting merchant vessels from diverse nations in the Red Sea, particularly in the Bab el-Mandeb strait. This strategic chokepoint holds significant importance in the global economy. These assaults have significantly impacted the commercial feasibility of one of the world's busiest maritime routes, with India's maritime trade also suffering considerable consequences. The US and UK launched joint strikes on the Houthis on 11 and 22 January in response to these attacks. The US has also launched eight separate strikes. India's early response to the Red Sea Crisis was balanced and muted. External affairs minister S Jaishankar's visit to Tehran on 15 January signalled India's willingness to explore a diplomatic solution. It has steered clear of joining the US-led multinational naval coalition in the Red Sea while it remains critical of the Houthis' violence. However, things quickly changed when the spectrum of attacks against commercial vessels diversified to a return of pirates' attacks in the region. India, initially exploring a diplomatic solution to the problem, is now deploying unprecedented naval capabilities to solve it. The experience of attacked vessels – MV Chem Pluto, which had Indian crew on board and MV Sai Baba, which was registered in India – has been instrumental in New Delhi's toughened stance. In its largest deployment in the region, India has stationed two frontline warships in the Gulf of Aden and at least 10 warships in the northern and western Arabian Sea, along with surveillance aircraft. India's commitment to duly respond to piracy is indeed a commendable feat. It shows New Delhi's ability to rise to emergency maritime situations. The country has aced the diplomatic game by saving Pakistanis, Iranians, Israelis and others alike. But does that solve India's economic setbacks in the region? Not quite. Despite India's efforts, securing sea lanes remains an elusive endeavour. The crisis may escalate further, with the risk of a direct confrontation between Iran and the US becoming more real. This likelihood has increased after three American GIs were killed by Iraqi militants in Jordan on 28 January. The pressing global concern now is to prevent the sabotage of trade in the Red Sea region. The repercussions on India's maritime trade are profound, as the economic fallout of Houthi attacks on commercial ships has taken a severe toll on the global economy. According to data from Xeneta, an ocean freight benchmarking firm, the surge in ocean freight rates has already exceeded the levels seen during the Covid-19 pandemic, when global supply chains were mercilessly disrupted. These shipping costs have skyrocketed by over 200 per cent in the first 50 days of the crisis, primarily due to the rerouting of ships along the Cape of Good Hope. There is also a hidden cost for the rerouting, which comes with 30 per cent more emissions.

Modi govt's FY25 revenue receipt looks gloomy. For every rupee earned, it will spend Rs 1.54

What are the key assumptions underpinning fiscal math for FY 2024-25? The Interim Budget assumes a 10.5 per cent growth in nominal GDP in FY25. Gross tax receipts are estimated to increase by 14 per cent—with income tax at a whopping 28.4 per cent, corporate tax at 13 per cent, GST at 11.6 per cent, customs decreasing by -0.8 per cent, and excise by -6 per cent. Revenue receipts are estimated to rise by 14 per cent, with tax revenues (net to Centre) increasing by 11.6 per cent. However, non-tax revenues are estimated to rise by a whopping 32 per cent, driven mainly by the increased dividends from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and revenues from the sale of telecom spectrum waves. With the use of a magic wand, revenue expenditure increase has been contained at just 4.3 per cent from Rs 35.02 lakh crore in FY24 BE (budget estimate) to Rs 36.54 lakh crore in FY25 BE. Within revenue expenditure, interest payments are estimated to rise by 10 per cent from Rs 10.79 lakh crore in FY24 BE to Rs 11.90 lakh crore in FY25 BE. Total capital expenditure, including grants for the creation of a capital account, rises by 9 per cent from Rs 13.7 lakh crore in FY24 BE to Rs 14.96 lakh crore in FY25 BE. The rise in total expenditure is estimated at a modest 5.8 per cent. The fiscal deficit in FY25 is projected at Rs 16.85 lakh crore (5.1 per cent



of the estimated nominal GDP of Rs 327.71 lakh crore). So, in FY25, the government of India is going to earn Rs 30.8 lakh crore, including divestment proceeds of Rs 50,000 crore and non-tax revenues comprising mainly dividends from RBI or Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and telecom receipts of Rs 3.99 lakh crore. And the Centre plans to spend Rs 47.65 lakh crore. This means for every Rs 1 it earns, it will spend Rs 1.547, or for every Rs 1 it spends it will take in only Rs 0.646. As the late RBI Deputy Governor SS Tarapore used to tell me, instead of focusing on fiscal deficit as percentage of GDP, which takes complex calculations and is based on far too many imprecise factors, especially in a data-poor nation like ours, we should look at fiscal deficit vis-a-vis recurring revenue receipts. When seen in this context, the situation

looks distinctively gloomy and sobering. Has the government tightened its belt, and will significantly large resources be available for crowding in private sector capital investment? Although the government's gross market borrowings will come down from Rs 15.43 lakh crore in FY24 RE (revised estimate) to Rs 14.13 lakh crore in FY25 BE; the net borrowing is almost at the same level at Rs 11.75 lakh crore in FY25 BE compared to Rs 11.80 lakh crore in FY24 RE. The government aims to achieve a fiscal deficit target of 5.1 per cent of GDP in FY25 versus 5.8 per cent in FY24. With a projected GDP of Rs 327.71 lakh crore in FY25, this 0.7 per cent reduction would save Rs 2.29 lakh crore. Had the fiscal deficit remained at the same percentage of GDP in FY25 as in FY24, the government's gross borrowing would have increased to that extent. Of

course, it would then have adversely affected India's credit rating, and bond yields would have seen a sharp rise—elevating the cost of funds in the economy, and raising skepticism among investors about the country's already-delayed medium-term fiscal consolidation plan. Expenditure on central sector schemes/projects in railways—one of the government's principal twin engines of growth other than roads—is up from Rs 2.4 lakh crore in FY24 RE to Rs 2.52 lakh crore in FY25 BE, showing only 5 per cent year-on-year growth. Central sector scheme/projects expenditure in the roads sector is up from Rs 2.76 lakh crore (RE) to Rs 2.77 lakh crore i.e. a measly 0.3 growth. Given the increased emphasis on the defence sector, the capital outlay on it has only increased from Rs 1.62 lakh crore in FY24 BE to Rs 1.72 lakh crore in FY25 BE, reflecting a paltry 6 per cent year-on-year growth. Despite tepid aggregate demand in the rural sector and pressure on farm incomes, fertiliser subsidies to our Aannadatas haven't been increased. Fertiliser urea subsidy is actually down from Rs 1.28 lakh crore in FY24 RE to Rs 1.19 lakh crore in FY25 BE. Nutrient-based subsidy is down from Rs 60,000 crore in FY24 RE to Rs 45,000 crore in FY25 BE. In FY24, food subsidy was budgeted at Rs 1.97 lakh crore and the revised estimate for FY24 is Rs 2.11

lakh crore. For FY25, the subsidy budget has remained almost flat at Rs 2.05 lakh crore compared to the revised estimates for FY24. In FY25, the entire food subsidy is going to be disbursed through Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana. In the crucial petroleum sector, the direct benefit transfer and subsidy on LPG cylinders for poor households are up from Rs 9,960 crore FY24 RE to Rs 10,594 crore FY25 BE—another measly 6 per cent increase. Government-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) are called upon, when global crude oil prices are elevated, to refrain from increasing prices of petrol and diesel and discharge national duty. However, capital support to OMCs is down by 50 per cent from Rs 30,000 crore in FY24 RE to Rs 15,000 crore in FY25 BE. In view of the strong upmove in Indian stock markets during FY24, the government's disinvestment program, involving the sale of partial or controlling stakes in various PSUs, was under scrutiny. Miscellaneous capital receipts, a part of non-debt receipts, mainly consisting of disinvestment proceeds from PSUs, were projected to be Rs 61,000 crore in FY24 BE. However, only Rs 30,000 crore was achieved, despite Indian equities having a dream run in FY24. As hope springs eternal, the government has budgeted Rs 50,000 crore under this category for FY25 BE.

Stanley Cups are the Louis Vuitton of reusable tumblers

If you think the act of drinking water is just for hydration, you're sorely mistaken—in the modern age of TikTok, X, and Instagram, how you drink water and what you drink it from is nothing less than a marker of social status. And the winner was the chic, powder-finish, double-insulated, and, sadly, lead-laden tumbler that is the Stanley Cup—until now. Recently, Stanley's 'Tumbler No. 1' status seems to be on shaky ground. Consumers armed with at-home lead testing kits are startled that their expensive cups contain the toxic metal. The company has admitted on their website that while the cups contain lead, it's sealed and will only be exposed if the base cap "comes off due to ordinary use". The casual admission is incongruent with the effects of long-term lead exposure

which can cause problems like high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases and even neurological issues in children. Everyone from The Washington Post to Bon Appetit is weighing in on the safety of the Stanley Cup, and the consensus seems to be that the fears are overblown. But then, social media is a fickle friend, and the cup's cult status can be toppled like a house of cards. Stanley cups are all the rage on social media—from numerous 'a day in my life' Tiktokers to British musician Adele. Everyone is obsessed with these gigantic tumblers called 'Quenchers', which hold up to 40 ounces (1.1 litres) of water. For clarity, doctors recommend at least 2 litres of water a day, so you would only need to fill your Stanley twice to last you through the day. The stainless-steel

reusable cup is supposed to reduce wastage and encourage sustainability but its social media stardom, led by marketing by and to (mostly white, millennial) women, has ensured the Stanley Cup becomes the number one aspirational gizmo. Consumers line up to buy new editions of the \$45 tumbler (Rs 3,700), resell it for twice as much on online platforms, and proudly display their endless collection of Stanleys in different colours. Way to go for sustainability! A few months ago, a woman posted a video on TikTok of her burnt car, where the only survivor was her Stanley Cup with ice still inside it. Jumping on the opportunity, the CEO of Stanley, Terence Reilly posted his own video offering to replace her Stanley as well as her car—a masterclass in marketing.

Judge Vishvesha's last Gyanvapi order sets his legacy. It's like Ayodhya all over again

At around 3 pm on Wednesday, Varanasi district judge Ajaya Krishna Vishvesha issued the last order of his career—directions to the district magistrate to make arrangements for pooja and raag-bhog of idols in the disputed southern tekhkhana of the Gyanvapi mosque premises by a priest specified by the Kashi Vishwanath temple trust. Minutes later, he was given a farewell by the Banaras Bar Association and the Central Bar Association. But his parting shot has potentially shaped the politics of UP for months and years to come. The 60-year-old Vishvesha was the district judge in the Varanasi court until 31 January.

And the country's most important political and religious dispute—the next Ayodhya—was transferred to his court in May 2022. The Supreme Court ordered that the Shringar Gauri case pertaining to a petition for Hindus to worship in the Gyanvapi basement area be transferred from the court of civil judge (senior division) to Vishvesha's court because the social complexities of the case required a more "senior and experienced judicial officer." Vishvesha's last order, issued just over a week after the Ram temple Pran Pratishtha presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

set off a flurry of activity on the ground. As soon as his directive came, everybody swung into action. Wasting no time, Varanasi district magistrate S. Rajalingam ordered a 7-by-7-foot gap to be created in the mosque's double-layered barricading—erected in 1993 by the Mulayam Singh Yadav-led government—granting access to the southern cellar for priests. A priest designated by the Banaras Bar Association and the Central Bar Association quickly prepared the basement site, called 'Vyas Ji Ka Tehkhana', inside the Gyanvapi mosque and performed prayers at 3 am on Thursday. This is why retired judge Ajaya Kumar Vishvesha is With a law degree from Haryana's urukshetra University, Vishvesha entered the Uttar Pradesh Higher Judicial Service as a munsif (civil judge, junior division) in 1990. Over the next two decades, he held various judicial positions in numerous districts across undivided UP. In 2009, the UP government appointed him as a special secretary and additional legal remembrancer (LR).

He served in this role, providing legal advice to the state government, until 2014. Subsequently, he returned to the judiciary as an additional district and sessions judge in

Jhansi, where he remained until 2017. After serving in similar capacities in Hathras, Budaun, Sitapur, and Prayagraj, he took over as district and sessions judge in Varanasi in August 2021, assuming a central and often controversial role in the Gyanvapi mosque dispute. The Gyanvapi mosque has long been a battleground, both politically and legally.

The first lawsuit post-independence was filed in 1991, centring on the property's ownership. Back then, petitioners like Somnath Vyas 'Vyasji' argued that the land belonged to the deity Vishvesha and should be handed over to the Hindu community. They also contended that the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act didn't apply as the mosque was built on remnants of the Adi Vishvesha temple. Over the last few years, new cases have been filed on who could pray where and until when, along with the title ownership. The case at the centre of the renewed legal tussle is the Shringar Gauri case filed by five Hindu women in August 2021. They sought legal permission for year-round worship of the idols of Hindu deities located on the outer wall of the Gyanvapi premises.

Over 7,000 crore budgeted for education remains unspent in current fiscal year

The Union government fell short of its targeted expenditure on education in 2023-24 by Rs 7,539 crore, with the amount spent on key schemes in the school education sector such as Samagra Shiksha and midday meal remaining below the allocation made in last year's annual budget. The shortfall in meeting the targeted expenditure in running these schemes is significant as the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports then chaired by BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vinay P Sahasrabudde had in 2022 asked the government to identify

the factors behind it. These details emerged after Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the interim budget Thursday in which the government has earmarked Rs 1.25 lakh crore for education, which is 14.47 per cent more than what it managed to spend so far in this sector in the current financial year. In 2023-24, the government had set out to spend Rs 1.16 lakh crore on education but spent Rs 1.08 lakh crore, the sector-wise details on expenditure incurred by the central government shows. A closer look at the fine print shows that this gap was essentially an out-

come of funds under Samagra Shiksha, midday meal (PM Poshan) and PM SHRI remaining unspent. For instance, Samagra Shiksha, which encompasses all major policies and programmes in school education, received a budgetary allocation of Rs 37,453 crore in 2023-24. However, the revised estimate which captures the actual expenditure incurred under a particular head shows that Rs 33,000 was spent to run the scheme. In the latest budget, the government has set aside Rs 37,500 to support the scheme. It is funded by the central government and states under a 60:40

ratio like in the case of PM Poshan. In 2023-24, Rs 10,000 crore was spent to run the scheme, as against the allocation of Rs 11,600 crore. This year, PM Poshan received budgetary support of Rs 12,467 crore. In the case of PM SHRI, Rs 4,000 crore was allotted, of which Rs 2,800 crore was spent. Announced in September 2022, under PM SHRI Schools (PM Schools for Rising India), as many as 14,500 schools across states and Union Territories will be redeveloped by the central government to reflect the key features of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

Lok Sabha Elections to Save Constitution

Prior to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, PM Modi additionally announced and dedicated a number of other development projects valued at more than Rs 19,100 crore. Eight major corporations have made investments in the township thus far, according to Greater Noida Authority officials



Delhi: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge sounded the Lok Sabha election poll trumpet in the capital, saying the elections were a war to safeguard the Constitution and democracy and that if BJP won, everyone would be PM Modi's "permanent" slave. Kharge told a party workers' convention in east Delhi's Geeta Colony, a Congress stronghold

until recently, that BJP had abandoned farmers, youths, and women by failing to fulfill Narendra Modi's electoral promises. The convention was held to mobilize party workers as Congress was negotiating a Lok Sabha partnership with AAP in the city. The deal's delay has raised worries among some, even though both sides are confident about an

alliance. Congress wants four seats, AAP three. Kharge accused the BJP of harassing opposition politicians and forcing them to join the BJP. He praised Congress MP Rahul Gandhi for his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, which he called the biggest stride by any party leader.

"He is seeking justice for everyone, including youngsters, women,

farmers and poor." Kharge noted that with rising commodity costs, the country had fewer jobs. He branded Modi "jhooton ka sardaar" for promising 2 crore employment every year and Rs 15 lakh in everyone's bank accounts but not delivering. The Congress leader also accused the PM of tyranny and using emotion and religion

to achieve his agenda. Rahul Gandhi stated, "Modiji wants to enslave the people of the country once again, due to which Dalits, backwards, and tribals will suffer," encouraging Congress members to reach out to every family and protest BJP's "divisive" agenda. Congress must win in Delhi to save democracy and the Constitution, he urged. "People from all over the country come to Delhi and if we win Delhi, we will win the entire country," said. Kharge further accused the BJP of "misusing" inquiry agencies and said that 411 opposition MPs, MLAs, and senior leaders were intimidated, harassed, or forced to join BJP in the past decade. Kharge advised Delhi Congress workers to prioritize booth work.

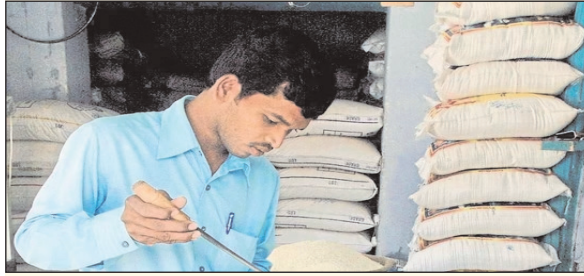
Before LS elections, Kerala's PC George joins BJP

Delhi: BJP sought Christian support in this year's Lok Sabha elections by adding former MLA P C George. The assembly ex-chief whip and his son Shone, a Kottayam district panchayat member, joined BJP at a New Delhi event while George's Kerala Janapaksham (Secular) merged. Union minister V Muraleedharan and BJP leaders Prakash and Anil Antony attended. Kerala Janapaksham (Secular) led by P C George is uniting with the BJP to support Prime Minister Narendra Modi's aim

to make India Viksit Bharat by 2047 "BJP national secretary Antony stated. JP Nadda posted on X: "I welcome senior Kerala leader Shri PC George, along with Shone George Ji and the members of his party, J a n a p a k s h a m (Secular), into the BJP family." George said Kerala was in a "agrarian crisis" under the LDF administration and he had to join Modi to change it. He claimed he would run for Pathanamthitta in the general election if the BJP asked. George, who has avoided the UDF and LDF, support-

ed the NDA in the recent Lok Sabha elections. He has met with BJP state and national leaders for over two months. George said he consulted Church leaders before joining the BJP. George joined the NDA in the last Lok Sabha elections to support BJP president K Surendran in Pathanamthitta, but he quit soon after. The 73-year-old sought BJP negotiations after Congress leaders opposed his return to the UDF. George was "a fiery speaker and a great Catholic diocese leader" according to Javadekar.

Centre will offer Bharat branded subsidised rice



Delhi: Currently, the government sells subsidized Bharat Atta at 27.50 per kg and Bharat Dal at ₹60 per kg. From next week, the Union government would sell packaged subsidised rice under the Bharat brand, while all traders in the cereal have been required to reveal their holdings to curb rising cereal inflation, an official said. Union food secretary Sanjeev Chopra told reporters that the government will not lift export prohibitions and trade restrictions "till prices come down", referring to market speculation that the government may loosen food trade restrictions. The government restricted wheat, rice, and onion exports in 2022 and last year to bolster supplies. These bans remain. The government would sell Bharat brand rice at 29 per kg starting next week. The food department's top official said NAFED, which would

sell Bharat rice, will target rice inflation hotspots on a heat map. Chopra said rice prices have climbed 14.5% in retail and 15.5% in wholesale markets in the past year, pushing the government to tackle food inflation. Chopra announced that the Centre will sell subsidised 'Bharat Rice' at ₹29 per kg for retail through two cooperatives, NAFED and NCCF, and state-backed retail chain Kendriya Bhandar. Online retailers will sell Bharat Rice. Currently, the Union government sells Bharat Atta at 27.50 per kg and Bharat Dal (chickpea) at 60 per kilogram. December retail inflation reached a four-month high due to food items. December cereals and vegetables were cheaper than November, but food costs continued to rise. In December, food price inflation reached 9.53%, up from 8.70% in November.

Bihar portfolio allocation: Kumar keeps home, Samrat receives finance

Delhi: Chief minister Nitish Kumar assigned new Bihar cabinet positions. Kumar kept the home department, while BJP deputy chief minister Samrat Chaudhary took finance, health, and sports. BJP deputy chief minister Vijay Sinha would supervise agriculture, road building, and others. Six days after Kumar and two BJP deputy chief ministers formed the new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) cabinet, portfolio distribution began. The portfolio allocation followed the 2020 methodology, but cabinet enlargement would come later. Kumar kept the home, GAD, vigilance, cabinet coordination, and election departments in his portfolio. Despite alliance partner changes, these departments have supported



him since 2005. The finance ministry, which had gone to Kumar-led JD-U for the first time since 2005, is back with the BJP. Besides finance, Deputy CM Choudhary oversees commercial taxes, health, election, urban development, housing, Panchayati Raj, industries, animal husbandry & fisheries, sports, and law. Agriculture, road construction, land reforms & revenue, sugarcane, mining and geology, labor resources, art, culture & youth, minor irrigation, public health & engineering were allocated to Deputy

CM Sinha. Cooperatives, backward and extremely backward classes, disaster management, environment, forests & climate change, and tourism are Prem Kumar's portfolios as the third BJP minister. After the grand alliance government was formed in 2022, senior JD-U politician Vijay Kumar Choudhary returned to the education department. His other areas include water resources, parliamentary affairs, building construction, transport, information, and public relations.

NTPC to buy 5,000cr KSK Mahanadi power unit

NTPC is set to acquire the beleaguered KSK Mahanadi power station in Chhattisgarh, one of India's largest single-site greenfield projects with proposed 3,600 MW capacity, making it the state-run utility's second acquisition of a stressed asset. People in the know said the investment in the project has been valued at Rs 5,000 crore but declined to indicate NTPC's acquisition price. The project is located in Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh. KSK Mahanadi came under corporate insolvency resolution process in April 2022 after it defaulted on Rs 21,760 crore loans in March 2018. NTPC in September 2022 acquired Jhabua Power's 600 MW Seoni plant in Madhya Pradesh for Rs 925 crore as part of plan to buy stranded assets to meet long-term capacity addition target of 7,000 GW.



Alliance with TMC unlikely in Assam

Delhi: Assam Congress president Bhupen Borah hinted that the party might reconsider its plans for seat-sharing with TMC in the state for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. This was in response to TMC's refusal to form an alliance with Congress in Bengal. "In Bengal, Trinamool offered two of the 42 Lok Sabha seats to Congress, which had demanded six. TMC chief and CM Mamata Banerjee rejected any possibility of an alliance with Congress. Therefore, you can understand our possible stand in Assam, where there are 14 Lok Sabha seats," said Borah, currently touring southern Assam's Barak Valley. In 2019, BJP secured nine seats in Assam, while its allies AGP and BPF - failed to win any. Congress managed to secure three, while AIUDF and an Independent won one seat each. Borah urged Congress members to take personal responsibility for their designated booths, aiming to strengthen the party's presence across Barak Valley. "Assam PCC will help and assist each and every party worker," he said.



Govts not bound to provide old-age pensions

Delhi: Supreme Court said govts are not bound to provide old-age pensions and said the judiciary can't direct states to provide old-age pensions to more than one person in a family. A petition was filed challenging Andhra Pradesh gov't's decision to provide old-age pension to only one person per family, with the exception of a supplementary old-age pension would be given to a family if the



additional person in the family belonged to disabled category. A bench headed by CJI D Y Chandrachud said, "Ultimately we have to

take into account the paying capacity of the state govts, who incur expenditure on so many social welfare schemes. These are purely policy decisions. The state govts are not bound to give old-age pensions." The AP gov't last year issued a notification enhancing pension amount for old persons, widow, toddy tappers, weavers, single women, fishermen, among others to 3,000 per month.

Karnataka government allocates 100 crore for Ram temple renovations

Delhi: CM Siddaramaiah of Karnataka allotted 100 crore for renovating old Ram temples, igniting political disputes before Lok Sabha elections. Bengaluru: Siddaramaiah, known as the atheist, launched a Ram Temple in Mahadevapura, Bengaluru, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi consecrated Ram Lalla Idol in Ayodhya. The gathering was symbolic to challenge Hindutva, but sources claim the government plans to exploit Ram Mandir politics to help Congress win the polls. The Siddaramaiah government plans to reno-

vate at least 100 temples, many of them old, according to departmental papers. The Congress government has earmarked ₹100 crore to renovate old Ram temples in the state. The official stated the temples will receive 210 crore in financial aid, while a total allocation of 690.28 crore for other departmental activities is envisaged. The ₹100 crore funding for renovating 100 ancient Ram temples has aroused political controversies, especially with the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections and the BJP's focus on the Ayodhya Ram Temple issue.

Haryana government starts Global City phase 1

Delhi: The Haryana government has begun Phase 1 of the Global City project in Gurugram, which will contain sophisticated residential and commercial spaces. The first phase, scheduled for completion in December 2026, will cost ₹940 crore. The 1,000-acre project will include commercial skyscrapers, offices, shops, hospitals, schools, and transit. HSIIDC will run the Global City until 2033, then allottees will pay for maintenance. The government has raised HSIIDC's working capital ceiling by 1,500 crore. Officials familiar with the plan claimed the Haryana government has started Phase 1 of the Global City project, a 1,000-acre mixed-



use development in Gurugram along the Dwarka Expressway with modern infrastructure and services. HSIIDC (Haryana state industrial and infrastructure development corporation) officials claimed the contractor has taken over the project site and will create roads, electricity, water supply, and other infrastructure on 587 acres by December 2026. They stated that Phase 1 will cost ₹940 crore to

build. Global City is being developed in Sectors 36, 36B, 37, and 37B. Commercial towers, offices, residential towers, retail spaces, hospitals, schools, a center for innovation, start-ups, an incubation zone, hospitality and cultural zones, 12 million square metres of built-up area, green spaces, water bodies, and an internal mass rapid transportation system will be built. In the last three years, the

state government launched and marketed this project through many national and international programs. The project began in 2019 and was awarded a first phase tender in September. First-phase trunk infrastructure is being built on 587 acres. The project will feature 13km of internal roadways, 82 acres of landscaping, a 26-km storm water drain network, 11.96km potable water network, 12km recycled water pipeline, and 10km utility tunnel. The work should finish by December 2026, said HSIIDC managing director Yash Garg. One of three high-tension power lines that pass across the project site will be moved by August 31, he said.

JD(S) to sign Lok Sabha seat-sharing arrangement with Karnataka BJP, may receive 4

Delhi: BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) are finalizing their seat-sharing deal for Karnataka Lok Sabha elections, which they announced last September. Sources expect BJP to compete 24 of 28 seats and JD(S) will contest 4 seats. Despite the anticipation, officials of both parties are keeping quiet about the details, planning to reveal them once the polls are announced in March. JD(S) seats include Mandya, Hassan, Kolar, and Chikkaballapur, sources said.

The Congress spent Rs 72 crore on Rahul Gandhi's first yatra, or 15% of their yearly budget.

Delhi: Rahul Gandhi, the general secretary of the Congress, conducted the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which cost Rs 71.8 crore and saw him travel more than 4,000 kilometers between September 2022 and January 2023 from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. As per the party's last annual audit report submitted with the Election Commission, the yatra cost accounted for almost 30% of Congress's administrative and general expenses for the year 2022-2023 and 15.3% of the total yearly spend.

MCD searches for property close to Yamuna to plant compensating trees

"We sought permission from the forest department for clearing trees from the identified 49-acre site in lieu of doing compensatory afforestation at another land at Ghumanhera near Haryana border," stated an MCD official."



Delhi: The Delhi Development Authority was allegedly written to by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) requesting the provision of a plot of land at O-zone (next to Yamuna) for compensatory afforestation. The city authority announced that although Sultanpur

Dabas contains a lot of kikar trees, they have planned to create a second artificial landfill site there.

"We sought permission from the forest department for clearing trees from the identified 49-acre site in lieu of doing compensatory afforestation at another land at Ghumanhera

near Haryana border," stated an MCD official. "But later on, the department added a need to choose a location close to Yamuna for compensatory afforestation. In this regard, we have written to the DDA to request land for planting the trees, and we are awaiting their response," the

spokesman stated. However, a top DDA official claimed that the authority has not heard from MCD on this matter in any correspondence. The concessionaire is expected to deliver the inert and other processing waste from the planned waste to energy (WtE) plants in Bawana to this con-

structed landfill, according to the civic authority. In the meanwhile, inert or ash produced by Tehkhand and Okhla WtE facilities would be transferred to the first engineered landfill in Tehkhand, where construction has already begun and is scheduled to open at any point this month. According to officials, because both engineered landfill sites will guarantee garbage disposal in a scientific manner, they will differ from ordinary landfills. In order to prevent leachate from seeping into the earth, these locations will also include a leachate treatment plant. "We have the tools necessary to do the task at the Tehkhand location.

AIIMS to train all staff in CPR courses

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) will train and certify its doctors, paramedical staff and all other employees with made-in-India CPR courses for cardiac arrest treatment. In a move to become a 100% cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)-trained institute, AIIMS signed a memorandum of understanding with the Indian Resuscitation Council Federation (IRCF). It will be a continuous process, said the authorities. According to doctors, many youngsters are recently suffering car-



diac arrest due to lifestyle medications and a stressful environment. Dr Shailendra Kumar of the anaesthesiology department, who will lead the programme, said the courses had been developed with experts from all over the country and drafted considering the

country's cultural and socio-economic background. The head of anaesthesiology, pain medicine and critical care, Dr Lokesh Kashyap, said a four-hour course had been designed for lay people, a one-day course for paramedics and a two-day course for medics. Prof Rakesh Garg, IRCF scientific director, said cardiac arrest could happen anywhere. "Usually the success rate of CPR decreases by 7-10% with each minute and it should be started within the initial few minutes of the arrest.

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 Unauthorised 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 Unauthorised Colonies have sewerage networks. Works of providing sewerage network in remaining 768 Unauthorised Colonies are at various stages," said the submission by Kumar.

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 Unauthorised 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 Unauthorised Colonies have sewerage networks. Works of providing sewerage network in remaining 768 Unauthorised Colonies are at various stages," said the submission by Kumar.

RBI orders Paytm Payments Bank to suspend most services after Feb. 29

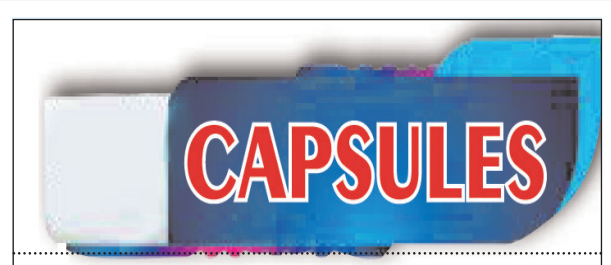
Delhi: The Reserve Bank ordered Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL) to suspend taking deposits or top-ups in user accounts, wallets, FASTags, and other instruments after February 29. Customers may receive interest, cashbacks, or refunds at any time. The central bank stated that chronic non-compliances and serious supervisory concerns prompted the direction. The RBI barred PPBL from enrolling new customers immediately on March 11, 2022. Paytm group firm PPBL did not comment on the RBI's bank-related direction. After February 29, 2024, customer accounts, prepaid instruments, wallets,

FASTags, NCMC cards, etc. cannot be deposited or topped up, except for interest, cashbacks, or refunds, which can be credited whenever "RBI. Up to their available balance, users can withdraw or use balances from savings bank accounts, current accounts, prepaid instruments, FASTags, and National Common Mobility Cards without limits. "No other banking services, other than those ... like fund transfers (irrespective of name and nature of services like AEPS, IMPS, etc), BBPOU and UPI facility should be provided by the bank after February 29, 2024," said. RBI also ordered the termination of One97

Communications Ltd. and Paytm Payments Services' 'nodal accounts' by February 29, 2024. One97 Communications owns 49% of Paytm Payments Bank limited but considers it as an affiliate rather than a subsidiary. RBI noted that any pipeline and nodal account transactions commenced on or before February 29, 2024 must be settled by March 15, 2024, and no further transactions will be allowed. After failing to meet service-level agreement requirements, NHA's Indian Highway Management Company (IHMC) stopped Paytm Payments Bank from issuing new FASTags.

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.



NDMC raises Delhi parking fees

Delhi: In order to reduce air pollution, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) will levy higher parking costs till April 30 or the end of Grap stage 2. The fees doubled in November 2023 for NDMC-operated and commercial concessionaire-managed parking lots. The Delhi Municipal Corporation (MCD) has not raised parking fees. City experts want a more thorough and uniform parking fee scheme. The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) will continue collecting higher parking costs under the Graded Response Action Plan (Grap) to tackle air pollution. The civic authority ordered that the higher cost remain until April 30 or the withdrawal of Grap stage 2, whichever comes first. Delhi has had Grap stage 2 curbs from October 21, 2023. For surface parking in NDMC lots, four-wheelers pay 20 per hour (maximum ₹100 per day) while two-wheelers pay ₹10 per hour. Multi Level parking sites charge ₹10 for four hours for vehicles and ₹5 for two-wheelers. The council doubled these charges at its parking sites on November 13, 2023, and private concessionaires' parking lots received the enhanced rates on November 28, 2023. NDMC announced on Wednesday that parking costs will be raised to prevent air quality from worsening according to statutory orders from the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM). Thus, NDMC has extended additional parking rates till April 30. The CAQM order influenced NDMC's decision. The statement stated that the earlier parking price increase has been prolonged until April 30 or CAM withdrawal, whichever comes first. Indeed, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which oversees 96% of Delhi, has not raised parking fees.

Delhi approves draft Solar Policy, triples aim to 6,000 MW by 2025

Delhi: Delhi approved its ambitious Solar Policy 2022, which triples installed capacity to 6,000 MW by 2025 from 2,000 MW. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia stated Delhi's new solar policy aims to develop 6,000 MW of solar capacity by 2025 to increase solar energy's proportion of Delhi's annual electricity demand from 9% to 25%, the highest in India. In 2016, the government aimed to install 2,000 MW of solar electricity by 2025. The strategy intends to build a single-window state portal operated by the Delhi Solar Cell that provides solar PV system benefits, process rules, and timelines. "The government will offer generation-based incentives (GBI) and capital subsidies to encourage solar energy adoption. Sisodia stated Community Solar and Peer-to-Peer trade will be available for the first time in the country. He claimed Delhi residential and business users will receive capital subsidies. The draft Delhi Solar Policy 2022 will be available for 30 days for stakeholder input before being tabled in the Cabinet for final approval.

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 from sale of surplus power and charging electric vehicles (EVs) as well as employment opportunities in the solar and EV charging ecosystems. Neeraj Kuldeep of CEEW-EF said solarisation of demand from these households will save about Rs 2 lakh crore for discoms over the 25-year life of the solar plant. Deloitte India's Anujesh Dwivedi saw the scheme boosting renewable energy capacity addition and fostering a more resilient and decentralised power infrastructure.

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.

Saras fair fragrant with Himachali traditional flavors



Chandigarh
The SARAS Mela which being organized by the Rural Livelihood Mission of the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt of HP at the Exhibition Ground, Sector 34 is just not serving a exhibition and sale platform of numerous women folks associated with Self Help Group but also serving the taste of the mountain flavors of their state. More than a dozen SHGs hailing from Kullu, Mandi, Solan, Shimla, Kangra, Hamirpur, Kinnaur, Chamba, Una and Bilaspur are cooking fresh local dishes.

Rajmah Madra, Moong Dal, Khatta, Sweet Rice, Kaddu ka Mittha, Kahdi, Telimah, Luske, Patande, Ashkali, Kulth Dal, Pahadi Arbi, Babroo, Bichhu Booti are being served in Chambiali, Mandiyali, Bilaspuri and Kangri Dham. There are certain delicacies that are made without using garlic and onion. Many dishes are made with ample amounts of pure ghee while some are cooked in mustard oil. In the era of fast food, these women are keeping their traditional food alive and the local people are also relishing the same in large numbers. According to the organizers, these dishes are usually prepared only on special occasions, but now their taste is being served outside Himachal Pradesh through such platforms. Many millet dishes can be seen in the fair. Momos and Siddu are being prepared from millet, are turning the hot favourite. Millet pulao is yet another astonishing feature of the food fair as red rice kheer, alsu or haldi laddoo and Guchhi ka Soup are other options which food lovers are opting for.

Klopp to take sabbatical, rules out ever managing another English club

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp plans to take a break from football for a year once his time in charge at Anfield finishes at the end of the season. Klopp said he lacked the energy to go on as he made a shock announcement on Friday that he will step down in May. The 56-year-old German has previously been linked with the German national team. But Klopp, who has won the Champions League and Premier League among

seven trophies since taking over at Liverpool in 2015, said his immediate plan was for a break and that he would never manage another English club. "Whatever will happen in the future I don't know now but no club, no country for the next year. No other English club ever, I can promise that," said Klopp at a press conference. The former Borussia Dortmund coach could go out on a high with Liverpool five points clear at the top of the

Premier League and in the running for three other trophies. Thanks to a series of summer signings, the Reds have bounced back to form this season after a turbulent 2022/23 campaign and Klopp said he was leaving with a squad in place that would succeed even without him. "It's too important to do it with 50 percent, it is just too important and this team is set up for the future," he added on his reasoning for stepping down.

Australian Open: Qinwen Zheng looks to stun champion Aryna Sabalenka

Qinwen Zheng is a problem solver in the mould of one who breaks it down before putting it together. An artist, who loves the lines. The 21-year-old Chinese, in her maiden Grand Slam final, has sparked the happy vibe of the Australian Open.

Talking about her opponent in the final, defending champion Aryna Sabalenka, the 12th seed said the world No. 2 was a complete player. "I would say, most big hitter in the tour right now. She got the most-big serve, most big forehand, big

backhand," Zheng said. Just as well that the backhand isn't 'most big'. Zheng, from Shiyan in northwestern Hubei, is 5 ft 10 and is happy to karaoke in three languages - English, Spanish and Chinese.

CAPSULES

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank's 187 Unbanked Rural Centres now cater to over 5.5 lakh customers in rural India

Fatehabad: Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (Ujjivan SFB), one of the leading small finance banks in the country, now caters to the banking needs of 5.5 lakh un-served and under-served rural customers through its vast network of 187 Unbanked Rural Centres (URCs). Through these URCs, Ujjivan SFB offers Agriculture and Crop Loans, Affordable Housing Loans, Individual Loans, and Business Loans for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. The Bank also provides Term Deposits and Savings Account at attractive interest rates and Current Accounts. These URCs offers personalised banking services like doorstep banking and technology enabled hassle-free banking experience, reducing the need for long-distance travel for banking needs. Mr. Ittira Davis, MD & CEO, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, said, "At Ujjivan SFB, we believe inclusive banking has potential to transform the lives of the people. Our Unbanked Rural Centre are the catalysts for the positive change, as a responsible mass market bank, we will continue to focus on deploying relevant and meaningful banking services with innovative technology solutions to assist unserved and under-served customers. Our mission is to promote digital and financial inclusion and prosperity for all segments of society". Ujjivan SFB offers a range of Agriculture and Crop Loans starting from Rs.26,000 to Rs.25 lakh, catering to the banking and financial needs of the rural population operating in different segments of farming and allied occupations.

Northern Arc Capital Limited files DRHP with SEBI for IPO

GURUGRAM: Northern Arc Capital Limited, a diversified financial services platform has filed Draft Red Herring prospectus with market regulator Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI). The company plans to raise funds via Initial Public Offerings through issue of equity share of face value Rs. 10 each comprising of fresh issue aggregating upto Rs. 500 crore (The "Fresh Issue"), and an Offer for Sale aggregating up to 21,052,629 equity shares (The "Offer for Sale"). Northern Arc is a diversified financial services platform set up primarily with the mission of catering to the diverse retail credit requirements of the under-served households and

● a domain expertise in enabling credit across the focused sectors in India, namely, micro, small and medium enterprises ("MSMEs")

businesses in India. Northern Arc has developed a domain expertise in enabling credit across the focused sectors in India, namely, micro, small and medium enterprises ("MSMEs") financing, microfinance ("MFI"), consumer finance, vehicle finance, affordable housing finance and agricultural finance. Northern Arc has been operating in the MSME, MFI and consumer finance sectors for over

13 years, 14 years and eight years, respectively. The Offer for Sale aggregating up to 21,052,629 equity shares, includes equity shares aggregating up to 4,922,949 by LeapFrog Financial Inclusion India (II) Ltd; equity shares aggregating up to 1,265,476 by Accion Africa-Asia Investment Company, equity shares aggregating up to 4,254,744 by Augusta Investments II Pte. Ltd; equity shares aggregating up to 2,237,030 by Eight Roads Investments Mauritius II Limited; equity shares aggregating up to 1,631,949 by Dvara rate trustee, Dvara Holdings (formerly known as Dvara Dvara Trusteeship Services Private Limited)).

Youth deliberate upon World Cancer Day during a webinar organised by Nada India

Shimla

The cancer growth rate in Himachal Pradesh is 2.2 percent while the national rate is 0.6 percent. The figures are alarming but with timely self-change and awareness, the situation can be controlled. These sentiments were expressed during the national webinar organized by Nada India Foundation to mark the World Cancer Day on Sunday. In the webinar, cancer experts from HP connected with the youth of the state and across the country and exchanged thoughts on

the subject. According to Sunil Vatsyayan, founder of Nada India Foundation and Karmaveer Award winner, youth power decides the fate of the nation and awareness programs on such occasions prove to be meaningful. According to Dr. Naina Negi, Senior Resident, Department of Oncology, Indira Gandhi Medical College emphasized that it is very important for people to be aware about tobacco and non-tobacco products which invite cancer in the near future. In his address,

Prof Vinay Bhardwaj, Head, Department of Public Health Dentistry at the Government Dental College and Hospital, Shimla said that the Govt is committed to support the multi stakeholders working in this campaign. Vatsyayan believes that the loss suffered by the state and the country during the Covid pandemic can be compensated only by imposing additional tax on tobacco. Also, by making them expensive, they can be kept out of reach of the youth. He advocated that other

states of the country should also set an example like Himachal Pradesh. Journalist Rajneesh Sharma and cancer survivor Prem Sood also expressed their views during the program. In the webinar, the youth also demanded closure of designated smoking areas created in public places. In the past, Nada India has been organizing such sensitized programs in collaboration with Himachal Pradesh University and various departments of the state government.

Capital Small Finance Bank Limited (the "Bank" or "Capital SFB")

GURUGRAM: Capital Small Finance Bank Limited (the "Bank" or "Capital SFB"), shall open the initial public offering of its Equity Shares of face value ? 10 on Wednesday, February 7, 2024. ("Offer") The Anchor Investor Bidding Date shall be Tuesday, February 6, 2024. The Offer will open on Wednesday, February 7, 2024 for subscription and will close on Friday, February 9, 2024. The Price Band of the Offer has been fixed at ? 445 to ? 468 per Equity Share. Bids can be made for a minimum of 32 Equity Shares and in multiples of 32 Equity Shares thereafter. The initial public offering comprises a fresh issue of Equity Shares aggregating to 4,500 million [? 450

crore] ("Fresh Issue") and an offer of sale of up to 1,561,329 Equity Shares by the Selling Shareholders ("Offer for Sale" and together with the Fresh Issue, the "Offer"). The Bank proposes to utilize the Net Proceeds from the Fresh Issue towards augmenting the Bank's Tier - I capital base to meet its future capital requirements. As the Bank continues to grow its loan portfolio and asset base, the Bank expects to require additional capital in order to continue to meet applicable capital adequacy ratios with respect to its business. The Bank intends to grow its loan advances which would require Tier - I capital to comply with the applicable capital

requirements. Further, the proceeds from the Fresh Issue will also be used towards meeting the expenses in relation to the Offer. (the "Objects of the Issue"). The Offer for Sale comprises Equity Shares aggregating up to 836,728 Equity Shares by Oman India Joint Investment Fund II; up to 151,153 Equity Shares by Amicus Capital Private Equity I LLP; up to 17,544 Equity Shares by Amicus Capital Partners India Fund I (collectively, the "Investor Selling Shareholders") and up to 555,904 Equity Shares by certain other persons listed in the Red Herring Prospectus (collectively, the "Other Selling Shareholders") and together with the Investor Selling Shareholders.

Unveiled: The Second Edition of Chivas Glassware presented, FDCI INDIA MEN'S WEEKEND in association with HSBC!

New Delhi: The Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) hosted this distinguished event at the historic Port and Jail Complex in Sinquerim, Goa on the 3rd and 4th February, 2024. Building on the success of the inaugural show, this year's edition promised to be a celebration of India's finest menswear designers, converging at the historically significant Agud Port and Jail Complex. This heritage structure, steeped in the legacy of India's freedom struggle, serves as a fitting backdrop for an event that bridges the gap between tradition and modernity. Event Highlights: Coveted Showcase and presentation by renowned menswear designers, including Antar-Agni,



Bloni, Khanijo, Sahil Aneja, Rohit Gandhi + Rahul Khanna, Kommal & Ratul Sood, Manoviraj Khosla, Siddhartha Tytler, Dhruv Vaish, Countrymade, Rohit Kamra and Pawan Sachdeva, Paresh Lamba Signatures, Vivek Karunakaran, Krishna Mehta, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Ashish N Soni, Shantnu & Nikhil, JJ Valaya,

unveiled their latest creations, showcasing a seamless blend of innovation and artistry. Sunil Sethi, Chairman, FDCI: "FDCI was delighted to present this unique showcase with 19 leading Menswear designers. We are thankful to Chivas Glassware and HSBC for joining hands with us to power this mem-

orable event at Agud Port & Jail Complex, Sinquerim, Goa. The event aimed to spotlight the exponential growth of menswear fashion, illustrating this evolution from conventional attire to a refreshing representation of style. Each designer brought a unique perspective, demonstrating the transformation journey".

Thunberg joined a march in southern England

LONDON: Climate activist Greta Thunberg joined a march in southern England on Saturday to protest the use of private jets and the expansion of an airport. Hundreds of local residents and activists holding banners and placards that read "Ban Private Jets" marched to Farnborough Airport, which mostly serves private aircraft. Some beat drums while others lit pink smoke flares. The airport, located in Hampshire County about 40 miles (64 kilometers) southwest of London, applied last year to increase its maximum number of flights from 50,000 to 70,000 a year. Groups working to fight climate change, including the organizer of Saturday's protest, Extinction Rebellion, say private jets are much more polluting than commercial passenger airliners. Flights to and from Farnborough Airport carried an average of 2½ passengers per flight in 2022, the group said.

CM Yogi dedicates UP's biggest annual Budget to date to Lord Shri Ram Lalla

Lucknow Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday dedicated the biggest annual Budget of Uttar Pradesh to date to Lord Shri Ram. Addressing a press conference following the presentation of Budget 2024-25 in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly, he said that Lord Shri Ram epitomizes the well-being of people, asserting his presence right from the inception till the conclusion of the Budget. CM Yogi articulated that the new Budget offers a perfect roadmap for comprehensive and balanced development of the state, aligning with the aspirations of its populace. The Chief Minister added that the new Uttar Pradesh is all about celebration, industry and hope. Budget sees 6.7 percent increase compared to 2023-24. Congratulating State Finance Minister Suresh Khanna for presenting the Budget for the fifth time, the



CM remarked that this Budget of Rs 7,36,437.71 crore is the biggest to date, 6.7 percent up compared to the budget of 2023-24, and is dedicated to faith, Antyodaya and economy. The increase in the size of the state budget is based on the commitment of the double engine government to expand the economy of the state as well as the Prime Minister's vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Prayas, he stated. No additional tax for the common man. Highlighting key aspects of the Budget, the Chief Minister underscored a groundbreaking provision for capital expen-

diture, amounting to Rs 2,03,782.38 crore, describing it as a testament to the government's commitment to bolstering infrastructure. Emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between infrastructure investment, job creation, and economic fortification, he envisioned a significant leap in the state's GDP, projecting an increase from Rs 12 lakh crore in 2016-17 to an impressive Rs 25 lakh crore by 2024-25. In a notable achievement, the Chief Minister highlighted the government's success in doubling the per capita income, propelling Uttar Pradesh to the position of the second-largest economy in the country.

Govt launches Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan to connect youth with self

Lucknow

The Yogi government has unveiled a significant initiative for the youth of Uttar Pradesh in the budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. In the budget announcement, Finance Minister Suresh Khanna revealed the launch of the "Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyami Vikas Abhiyan." This scheme is designed to empower educated and skilled youth by providing financial support for the establishment of new micro-enterprises, fostering self-employment opportunities. A budgetary allocation of Rs 1000 crore has been

proposed for this. This innovative step by the Yogi government seeks to generate employment in both rural and urban areas through the establishment of fresh micro-enterprises. Under this, interest-free loans of up to a maximum of Rs 5 lakh will be provided to projects in the industry and service sectors. The Self-Employment Mission aims to benefit one million units over the next decade by funding 100,000 units annually. Individuals trained through government schemes such as Vishwakarma Shram

Samman Yojana, One District One Product Training and Toolkit Scheme, Scheduled Caste/Tribe/Other Backward Class Training Scheme, and Skill Upgradation by the Uttar Pradesh Skilled Development Mission will be eligible.

Along with this, youth holding a certificate/course/diploma/degree from any school/educational institution will also benefit from this scheme. Micro units in the industry and service sector with a maximum project cost of up to Rs 5.00 lakh will be eligible.

The Delhi govt. will create a useful curriculum for special education schools

Delhi: The Delhi government has made the decision to give special education instructors access to a comprehensive digital resource library that is linked to the functional curriculum on an inclusive and accessible learning management system in state-run schools. This would enable teachers to

undertake continuing formative evaluations of children with special needs.

Officials say that the Delhi government's inclusive education section is developing a functioning curriculum that will allow students with special needs to get instruction and learning from the

same source in all of the school's locations. "The functional curriculum's goal is to meet the needs of students with special needs enrolled in state-run schools. It particularly includes the development of life skills outside of the classroom," a Delhi government official stated.

CAPSULES

UP Budget 2024-2025 (Women and Child Development, Social Welfare)

Yogi govt announces provision of more than Rs 13,000 crore for the Women and Child Development Department. Allocates Rs 700 crore for Kanya Sumangala, Rs 5129 crore for Nutrition programme & Rs 971 crore for payment of honorarium to Anganwadi workers and assistants Lucknow, February 5. The Yogi government, in a significant commitment to the welfare of women, has allocated a substantial budget exceeding Rs 13,000 crore for the Women and Child Development Department, thereby continuing and enhancing ongoing schemes. Within this allocation, the government has earmarked approximately Rs 5129 crore for the nutrition program, further reinforcing its dedication to the well-being of women and children. Another noteworthy provision of approximately Rs 971 crore is proposed for the honorarium payments to Anganwadi workers and helpers, recognizing their crucial role in grassroots-level service. Additionally, a budget provision of Rs 700 crore has been outlined for the Kanya Sumangala Scheme, underscoring the government's commitment to promoting the welfare and empowerment of young women. The comprehensive approach extends to schemes for the holistic development of children aged 6 months to 6 years, pregnant women, and lactating mothers, implemented through 1,89,796 Anganwadi centers across all 75 districts in the state. Remarkably, over 2 crore 6 lakh beneficiaries are benefiting from supplementary nutrition.

Significant budgetary allocations to usher in a new phase of development in Ayodhyadham

Lucknow/Ayodhya

February 5 "For centuries, the life of Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram has served as a source of inspiration for India and the world, urging individuals to aspire for higher ideals. His unwavering commitment to honor his father's word, forsaking royal luxuries without hesitation to embark on exile, and resolutely suppressing the wicked and unrighteous sets a unique and unparalleled example of royal righteousness." The statement was part of the Budget 2024-25 speech in the UP Assembly. There was repeated references to Lord Shri Ram and the spiritual essence of Ayodhya through out the speech. Committed to restoring the grandeur of the 'Treta Yuga' in the divine Ayodhya Dham, the Yogi government unveiled its proposals for the entire Ayodhya divi-



sion in its budget speech. The proposals for Ayodhya in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025, include significant projects such as the expansion and beautification of access roads in Ayodhya, the enhancement of facilities for tourists/public facilities and the expansion of Maharishi Valmiki International Airport. Key focus on these proj-

ects in Ayodhya in the year 2024-25—In anticipation of a potential rise in the number of tourists and devotees with the construction of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya district, widening/beautification of 03 access roads and development of parking and public facilities are being carried out at 6 places.

UP Budget 2024-25 (Infrastructure and Industrial Development)

Govt allocates substantial budget for transforming Uttar Pradesh into 'Udyog Pradesh' Provision of Rs 250 crore to attract investment of FDI, Fortune Global 500 and Fortune India 500 companies in the state. Allocation of 3 out of 6 nodes of Defense Corridor completed in Yogi government Lucknow, February 5 "Utsav, Udyog aur Ummeed, Yahi hai Naye UP ki Tasveer." Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reiterated this vision with

purpose after the presentation of the monumental budget in the UP Assembly. In the biggest budget ever in the history of the state, the Yogi government has opened the treasury for the development of industry and infrastructure. A provision of Rs 250 crore has been made to attract FDI, as well as investments from Fortune Global 500 and Fortune India 500 companies in the state. Furthermore, the budget earmarks an additional Rs 400 crore

for the Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission. Allocation of 3 nodes out of 6 nodes of Defense Corridor completed To position UP as an industrial hub, significant emphasis has been placed on infrastructure and industrial development. Following the establishment of the new Bundelkhand Industrial Development Authority (BIDA), there are plans to create industrial, commercial, and residential town-

ships on the lines of Noida and Greater Noida. Besides, special schemes related to semiconductors, data centres, startups and IT sector are also included in it. The budget announcement highlighted extensive progress in the state's Defense Corridor, with the allocation of three out of six nodes already completed. More than Rs 2057 crore allocated for the Ganga Expressway project. Talking about infrastructure.

Rs 755 crores allocated for Uttar Pradesh Police, focus on strengthening law enforcement

Lucknow

In a move to ramp up the fight against crime and criminals with an unwavering stance, the Yogi government has allocated a substantial budget of Rs 755 crore to the Uttar Pradesh Police (Home Department) for the fiscal year 2024-25. This

comprehensive budget aims to empower the police force across various aspects, including personnel salaries. A significant portion, amounting to Rs 25.64 crore, is specifically earmarked for bolstering the department's mobility through the acquisition of new vehicles. This strategic investment will see the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC), 18 newly established regional cybercrime units, and the Special Task Force (STF) equipped with modern and efficient vehicles, enhancing their operational effectiveness. New Abhiyan Department office to be set up in Chitrakoot with Rs 5 crores. With a designated budget of Rs 5 crores, a new office of the Abhiyan Department is slated

for construction in Chitrakoot. The Police Department has received a financial allocation of 25.64 crores, directed towards fortifying the capabilities of the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) through the procurement of 120 new vehicles. An earmarked expenditure of 20 crores has been assigned for this purpose, aligning with the prescribed BPRAD standard of the PAC. The acquisition will be facilitated through the involvement of 24 actively engaged companies. In parallel efforts to combat cybercrime within the state, 18 regional cyber crime units have been instituted. A budgetary provision of Rs 5.07 crore has been set aside for the acquisition of new vehicles, catering to the requirements.

Rs 2500 crores allocated for holding Mahakumbh-2025

Lucknow

The Yogi government has earmarked a budget of Rs 2500 crore for the organization of the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj on a grand note in 2025. Utilizing this budget, the Urban Development Department will spearhead the organization of a magnificent Mahakumbh, incorporating world-class facilities. Furthermore, the Yogi government has sanctioned an additional budget of Rs 100 crore for the execution of cultural programs during the Mahakumbh by the Culture Department. —Rs 4K crores allocated for PMAY Yogi government has allocated Rs 25,698 crore to the Urban Development Department in the budget. Under this, a provision of about Rs 3948 crore has been proposed for the



Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) to provide housing facilities for the poor. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), only 2.51 lakh houses were constructed in the state between 2007 and 2017. However, from the year 2017 onwards, an amount exceeding Rs 35,236 crore was transferred through DBT to more than 17.65 lakh beneficiaries in the state.—Rs 1000 crore to address flood and

waterlogging. Similarly, Rs 4500 crore has been proposed for the AMRUT 2.0 scheme launched in the year 2021 whereas Rs 800 crore is proposed under the Mukhyamantri Green Road Infrastructure Development Scheme (Urban), 60 percent up compared to the current year.

Addressing the challenges of floods and waterlogging in state cities, a provision

of Rs 1000 crore is proposed to start the Urban Flood and Storm Water Drainage Scheme. Moreover, Rs 675 crore has been allocated for the 'Mukhyamantri Nagariya Alp Viksit Malin Basti Vikas Yojana', which is almost double as compared to the current year. A budgetary provision of Rs 500 crore has been proposed for a new urban services and infrastructure development scheme. Additionally, Rs 400 crore is earmarked for the State Smart City Scheme, signifying a substantial 63 percent increase from the current fiscal year. Another significant allocation is made with Rs 400 crore proposed for the Kanha Gaushala evam Besahara Pashu Ashray Yojana (Destitute Animal Shelter Scheme).

Pistol shooter Anuradha Devi starts over at 33

Delhi: Anuradha Devi, 33, broke a barrier by winning a World Cup silver in Cairo while pistol shooting. Teens have joined the sport recently. They have dominated several tournaments so much that a 30-year-old could consider they are too old for the sport. Devi pondered about quitting the sport, but she persisted because of her tenacity. Devi, 33, earned silver behind Greece's Anna Korakakki in her international debut. It was perfect timing as India searched for a second air pistol shooter to qualify for the Paris Olympics. Devi is optimistic about another Paris Olympics qualification tournament. "I wanted a medal at my first international tournament, the World Cup. I want to go to the Paris Olympics, but first I want a quota spot," said.