

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Monday 25 March, 2024

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

Kangana, Calcutta High Court ex-judge, Sita Soren, Jitin Prasada in BJP 5th list

Ramesh Awasthi, a former journalist, who had recently organised Sanatan Yatra, has replaced Satyadeo Pachauri in Kanpur.



NEW DELHI: With BJP basking in the glory of fulfilling one of its oldest promises of building Ram Temple in Ayodhya, Arun Govil, an actor who played Lord Ram in the popular 'Ramayan' serial, is in the list of the party's 111 Lok Sabha candidates announced on Sunday. Actor Kangana Ranaut, a staunch advocate of Hindutva, has been named from Himachal Pradesh, where she takes on Congress state president and incumbent MP Pratibha Singh — a signal that BJP won't make any concession for the Congress leader, whose son Vikramaditya Singh, a minister in the state, has been rebellious against his party leadership. In Jharkhand, BJP

benched sitting MP Sunil Soren after announcing his name from the Dumka earlier. He has been replaced by ex-CM Hemant Soren's sister-in-law Sita Soren, who recently shifted to the saffron camp. Among 14 new faces in BJP list of 19 from Bengal is Calcutta HC ex-judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay (Tamluk). Jitin Prasada, who replaced Varun Gandhi from Pilibhit, joined BJP from Congress before the last assembly polls in UP. Apart from Varun, another controversial leader Anant Kumar Hegde and Union minister Ashwini Choubey were dropped, while BJP

fielded its Kerala unit president K Surendra against Rahul Gandhi in Wayanad. Son of former deputy PM Devilal, Ranjit Chautala, figured in the list from Hisar in Haryana, being rewarded minutes after joining the party. Senior BJP leader and one of the prominent OBC faces of the party, Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan has been fielded from Sambalpur in Odisha, making a return to electoral politics after 2009. He was elected to LS from Deogarh in 2004, but lost the seat in 2009 and was accommodated in Rajya Sabha. "I express my immense

gratitude to respected Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji, home minister Amit Shah ji and our party president J P Nadda ji and the central election committee for reposing faith in me to serve the people of Sambalpur," Pradhan said after his nomination as party candidate. Govil, who has replaced incumbent Rajendra Agrawal from Meerut, had contested Lok Sabha polls as a Congress nominee unsuccessfully against former PM VP Singh in Allahabad Rural bypoll in 1988. So far, the BJP has released five lists with 398 candidates. Mithilesh Tiwari, state general secretary of the party and an ex MLA, has replaced Ashwini Choubey in Buxar while V K Singh has been replaced by MLA Atul Garg in Ghaziabad in UP. Rama Devi and Chhedi Paswan are the other prominent omissions. Ramesh Awasthi, a former journalist, who had recently organised Sanatan Yatra, has replaced Satyadeo Pachauri in Kanpur.

Pakistan businesses ask for trade ties with India, new govt. agrees to consider demand

ISLAMABAD/NEW DELHI: Pakistan's new govt may resume trade ties with India in deference to the demands of local businesses, the country's foreign minister Ishaq Dar said at the end of his UK-Europe visit. Dar's statement about ending the nearly five-year suspension of trade over India revoking J&K's special status in August 2019 comes weeks after PM Shehbaz Sharif thanked counterpart Narendra Modi for his congratulatory message on X. India, however, believes Pakistan must first reinstate its high commissioner in India before nursing any thought of a rapprochement with India. Pakistan had recalled its top diplomat from India and called off trade after India revoked the special status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. Known to be a dove in India-Pakistan diplomatic parlance, Dar is a



trusted aide of Nawaz, whose daughter is married to the foreign minister's son. India will wait though to see if the four-time finance minister's remarks have the backing of the army, given its own experience with the previous Sharif government. Foreign minister S Jaishankar had only on Saturday accused Pakistan of promoting terrorism at "industry level". "Pakistani businessmen want to trade with India...the govt will examine the possibility by holding consultations with all stakeholders," foreign minis-

ter Dar said at a presser at the Pakistan High Commission in London on Saturday. Pakistan could prioritise reviving the economy before considering normalising ties with India, he indicated even as he broached Kashmir. "India took extreme steps in August 2019 by making a constitutional and legal amendment that was very painful," the foreign minister said, also mentioning "UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir" and a "dispute that lingers". "But I believe the

Pakistani business community has been making this appeal and demand (to resume trade with India)," he said. The geopolitical divide has impacted businesses on both sides, mainly those focused on cross-border commerce, mainly in textiles, agricultural products and medical items. "They (businesspeople) pointed out that imports are continuing via Dubai and Singapore with extra freight and transportation costs," Dar said. "Let's see what can be done, at least to the extent of economic activities and trade...You can't change your neighbours. We have to coexist." India and Pakistan have laid down prerequisites for normalising bilateral ties, frozen since 2019. Pakistan remains firm on J&K's erstwhile special status, while India insists Article 370 is its business and off the agenda for any bilateral talks.

In a record, Zoji La reopens after 35 days against 68 in 2023

NEW DELHI: Border Roads Organisation has reopened Zoji La (pass), the main obstacle in Ladakh's lifeline via Srinagar, for vehicular traffic after 35 days of being under snow against 68 days last year - a record that reflects India's growing mountain road-building prowess that has big upside for border defence as well as people's lives in the frontier region. The 439-km Srinagar-Leh road is the main link connecting Ladakh to Jammu & Kashmir and is the key route to move troops and supplies in the frontier region. The 11,540-ft Zoji La, about 100km from Srinagar, used to be closed for around 160-180 days during the winter some years ago. But the closure period has come down in the last few years as a result of govt's thrust on developing border connectivity and deployment of latest machinery. The road had seen intermittent traffic disruptions as winter set in in the last few months. It was closed for a few days around Dec 23 but was reopened soon. Again on Feb 25, traffic was suspended because of heavy snowfall caused by a series of western disturbances. Early resumption of traffic in the last 2-3 years has allowed the forces to space out - instead of squeezing in 3-4 months earlier - the annual rotation of larger-than-usual number of troops deployed in the region since the May 2020 Galwan border clashes with the Chinese army. It will also allow trucking of civil and fresh supplies instead of costly air freight. Home-bound Ladakhis and guest workers will have a cheaper travel option than the prohibitively expensive flights that remain the only means when heavy snow snaps road connectivity. The short closures of the difficult passes has demonstrated BRO's snow-clearing capability. Govt is capitalising this by boring a tunnel under Zoji La, set to be completed soon.

For 46 years, Odisha widow, now 91, waiting for pension

CUTTACK: Orissa HC has given Kendrapada district collector Suryawanshi Mayur Vikas one month to make arrangements for the disbursal of family pension to a 91-year-old woman whose husband, a school teacher, died 46 years back. The direction comes four months after HC asked the Kendrapada district collector to sanction family pension to



Hara Sahoo, whose husband passed away on Aug 26, 1977. The court asked for release of the pension from the date of entitlement "along with arrears within a period of two months from the date of receipt of order". The order was passed on Nov 15, 2023, but the woman did not

receive her pension. After she filed a contempt petition, single judge bench of Justice Biraja Satapathy said on Friday, "This contempt petition is disposed of by granting one-month further time to the contemnor to comply with the order." He warned, "If the order is not complied with within the extended time, it will be held as deliberate violation of this court's order."

In 3 days, 22 fined 1.1 lakh for washing cars with potable water in Bengaluru

BENGALURU: Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has collected 1.1 lakh in fines in three days from 22 cases of violations related to using potable water from Cauvery river and borewells for car wash. BWSSB issued a notice on March 10, informing the public of a fine of 5,000 for each violation of potable water use. It specified activities for which potable water is banned, such as car washing, gardening, and large construction projects. "The city is facing a water crisis, and our orders were in line with that. We started enforcing the orders on restrictions only from Friday after carry-



ing out awareness until then. Between Friday and today (Sunday), we have booked 22 cases and collected spot fines from people and given them receipts like traffic police do," BWSSB chairman V Ram Prasath Manohar. While there are six major activities that the board is looking at, the focus in the first phase of enforcement has been car washing, he added. "People are using sprays and hoses connected directly to taps and a lot of water is wasted. All cases were based on our spot inspections and complaints from local residents. We will continue with our drive," he said. According to BWSSB, most cases came from the board's southeast division - 13 cases worth 65,000 - while the remaining are spread across east, north, northeast and southwest divisions. CM Siddaramaiah, deputy CM and

Bengaluru development minister D K Shivakumar, and officials from BWSSB and BBMP have been allaying fears of the city completely running out of water this summer, but none of them have denied the crisis at hand. With both southwestern and northeastern monsoons having failed to recharge groundwater tables in the city, BWSSB had, as early as second week of Jan, written to the Cauvery Neeravari Nigama (under the water resources department) to prioritise Bengaluru's drinking needs and reserve water for the Capital city at the KRS and Kabini reservoirs.

Naveen Jindal gets ticket hours after quitting Congress

NEW DELHI: BJP on Sunday decided to field Naveen Jindal, who heads steel and power giant JSPL, from Kurukshetra, hours after he switched over to the saffron party. Jindal — an accused in the coal scam, which was a key election issue for BJP in 2014 — was twice elected to Lok Sabha from Kurukshetra. In 2014, he had finished third when BJP's Raj Kumar Saini won, and was not fielded by



Congress in the 2019 polls. The youngest son of OP Jindal, Naveen serves as chairman of Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) and also leads lobby group Indian Steel Association. A keen polo player,

Jindal is credited with ensuring that restrictions on flying the Tricolour were eased. OP Jindal, was power minister in the Haryana govt, while Savitri Jindal (Naveen's mother) also served as a minister in the state till 2014. Although there was a buzz of his joining BJP, the move was a setback to Congress as he was seen to be close to Rahul Gandhi, the former party president.

Ludicrous, says Jaishankar on China's claims over Arunachal

External affairs minister S Jaishankar on Saturday dismissed China's repeated claims on Arunachal Pradesh as "ludicrous" and asserted that the frontier state was a "natural part of India". In probably his first public comments on China's frequent claims. on Arunachal Pradesh and its opposition to Indian leaders visiting the state, Jaishankar said it was not a new issue. "This is not a new issue. I mean China has laid claim, it has expanded its claim. The claims are ludicrous to begin with and remain ludicrous today," he said in response to a question after delivering a lecture at the prestigious Institute of South Asian,

After arrest of IIT-G student for 'IS links', hunt on for another

GUWAHATI: An IIT-Guwahati student detained Saturday after he allegedly emailed an Assam top cop saying he was going to Afghanistan to join terror outfit IS was formally arrested Sunday and booked under the stringent UAPA. Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma described Delhi native Tauseef Ali Farooqui as "completely radicalised" and said he was one of two IIT Guwahati students suspected of having links with IS and trying to join the group. The other is yet to be tracked down. Tauseef's arrest came barely four days after IS India head Haris Farooqi and an aide were nabbed in Assam's Dhubri just after crossing over from Bangladesh. They



duo have been handed over to NIA. A local court sent Tauseef to 10 days' police custody. Sarma said the family of the fourth-year BTech student from Delhi's Okhla area had been informed and central agencies alerted. "We believe there is another such student in the institute. Police are probing and will most probably find the student soon." Police said they had seized a black flag, purportedly similar to that of IS, from Tauseef. "Further investigation is under way to unearth other aspects and links."

7 of 8 new Haryana ministers are first-timers

Delhi:

Nayab Singh At a state-level ceremony, eight BJP ministers—seven of them first-timers—took oaths in Saini's maiden cabinet enlargement. The government's council of ministers increased to 14 with the appointment of Hisar MLA Kamal Gupta as cabinet minister for the second time, Ambala City MLA Aseem Goel, Thanesar (Kurukshetra) MLA Subhash Sudha, Bawani Khera (reserved) MLA Bishambar Balmiki, Nangal Chaudhary MLA Rao Abhay Singh Yadav, Badkhal MLA Seema Trikha, Sohna MLA Sanjay Singh, and Panipat (rural) MLA Mahipal Dhandha as minister. BJP has shown it will not bow to criticism



by ignoring Independent MLAs, ex-home and health minister Anil Vij, and Union minister Rao Inderjit Singh while trying to address its caste and regional equations. Three of the 14 ministers are OBC, two are Brahmins, three are Jat, two are Dalit, and Goel and Kamal Gupta

are Vaish. Saini and the BJP high command have endeavored to represent all parts of the state, especially the northern districts of Ambala, Kurukshetra, and Panipat, and the Ahir-dominated southern belt through Banwari Lal and Rao Abhay Singh. Son of a

previous minister of state, Sanjay began his political career as a sarpanch and was elected to the legislative assembly in 2019. He represents the party in Mewat and is Rajput. Goel is a two-term MLA. 2014 assembly elections saw him defeat former Union minister and vet-

eran politician Venod Sharma. He worked with CM Saini as BJYM president of Ambala district and is a close friend. His oratory is also notable. Former CM Manohar Lal Khattar trusted two-time MLA Dhandha. He is famed for his oratory and has participated in most major political parties. He may become a southern Haryana BJP leader.

He joined after government dropped Rao Inderjit Singh confidant Om Parkash Yadav MLA Balmiki is from SC (B) group and has served Bhiwani thrice. After Ratan Lal Kataria's death, he is expected to become the party's Dalit face. Balmiki was also engaged in Haryana assembly sessions.

Three HP independent MLAs who supported the BJP in the RS elections resigned

Delhi:

Three Independent MLAs from Himachal Pradesh resigned from the legislature after casting ballots for the BJP nominee in the Rajya Sabha election on February 27. They said that "targeting them and their families and registering false cases against them" was what the state government was up to. In front of numerous BJP leaders, including leader of the opposition (LoP) Jai Ram Thakur, the MLAs K L Thakur from Nalagarh, Hoshyar Singh from Dehra, and Ashish Sharma from Hamirpur arrived in Shimla by helicopter and handed in their resignations to assembly secretary Yashpal Sharma. In the Himachal Pradesh assembly, nine



assembly seats are now empty due to resignations. Six Congress MLAs were disqualified for voting for BJP candidate Harsh Mahajan in the Rajya Sabha and for defying the party whip during the budget session, which resulted in the loss of six seats. Elections have been scheduled for the six seats that became vacant. Following his conscience, Hoshyar Singh voted for the BJP's RS candidate, he

said after resigning. He claimed that, in violation of democratic principles, fictitious cases were being brought against the MLAs. According to Ashish Sharma, he resigned without being pressured in the best interests of the state and his electorate because of the unstable political climate in the region. Additionally, he disclosed that he would receive a BJP ticket and run for office once more.

BJP recruits former Indian US envoy

Delhi:

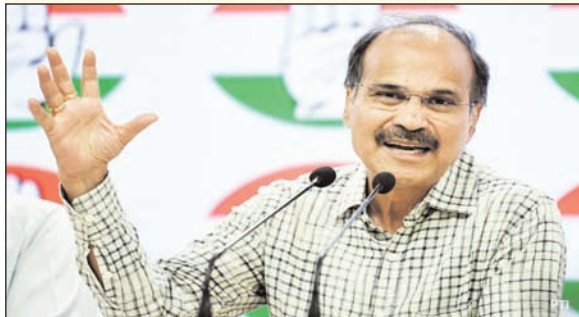
Former Indian Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu joined the BJP, joining a select group of ex-diplomats who entered politics under Narendra Modi. Union Ministers Hardeep Singh Puri and S Jaishankar were diplomats too. Sandhu is the grandson of Congress activist and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandhak Committee (SGPC) founder Teja Singh Samundri and a 1988-batch IFS officer. Career diplomat



Sandhu served in the US three times. He was Deputy Chief of Mission and Ambassador after serving as a junior diplomat during the 1990s Pokhran testing. After the 1998 Pokhran nuclear test, New Delhi's relations with Washington, DC, worsened. Sandhu

helped repair them. He was crucial to the US Congress's Kargil conflict resolution denouncing Pakistan as Indian Embassy First Secretary (political). Sandhu has a broad political and administrative network in the US, both Democratic and Republican.

List of names from Congress: 57



Delhi:

UP Gandhi family members should run for office in Amethi and Rae Bareilly, the Congress instructed the party's top poll panel, despite the fact that the two seats were not discussed in the meeting report. Subodh Ghildiyal & Shailvee Sharda, Arunachal Pradesh (2), Karnataka (17), Gujarat (11), Maharashtra (7), Rajasthan (6), Telangana (5), Bengal (8), Arunachal Pradesh (2), and Puducherry have all been included in the newly released list of 57 candidates. Radhakrishna, the Congress chief's son-in-law, has been named as the candidate from Gulbarga, the chief's traditional constituency. Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, a West Bengali from Berhampore, will run again. Priyanka

Jarkiholi will represent the party in Chikkodi, Karnataka, while Praniti Shinde, the daughter of Congressman Sushin Kumar Shinde, will run from Solapur. Shahu Shahji Chatrapati, a grandson of Shivaji, will run from Kolhapur in Maharashtra. Priyanka's father serves as a minister in the cabinet of Siddaramaiah at the moment. Ajay Rai has been ruled out of the Varanasi prime minister post, and Danish Ali, the BSP renegade from Amroha, has been informed during the AICC panel meeting in Uttar Pradesh. In line with the Congress's push to field senior leaders in the challenging northern states, Digvijaya Singh is the most likely candidate from Rajgarh to represent MP.

BJP presents its fourth list of fifteen candidates for the Lok Sabha

Delhi: In preparation for the next Lok Sabha elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) unveiled its fourth list of fifteen candidates. The list contains Puducherry and Tamil Nadu's parliamentary seats, which will hold polls in the first round of general elections on April 19. In a significant move, the BJP nominated A Namassivayam from the

Puducherry Lok Sabha seat. Under the N Rangaswamy administration, Namassivayam serves as the Union Territory's home minister. The following 15 candidates are scheduled to run in the Lok Sabha elections: A. Namassivayam of Puducherry, 2 Pon. V. Balaganapathy, Tiruvallur (SC), 3 North Chennai: R. C. Paul

Kanagaraj 4 Ashwatham, A. Tiruvannamalai Dr. K.P. Ramalingam, 5 Namakkal 6 A.P. Murganandam, Tiruppur 7. K. Vasantharajan, Pollachi V.V. Senthilnathan, 8 Karur P. Karthiyayini, 9 Chidambaram (SC), SGM Ramesh, 10 Nagapattinam (SC), 11 M. Muruganandam, Thanjavur.

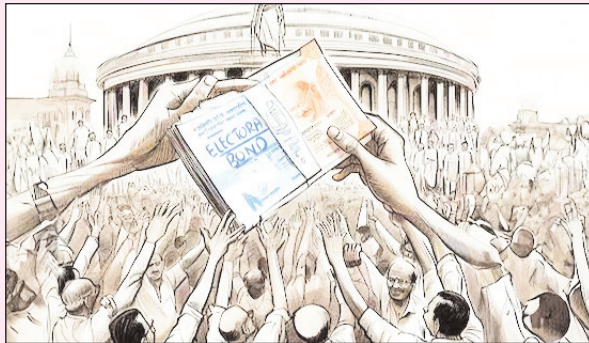
Government to amend Kashmiri migrants' names for better aid

Delhi: As the number of family members has grown, the Delhi government tax department has begun revising Kashmiri migrants' names. Officials stated the department's website now offers improved migrant card addition, deletion, and dividing applications. An official stated each revenue district has copies of the forms for migrating families. Officials claimed the government decided at a cabinet meeting chaired by chief minister Arvind Kejriwal to allow migrants to add or remove names from their cards or split them. Adult or married children of recipient families would receive individual cards. "Registered migrants can now disclose their families and split them due to growth. Birth and death of a pair would add and delete members. Also, a non-migrant girl marrying into a migrant family will become a member," official claimed. Officials encouraged revenue districts to examine applications and consider adding or removing members or separating family cards for further action. All family members eligible for monthly support must have their Aadhaar data seeded, officials said. "As per current guidelines, relief will only be paid through the Aadhaar payment bridge or public financial management system."

In Megha-league, Hyd Group is the largest BJP donor with 664cr

Delhi:

BJP received the most money from Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Ltd, followed by Qwik Supply Chain Private Limited and Vedanta Ltd. Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited gave Rs 584 crore in electoral bonds, and Western UP Power Transmission Company Ltd contributed Rs 80 crore, totaling Rs 664 crore. Qwik Supply Chain Private Ltd sponsored the party Rs 375 crore. The little-known Mumbai-based corporation that has become the third largest buyer



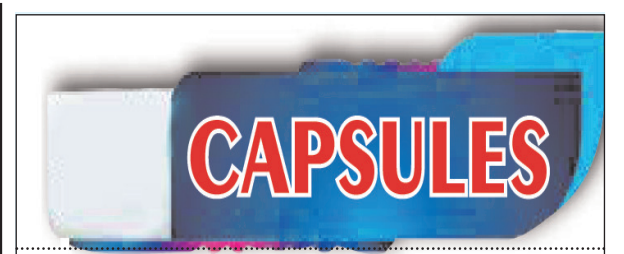
of electoral bonds with Rs 410 crore looks to be tied to Reliance Industries Limited. However, RIL denies the link. Tapas Mitra has 26 other directorships, whereas Vipul Mehta has eight. Mitra is a director of Reliance Eros Productions LLP and Jamnagar Kandla Pipeline Company

Private Limited, which shares an Ahmedabad address with several other Reliance organizations. According to LinkedIn, Mitra is RIL's head of accounts and manages accounts and commercial operations across the firm. Delhi-based Bharti Airtel Ltd donated Rs 183 crore, Kolkata-based Madan

Lal Ltd donated Rs 175.5 crore, and Keventer Food Park Infra Ltd donated Rs 144.5 crore, totaling Rs 320 crore. Top donors to the party were DLF Commercial Developers Ltd., which gave Rs 130 crore, and 'Lottery King' Santiago Martin's Future Gaming and Hotel Services Private Ltd., which gave Rs 100 crore in bonds. BJP collected Rs 5,594.3 crore via electoral bonds, according to State Bank of India data provided to the Election Commission. The Kotak Mahindra Bank promoters' Infina Finance Private Ltd.

Delhi, Gurugram, Noida Lok Sabha 2024 vote on May 25, April 26

Delhi: Delhi and Gurugram will vote jointly in the sixth phase on May 25, while Noida will vote in the second phase on April 26. On May 25, the Election Commission of India (ECI) will hold the sixth phase of voting for Delhi's seven Lok Sabha constituencies. Gurugram and Delhi will vote jointly in the sixth phase on May 25, while Noida will vote in the second phase on April 26. June 4 is vote-counting day. An estimated 14.7 million eligible voters in the national Capital will elect their MPs. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) owns all seven Lok Sabha seats and 8 of the 70 Delhi assembly seats, where the AAP has 62. Delhi had 60.60 percent voter turnout in 2019. INDIA coalition members AAP and Congress will run in elections.



SpiceJet donated Rs 70 lakhs, and IndiGo's promoter and group firms donated Rs 56 crore



Delhi: While SpiceJet donated Rs 70 lakh to AAP, IndiGo promoter Rahul Bhatia, acting individually, and businesses within his InterGlobe Group have contributed Rs 56 crore to four political parties.

InterGlobe Real Estate Venture (Rs 20 crore) and InterGlobe Air Transport Ltd (Rs 11 crore) contributed the majority of the Rs 31 crore to the BJP. Surprisingly, TMC was the second-largest beneficiary, receiving Rs 16.2 crore from Bhatia. Congress received Rs 5 crore from InterGlobe Aviation Ltd., and Bhatia gave its ally NCP Rs 3.8 crore. While SpiceJet has been struggling to raise money for the past three years, during which it has frequently delayed paying employees' salaries and other statutory obligations like PF, in addition to delaying the deposit of TDS, InterGlobe is well-funded because IndiGo has been the only airline to be consistently profitable. While many SpiceJet employees were taken aback by the political party payments, many IndiGo employees did not.

Maruti recalls more than 16,000 Baleno and WagonR vehicles

Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India announced on Friday that it was recalling more than 16,000 Baleno and WagonR vehicles in order to address a potential issue with a fuel pump motor component. In a regulatory statement, the largest carmaker in the nation stated that 11,851 Baleno and 4,190 WagonR cars made between July 30, 2019, and November 1, 2019, are being recalled by the business.

It went on to say that there may be a potential flaw in a fuel pump motor component, which in an extremely unusual circumstance could cause an engine to stall or have trouble starting. The company stated that Maruti Suzuki authorized dealer workshops will get in touch with the owners of affected vehicles and arrange for a free replacement of the part. organizations

Kejriwal's detention throws AAP's election campaign into chaos

Delhi: The Aam Aadmi Party's face, Arvind Kejriwal, is in jail, and the future of Delhi's government is in jeopardy. As a result, the party's campaign for the Lok Sabha elections is expected to encounter significant leadership challenges without its top strategist and campaigner. The AAP leadership's concerted efforts to declare that the party's supremo will lead the government from behind bars only serve to further cement Kejriwal's association with the party. Within the AAP, decision-making has typically been centralized, with Kejriwal perceived as the leader. With other politicians escorting him, Kejriwal was the most prominent politician even throughout the election season, vigorously advocating for the Delhi model as a



viable alternative for growth through town hall meetings and roadshows. The next few days will be critical for the second line of leaders, who must balance campaign direction with Delhi's governance concerns. These figures include Gopal Rai, Atishi, Saurabh Bhardwaj, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, and Rajya Sabha MPs Sandeep Pathak and Raghav Chadha. Kejriwal's detention is expected to be the cornerstone of the party's electoral campaign. Leaders of the

AAP compared the nationwide protests that followed his arrest to a "undeclared emergency-like situation" the day after he was arrested. AAPs. Also, Rai believes there is still plenty of time to plan the campaign, as elections are scheduled for June 1 in Punjab and May 25 in Delhi. He added that the alliance members would soon declare a coordinated movement against Kejriwal's detention and that the INDIA bloc would play a crucial role in mobilizing support.

Delhi extends excise policy

Delhi: Officials say the Delhi government will continue its excise duty-based approach in 2024-25. An order from the government's excise department approved the continuation of the excise duty-based policy for 2024-25 to grant wholesale licenses on the same terms and conditions as 2023-24. Officials stated wholesale licenses are authorized under the same excise duty-based policy from October 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024. The officials said the circulars for retail and HCR licenses will be issued in the coming days. The excise duty-based policy regime, which transferred retail liquor operations from private corporations to Delhi gov-



ernment enterprises, was adopted in September 2022 and extended in April and October 2023. After claims of irregularities in the Delhi government's ambitious excise policy 2021-22, launched on November 17, 2021, the policy was introduced. The Arvind Kejriwal government abolished the scheme days after Delhi LG VK Saxena suggested a CBI probe into the

alleged irregularities. Officials stated the administration promised a new excise policy that is yet unfinished. They stated a government committee has prepared a new policy draft that the government has yet to approve. Delhi has 684 liquor establishments run by four government organizations under the excise regime.

Same-day polls for all bar associations: HC

Delhi: Delhi High Court ordered all bar organizations in the national capital to hold elections on one day for two years. It also prohibited candidates from running for several bar associations, even if they practice in multiple courts. A special bench of Acting Chief

Justice Manmohan, justices Rajiv Shakdher, and Suresh Kumar Kait issued a number of orders, including "ensure purity in elections and to curb the use of money power, this court prohibits hosting election parties, printing of posters, and erection of hoardings" It said

candidates could hold physical and virtual gatherings and utilize WhatsApp or other social media to promote legal fraternity-beneficial propositions. The ruling was on a series of petitions about simultaneous bar association executive committee elections.

DDA's unlawful colony idea gets a lukewarm response

Delhi: 4.75 lakh unauthorized colonists have applied to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for house ownership rights under the PM Uday Yojana until March 1. 22,034 conveyance deeds and permission slip cases have been granted, whereas 56,306 have been disposed of. Officials said the remaining applications are in various stages. Although DDA has taken steps to encourage over 40 lakh people living in 12.5 lakh dwellings and 1,731 unauthorized colonies to join the plan, which was intro-



duced four years ago, the numbers haven't been encouraging. Residents reported they have trouble attaching power of attorney. They believe the system offers only ownership rights and no other benefits. Some people can't destroy and rebuild a house or receive a building permit. Sushil Chaddha, of Chandra

Vihar, Nilothi, wanted to apply for the scheme but found the registration price excessive. For plots under 50 sq yd, the cost is Rs 70,000; for 100 sq yd, Rs 1.2 lakh. Though the fee is area-based, illegal colonies have cheap land and no development. "Why would someone pay these fees to acquire ownership?" he said.

Even after the first registry, nationalized banks don't lend to unauthorized colonies, and private banks' home loan rates are high. Increased registration fees are also discouraging property registration "said. Officials stated they reduced the standard operating procedure and scheme application criteria. We stated that conveyance deeds might be applied. Stone slab houses are also acceptable. The official claimed 150 mitras are going door-to-door in unauthorized settlements to promote the scheme's benefits and ownership process.

Ring Road in Punjabi Bagh, Delhi, closed for 2 months

Delhi: Due to subway work, Delhi Traffic Police will restrict Ring Road near Punjabi Bagh's Bharat Darshan Park for two months. The subway, flyover, and underground cabling projects have caused traffic jams, causing the Traffic Police to close roads and divert traffic. Traffic from Moti Nagar to Punjabi Bagh roundabout to Vashisht Kumar Gulla Marg has been diverted, per an alert. Ring Road traffic has been diverted by barricades. Shiv Das Puri



Marg, Road 41 near Punjabi Bagh gurudwara and Traffic Training Park will be busy. It said motorists coming from Moti Nagar from Karampura flyover to the Punjabi Bagh roundabout via Bharat Darshan Park should take Vashisht Kumar

Gulla Marg, turn right on Road Number 41, turn right at the Traffic Training Park, and turn left toward the roundabout. The Traffic Police also recommend the freshly built flyover for Raja Garden commuters heading to Punjabi Bagh junction.

Commuters from Dhaula Kuan should turn right from Raja Garden Chowk onto Shivaji Marg to reach Zakhira. Motorists should also be patient and follow traffic laws. Punjabi Bagh construction in west Delhi continues to clog commuters and emergency services. Project expected to finish in March to improve medical access and traffic. Traffic delays have commuters questioning construction agency decisions and seeking other routes.

Delhi's Punjabi Bagh gets new MCD vehicle park

Delhi: The 276-car parking lot should reduce congestion along the Outer Ring Road-Rohtak Road intersection. Municipal officials claimed the MCD has solicited proposals to build a multi-level automated car park in Punjabi Bagh, west Delhi. MCD officials said the shuttle-type car park, a commercial complex component, will be erected in two years and hold 276 automobiles. The parking lot is designed to reduce traffic around the Outer Ring Road crossroads, where Bharat Darshan Park tourists park their cars. Multiple banquet halls in the neighborhood add to the traffic on this busy road. "It will be an automated shuttle parking because it can fit more vehicles in a small space, is faster to assemble, and costs less. The land will be



given to a private developer for a 30-year concession under a public-private partnership. The commercial complex will produce revenue for the developer. A senior MCD official stated on condition of anonymity that the commercial complex with multi-level parking will take two years to build. The shuttle system allows vehicle platforms (dollies) to move horizontally and vertically. MCD's parking projects department announced that 1,150sqm of the

2,300sqm plot will be renovated due to the 50% ground coverage limit. The official stated that the minimum upfront payment is ₹5 crore and the annual recurring cost is ₹50 lakh. Punjabi Bagh resident Charan Singh Yadav said unlawful parking in front of Bharat Darshan Park and banquet venues causes hours-long traffic congestion. A 1,500sqm area at Bharat Darshan Park is being developed into a six-story parking lot for 188 automobiles.

Karnataka govt says no to Goa power line through Western Ghats

BENGALURU: Karnataka govt has rejected neighbouring Goa's proposal to draw a power transmission line through the Western Ghats forest by the Goa-Tamnar Transmission Project Limited (GTTPL), and directed the project executing agency to lay the line through non-forested areas instead. K'taka says no to Goa power line through Western Ghats forest. The state govt has also ordered serving of showcause notice to forest department officials who had earlier recommended the project, overlooking destruction of large tracts of forested areas in the Ghats. Planning to light up parts of South Goa by sourcing power from Tamnar in Chhattisgarh, GTTPL had sought permission from Karnataka to divert a whopping



174.6 hectares of forest land, including the Kali Tiger Reserve (KTR), to lay a 400 kV transmission line. While the user agency was yet to get a clearance from the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), GTTPL sought permission from Karnataka to lay the transmission line through state forests. Based on the Central Electricity Authority's proposal to execute an additional 400 kV feed to Goa, GTTPL had reportedly planned the

transmission line from Narendra village, near Dharwad in Karnataka, by tapping the existing 400 kV Narendra line of the Power Grid Corporation of India, linking the 400/200 kV substation at Xeldom in Goa. The transmission line was aligned to pass through three Karnataka districts - Dharwad, Belagavi and Uttara Kannada - before reaching south Goa. The user agency had also submitted to take up afforestation.

Mumbai's Sion ROB to be closed from March 28 for 2 years

MUMBAI: The British-era Sion Railway Over Bridge (ROB), which is going to be reconstructed, will be closed for traffic for at least two years from March 28, 2024, onwards. The bridge will be closed on the intervening night of March 27-28. The demolition was first scheduled on Jan 20 but was held up after protests by local residents and the intervention of MP Rahul Shewale. The next date for the demolition was set for Feb 28, however, it was postponed yet again to prevent inconvenience to students who were going to attend HSC and SSC board examinations.

EC asks to stop sending WhatsApp texts on "Viksit Bharat"

Delhi: The ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) was instructed by the Election Commission to immediately cease sending the government's "Viksit Bharat" messages to residents via WhatsApp. MeitY was asked to provide a compliance report right away. The commission had been notified of multiple complaints that even after the model code of conduct was implemented with the announcement of the Lok Sabha elections on March 16, people's phones continued to get 'Viksit Bharat' texts showcasing the government's achievements. MeitY clarified to EC that while the letters were distributed to citizens via WhatsApp prior to MCC taking effect, it's possible that some of them were reached later than expected because of network and system issues.

Editorial

How Sanskrit Was Destroyed in Tamil Nadu?

More than a century after it was founded, the only "justice" that the notorious Justice Party delivered to Tamil Nadu was snuffing out the inherently dharmic soul of the Tamil people. The Justice Party ensured that the sacred Tamil Desam permanently lost its capacity to produce iconic sons like Pallava Narasimhavarman, Raja Raja Chola, Rajendra Chola, all the way up to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. The state's impressive infrastructure is now a vast and glimmering but soulless wasteland where nothing cultured and refined grows because all the good and the noble and the virtuous and the lofty and the spiritual has been scorched by the flames lit by generations of Dravidianists. The learning, nurturing and preservation of Sanskrit was among the first casualties to burn in this Dravidian furnace. The story of its near-total annihilation needs to be told in a detailed volume. But to offer a tragic appetiser of sorts, this essay series has picked a real-life slice from the recent history of Sanskrit destruction in Tamil Nadu. The period is the 1960s decade and the scene of action is set in the prestigious Presidency College, Madras. The manner in which the destruction of Sanskrit was carried out resembles the manner in which fanatical Muslim sultans made appointments in officialdom: kicking out Hindus and replacing them with Muslims or with Hindus who fell for the lure of converting to Islam for material benefits. It might seem incredible and even unbelievable today, but even as recently as in the 1940s, the learning of Sanskrit and its literature was regarded as a mark of high culture in Tamil Nadu. Especially in Tamil Nadu. Throughout Indian history, Kanchipuram strode aloft as one of the renowned and prestigious centres of Sanskrit scholarship. The sacred city took pride in being home to several unbroken lineages of extraordinary Sanskrit pandits and vidwans. Sadly, Kanchipuram, like the rest of the Tamil Desam, had not reckoned with the Messianic, caliginous sword called Dravidianism which was making slow but determined inroads about a century ago. The rowdy denizens of the Justice Party, in their rabble-rousing speeches, essentially spouted variants of the following clamour: "What is there in Sanskrit that's not there in Tamil? The wicked Aryas from the north and their Sanskrit language invaded our pure Tamil land and destroyed our literature and culture and flung us into backwardness. We must liberate our pure Tamil land and culture from these Aryas. They are today known as South Indian Brahmins, who continue to oppress us." Today, the whole of the Dravidian ecosystem resembles a cauldron of dangerous junk composed of the following: at the top is the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) led by the aptly christened MK Stalin and his son Udhayanidhi Stalin. Other elements include the fossilised Periyarists and the innumerable Dravidian groups and petty factions. For more than half a century, they have held Tamil Nadu in their vice-like grip. But history tells a different story. The Justice Party and its predecessors didn't have it easy. The early role played by the Church, especially by Bishop "Kaltuvell Aiyyar" (Robert Caldwell) in seeding and fomenting Tamil separatism is too well-known to repeat here. But its far-reaching consequences leading up to our own time need deeper examination. One such consequence has already been mentioned: the naked lie that evil Aryas from north India and their oppressive Sanskrit language destroyed an alleged "original" Tamil culture and a "pure" Tamil language. This has become a settled truth in Tamil Nadu's public discourse. It is still the seed capital of the Dravidian ideology. It also posits that these Aryas armed with their Sanskrit were solely responsible for creating backward classes in the state.



India's Buddhist diplomacy has policy gains. It strengthened our position in ASEAN region

Culture remains an important mainstay of Indian diplomacy. In its sojourn of cultural globalisation, material culture has formed an integral part of India's cultural diplomacy. It is thus appropriate to mention India's 'relic diplomacy' in this context. Recent cases where the relics of Lord Buddha were flown to Thailand and Queen St. Ketevan's relics were given to Georgia have been key instances of India's cultural diplomacy and have also signified cross-cultural communication. Material culture, such as relics, has transcended bound-

aries and has come to encapsulate the culture and concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (The World is One Family) in the case of India. In 1982, when the first Festival of India in the United Kingdom was held as a joint exploration between the countries and cultures, one of the important objectives of the festival was to promote a new understanding of continuity and change, the unity and plurality of Indian culture, and its ability to carry forward the India of the past into the present and the future. Nearly 200 sculptures

and 135 paintings were included as part of this effort. This exhibition had some masterpieces, such as the exhibition of banalingas and shaligramas as per Hindu culture. The four goals of life, such as Dharma (righteousness, moral values), Artha (prosperity, economic values), Kama (pleasure, love, psychological values) and Moksha (liberation, spiritual values, self-actualisation) were also depicted. The theme of enlightenment was also depicted courtesy of Lord Buddha, as were other syncretic aspects of Indian culture

from Sufism. India continues to harness its shared cultural potential with ASEAN countries, with Thailand being a recent case. The revered relics of the Lord Buddha and those of his disciples, Arhant Sariputta and Arhant Maha Moggallana, are on a sacred journey from India to Thailand, where an exposition of the relics has been organised. This particular event marks the 72nd birth year of the king, Rama X, further emphasizing on the civilisational relationship between India and Thailand.

Why are leaders joining BJP?



There are only a few days left for the Lok Sabha elections, due to which there is a discussion in the entire country whether the party will be able to touch the figure of 400 claims by BJP leaders this time too under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi? This question is because on one hand BJP is claiming a big victory, while on the other hand the storm of opposition is increasing across the country. However, all the parties in alliance with BJP may be rest assured that from wherever they will get tickets, their victory is certain and they will get to enjoy the cream of power for the third time also, and in this happiness, all the parties included in NDA are going to the elections.

Are busy preparing. But on the other hand, all the opposition parties are also busy preparing for the Lok Sabha elections, but their preparation is not enough to win the elections, many of their leaders are also joining other parties, especially BJP. This stampede of turncoats just before the elections shows that they too are feeling the call of BJP government coming to power for the third time and they are desperate to escape the raids of central agencies and the wrath of the central government. Understanding your own well-being. However, on the other hand, the picture

is on the contrary, some of the leaders are cutting their tickets, some of them are joining other parties, one example of this is Varun Gandhi, whose talk of contesting elections from Pilibhit on SP ticket is intense. But some BJP leaders are scared and are silent even after not getting the ticket, because they know that if they go to any opposition party, the same thing will happen to them, which is happening to the leaders of opposition parties. However, the process of defection among parties is going on at a rapid pace in Uttar Pradesh. Many leaders of opposition parties have joined BJP and the number of leaders joining BJP is the highest. Recently, more than 200 small and big leaders had joined the BJP. At that time, Deputy CM Brijesh Pathak of BJP in Uttar Pradesh government had said that the caravan of BJP is continuously increasing, the opposition leaders coming to BJP are with

Modi ji for development. Be it SP, BSP, Congress, there is a stampede everywhere and this shows that in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, all the parties in Uttar Pradesh will vote Yes, and that this time BJP will win 80 seats on its BHARATANATYAM party. Actually, there are many reasons behind the campaign of BSP, SP and Congress leaders to join BJP. Some political experts say that at the behest of the Modi government at the Centre, due to the raids by ED, CBI and Income Tax Department and the lure of huge money, prominent leaders of opposition parties are joining BJP. No one wants to ruin his political career by accepting trouble. At the same time, some experts believe that seeing the chances of BJP's victory, opposition leaders are joining it, because the leaders who have tasted power cannot stay away from power for long, and anyway, by staying away from power, it becomes dif-

icult to survive. However, after RLD joined NDA, the number of people joining BJP in Uttar Pradesh has increased rapidly and this trend is still continuing. Actually, BJP believes that by breaking the senior leaders of the opposition and bringing it with itself, it can strengthen its claim on 80 seats in the state, because in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, without caring about the opposition parties, when the BJP used some of its old When it tried hard on the strength of allies, it got only 64 seats, whereas before that in the year 2014, in the name of Gujarat model, in the Modi wave, BJP and its allies had won 73 seats.

Now the situation is more critical than before and BJP is clearly seeing that if this time it does not adopt all the tactics of Sama, Daam, Dand and Bheed, then the graph of its seats may fall further and if this happens, then This will be a big blow to BJP and its dream of crossing 400 will not be fulfilled under any circumstances. Therefore, the high command of BJP has also started courting the leaders of its allies who are angry with the Yogi government in Uttar Pradesh and due to this, Rajbhar of SubhaSP and Dara Singh, who returned to BJP from SP, have been awarded ministerial posts. Already happened. On the other hand, in connection with

the distribution of tickets, BJP has also distributed 51 tickets including 44 sitting MPs. And surprisingly, this time he is preparing to give tickets to people like Ramayan artist Aruna Govil, who played Ram, and people like Kumar Vishwas. However, the list of leaders joining BJP from opposition parties is getting longer. NRHM scam accused Anant Mishra alias Antu, Medical and Health Minister in Mayawati government, has joined BJP, Siddh Gopal Sahu, former Minister of State in BSP government, Achhe Lal Nishad, former Minister of State, and Dr. Hafiza Irshad, former MLA in BSP, has also joined BJP. Has gone. At the same time, BSP has so far kept its campaign for giving tickets so low that despite announcing that it will contest the elections alone, it has announced only 41 tickets so far. Talking about SP, its former assembly candidate Madhusudhan Sharma, who had joined SP from BSP, joined BJP. Apart from this, SP leader Mahendra Nath Rai, SP leader and former MLC Shyam Sundar Singh, Bipin Kumar Shukla, who had contested the assembly elections as a SP candidate, former SP MLA/former District President Jitendra Verma, former District Panchayat President Lal Singh Lodhi also participated in the elections. BJP evening with supporters

Kejriwal's arrest caps AAP, BJP feud. If he stays CM, Delhi can face President's rule

Less than a month before the Lok Sabha polls, Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal became the first sitting chief minister to be arrested in independent India last Thursday. It set off a political firestorm and protests on the streets of New Delhi, where the party was born out of the anti-corruption movement nearly 12 years ago. Kejriwal's arrest, which capped years of a bruising feud between the AAP and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), occurred in a case registered by the Union government's Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with alleged irregularities in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's excise policy for 2021-2022, which was later withdrawn.

A 12-member team of ED arrested

Kejriwal from his official residence in Delhi's Civil Lines area hours after the Delhi High Court declined to grant him interim protection from any coercive action.

Kejriwal had been served nine summonses since last October by the ED to join the investigation in the case, which he skipped, calling them "illegal". The arrest of Kejriwal, a fierce critic of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, triggered sharp reactions from the Opposition parties, many of which, including the AAP, are contesting the upcoming Lok Sabha polls under the INDIA banner. On Friday, a delegation of INDIA bloc leaders submitted a petition to the Election Commission of India (ECI) opposing the arrest. "There emerges a clear, deliberate and sinister pattern, where

the ruling regime is abusing its power, and completely destroying any semblance of a level playing field for other political parties contesting the Lok Sabha elections. Never before has such high-handedness ever been witnessed," the INDIA bloc petition to the ECI said.

The parties argued that the ED's move is in direct violation of provisions of the Representation of People Act and the Indian Penal Code. More than the INDIA bloc, however, the arrest poses a major challenge for the AAP, which attained the status of a national party in 2023. It faces not only the task of fighting the Lok Sabha polls but also the challenge of keeping the party stable, given that Kejriwal is its fourth top leader to find himself behind bars.

Halal Label to Zomato's Pure Veg Delivery

Meat is inflammable in India. Whether you like your steak medium-rare or you reject the killing of living creatures for food, any discussion around it is prone to catching fire instantly. Religion breathes hot and heavy on our diet, caste kindles passions on our plates. So, when food delivery giant Zomato announced a pure-veg service in which exclusive delivery vehicles and boxes will be used for those finicky about not getting their food mixed up with non-vegetarian stuff, India's self-proclaimed secularists pounced on the company, calling the move casteist and discriminatory. The usual bogey of Brahminism immediately came up, without an iota of irony about the casteist attack against Brahmins and the larger, thinly veiled offensive against Hindus. This latest diatribe against Zomato is a non sequitur. It is just a special service for a category of customers. But it does not discriminate or inconvenience anybody. Zomato has not said it will stop serving food to non-vegetarians. Nor has it declared that people of any particular caste, religion or race cannot be part of the 'pure veg' service. For instance, your pure-veg meal could be cooked by a Dalit or a Christian and delivered to you by a Muslim executive. The protestations appear even more devoid of logic and soaked in devious agenda because the same



worthies refuse to show even a leaping eyebrow of affront over halal-marked food, which casually cuts out non-Muslims from the entire meat economics involving Muslims. The outrage over Zomato's pure-veg service is nonsensical. But what it also shows is that Indians are still not debating the right and pertinent issues around meat. From ancient times, India has never been a vegetarian-majority nation and is unlikely to turn into one soon. The 2015-16 National Family Health Survey-4 found that 70 per cent of women and 78 per cent of men in India were non-vegetarians. Jains and certain vegetarian Hindu and Buddhist sects are welcome to practice their faith safely in this land, but even Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi cannot gaslight Bharat to turn exclusively vegetarian.

So, here are the four major issues which should inform India's debate around meat and diet. First, respect the choices of vegetarians and vegans. Zomato or any other organisation is perfectly justified in going a step ahead to

reward their compassion and concern for animals. Any cast or community is entitled to their food choice as long as they are not forcing it on others. Why then the problem with beef, one may ask. It is because even the makers of our Constitution acknowledge the worship of the cow as a 'mother' or provider of milk and a host of goodness as a national and civilisational ethos.

Article 48 — one of the Directive Principles — asks the state to try and ban the slaughter of cows and calves. Second, India needs to end the halal apartheid. One has to recite from the Quran and strictly observe the Islamic slaughter ritual to make halal meat. The whole idea is to filter out non-Muslims. Since most Hindus and Sikhs today are not vociferous about meat from jhatka-style slaughter, halal gives the perfect play for Muslims to monopolise the meat industry, at least at the middle and lower levels. Random halal certification must end, and establishments advertising halal labels must also clearly brand non-halal or jhatka products.

Norges Bank of Norway supports ICICI Securities delisting

NEW DELHI: Amid Quantum Mutual Fund voting against the proposed delisting of ICICI Securities, the largest public shareholder Norges Bank Investment Fund has voted in favour of the proposal of the stock broking arm of ICICI Bank. The foreign fund, which holds nearly 3.25 per cent stake in ICICI Securities, voted in favour on Thursday, the first day of e-voting, as per the information posted on the website of Norges Fund Investment Bank. The e-voting will remain open till March 26. The move of the Norway-based Norges Bank provided a shot in the arm of ICICI Securities' plan to delist itself as it needs two-thirds of the public shareholders' support to pass the resolution. However, Quantum Mutual Fund, which holds a 0.09 per cent stake in ICICI Securities, voted against the resolution



on Thursday. Quantum Mutual Fund opposed the delisting as it did not find the swap share ratio lucrative to the shareholders of ICICI Securities. As per the scheme of arrangement, shareholders of ICICI Securities will get 67 shares of ICICI Bank for every 100 shares they hold. Public shareholders collectively hold nearly 25 per cent stake in the company. Now, the fate of the resolution hinges on how the remaining public shareholders vote. Insurance Corporation is the second biggest public shareholder, with a

2.5 per cent stake in ICICI Securities. Indian insurance companies, including LIC, hold a 3.5 per cent stake, while mutual funds hold a 2 per cent stake. The total shareholding of foreign portfolio investors is 10 per cent. Resident Indians hold nearly 6 per cent. ICICI Bank is the promoter of the company, with nearly 75 per cent shareholding. ICICI Securities announced the plan to delist in June 2023. If the resolution goes through, ICICI Securities will eventually become a wholly-owned subsidiary of ICICI Bank.

FAA to examine United Airlines safety procedures

NEW DELHI: The US Federal Aviation Administration will be examining safety procedures at United Airlines following a series of incidents involving Boeing-manufactured planes. The aircraft maker has been facing serious criticism, after several reports of safety issues, which includes an incident in January where a panel on a Boeing 737 MAX 9 Alaska Airlines jet came off during a flight. United Airlines, which operates the largest fleet of 737 MAX 9s with 79 aircraft, has disclosed issues like poorly secured bolts on cap doors. Sasha Johnson, United's vice president of corporate safety,



informed employees that the FAA will intensify its oversight of the airline's safety protocols. She emphasized the need for a thorough evaluation of operational areas to enhance safety compliance. She said United needed to take an "even closer look at multiple areas of our

operation to ensure we are doing all we can to promote and drive safety compliance". Recent safety incidents have prompted a reevaluation of procedures to ensure utmost safety measures are in place. United Airlines, which became the largest US airline by traffic.

Amazon India revises seller fee structures

NEW DELHI: E-commerce major Amazon on Saturday said it is revising its seller fees on account of inflation and interest rates, as well as to match the industry-prevalent fee structures. Starting April 7, Amazon.in is revising its fee structure, including referral fees, closing

fees, and weight handling fees besides other ancillary fee heads, for sellers on its marketplace. "These revisions take into consideration various macroeconomic factors such as inflation, interest rates, operational costs etc, and align with industry-prevalent fee patterns,"

the company said. Referral fees will be reduced in categories like apparel, bedsheets, cushion covers, and dinnerware, and increased in categories like business and scientific supplies, chimneys, laptop sleeves and bags, and tires, a company statement said.

Maruti Suzuki acquires over 6% stake in Amlgo Labs

NEW DELHI: Maruti Suzuki India on Saturday said it has acquired over 6 per cent stake in technology startup Amlgo Labs. The startup operates in data analytics, cloud engineering, machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) to assist companies in data-driven decision-making. The investment is being made through Maruti Suzuki Innovation Fund, an initiative to undertake strategic investments in startups exhibiting high levels of technological innovation, the auto major said in a statement. This is the second such investment by the company. Earlier, it had invested in Sociograph Solutions in June 2022. "Our investment in Amlgo Labs will help us to further strengthen the quality of new models, using advanced analytics and machine learning," Maruti Suzuki India Managing Director and CEO Hisashi Takeuchi said.

Trade body slams Moscow terror attack

CHENNAI: The Indo-Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industries has expressed deep shock at the Moscow terror attack which claimed more than 70 lives. "We extend our deepest condolences to all those affected by this horrific act of violence. Our thoughts and prayers are with the friends and families of the victims," said a statement issued here by P Thangappan, secretary-general of Indo-Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industries, on Saturday. The Chamber assured the Russian Federation of all support, and said, "We are always with you against terrorism in any form."

'Govt has set sight on marathon to 2047, emphasis on fiscal prudence'

In the Budget speech, the focus on 2047 is evident. The government is committed to a long-term journey, akin to running a marathon. This endeavor requires sustained effort and endurance, as opposed to short bursts of energy, says Finance secretary T V Somanathan. 'Govt has set sight on marathon to 2047, emphasis on fiscal prudence'



If you see the Budget speech you will see the emphasis on 2047. The govt has set its sight on running that marathon. Running to 2047 is a

marathon, it's not a sprint. If you are going to run a marathon, you need to be in good shape and you can't have short-term stimulants or something that will get you some yards and then it's done. The whole focus is on making India a developed country by 2047, for which a healthy pres-

ent and a strong fiscal position is an important concomitant. Some purely short term measures don't really fit into that picture. It's a consistent picture: focus on the long term for which you need to build strength in the short term and that needs to be done by prudence in fiscal policy and

by not doing things which can detract you from that path. Not doing the wrong thing is more important than appearing to do things. The idea is that govt finances may be good, bad or indifferent depending on the times, depending on the circumstances, depending on the policies. But what is the position should be reflected as reasonably and accurately as possible. That is an emphasis. As regards the Finance Commission, again the terms of reference that have been given to them are the term.

Amul goes international with launch in US

ANAND: Popular dairy brand Amul, whose tagline is 'Taste of India', goes international for the first time and is ready to cater to the people with its range of fresh products in the US. "I am pleased to inform that Amul shall be launching its fresh milk products in the United States of America. Happy to inform that we have tied up with a 108-year-old dairy cooperative in the US - Michigan Milk Producers Association, and this announcement was done at their annual meeting on March 20 at Detroit," said Jayen Mehta, Managing Director of Gujarat Cooperative Milk



Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which operates Amul. "This is for the first time Amul fresh products range will be launched anywhere outside India and in a market like the United States, which has a very strong Indian and Asian diaspora," Mehta told ANI. Further, he said Amul hopes to expand the

brand and become the largest dairy company in line with the vision given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he attended its golden jubilee celebrations recently. Amul's entrepreneurial spirit has made it one of the strongest dairy brands in the world. Addressing the gathering during the

golden jubilee celebration, the Prime Minister asserted that a sapling that was planted 50 years ago by the farmers of Gujarat has become a giant tree. Amul products are exported to more than 50 countries around the world. It has under it 18,000 milk cooperative committees, a network of 36,000 farmers, processing more than 3.5 crore litres of milk per day. The evolution of the dairy sector in India and the stellar role played by dairy cooperatives since the launch of Operation Flood form an integral part of the country's growth story as the country now is the largest producer of milk.

'Office space demand in January-Mar set to rise 35 per cent in 6 cities; 2-fold jump in Hyderabad'

NEW DELHI: Office space demand across six major cities continues to be strong, with gross leasing of workspaces set to rise 35 per cent annually in the January-March quarter, according to Colliers India. Real estate consultant Colliers India has released the data on the office market for the January-March period, nine days before the closing of the current quarter. As per the data, the total gross leasing of office space is estimated to rise to 13.6 million square feet across six major cities -- Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune -- during the first quarter of 2024. The leasing stood at 10.1 million square feet (sq ft) in the year-ago period. The demand is set to



grow in Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Delhi-NCR, but may fall in Chennai. In Pune, the demand is likely to remain flat at 0.8 million sq ft. According to the data, the leasing of office space in Hyderabad is estimated to jump more than two times to 2.9 million square feet during January-March from 1.3 million square feet in the year-ago period. In Mumbai, the demand is expected to surge 90 per cent to 1.9 million sq ft from 1 million sq ft. Office space leasing in

Bengaluru is set to rise 25 per cent to 4 million sq ft from 3.2 million sq ft. In Delhi-NCR, the demand is expected to rise 14 per cent to 2.5 million sq ft from 2.2 million sq ft. Office demand in Chennai is estimated to fall 6 per cent to 1.5 million sq ft during January-March this year compared to 1.6 million square feet in the year-ago period. Gross absorption or leasing data does not include lease renewals, pre-commitments and those deals where only a letter of intent has been signed.

Miners urge govt not to impose export duty on low grade iron ore

NEW DELHI: Miners' body FIMI has urged the government not to impose any export duty on low-grade iron ore, stating that any such move would cause a significant loss of state revenues and employment and also affect foreign exchange earnings. In a representation to the government, the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI) said the mining sector was adversely impacted when in May 2022 the export duty was imposed on low-grade iron ore fines and pellets. The government, however, withdrew the tax in November same year. A major share of the mining sector's contribution to the country's GDP is accounted for by iron ore among the non-coal minerals. Iron ore mining also significantly contributes



towards creating jobs with employment of about 5 lakh persons -- 45,000 direct and 4,50,000 indirect, it said. More than 90 per cent of the country's overall iron ore shipments go to China. "We request that any proposal for banning, restricting exports of iron ore and pellets may kindly not be considered and the status quo of nil export

duty on these products be maintained," the miners' body said. With the opening of new mines and expansion of existing mines the iron ore production capacity is likely to rise to 330 million tonnes in FY'25. But if there is a ban on exports of iron ore or a duty is imposed on its exports, in such a scenario the production will drop to

225 million tonnes, it said. In the mining of iron ore, lumps are generated to the tune of only 25-30 per cent and the balance of iron ore is in the form of fines. "The fines below 58 per cent Fe are required to be kept in the mining lease area only as these cannot be utilised by the steel industry specially secondary steel sector," it said. The non-removal of low grade iron ore from the mines restrict the production of lumps also and becomes an environmental hazard besides limiting scientific mining. Thus accumulation of iron ore fines in the mines also leads to the restricted availability of lumps in the market which in turn adversely impacts the steel industry, it said.

'Ageing' Shami needs to take cue from Anderson: McGrath

NEW DELHI: Legendary Australian pacer Glenn McGrath believes that the current Indian pace attack has much to offer before the next generation can take over. McGrath also encouraged Mohammed Shami to draw inspiration from the longevity of England veteran James Anderson. McGrath made these remarks on the day when India secured an impressive 4-1 Test series victory over England at home. "We have to wait and see the next generation coming through. (Jasprit) Bumrah has still got a bit to go, (Mohammed) Shami is a little older, and (Mohammed) Siraj has been around for a little while but still has plenty left. So, the (current Indian) bowling attack has still some life left," McGrath told PTI. On the sidelines of an MRF Pace Foundation event in Chennai.

BJP allots Mandya, Hassan, Kolar seats to JD(S) for Lok Sabha polls

BENGALURU: The BJP and its regional ally JD(S) have arrived at a consensus on their seat-sharing agreement in Karnataka for the Lok Sabha elections. According to the tie-up, JD(S) will contest in three seats - Kolar, Hassan, and Mandya.

Dance Of Democracy Confirming the pact, Radha Mohan Das Agarwal, the BJP's Karnataka state election in-charge and Rajya Sabha MP, reiterated his party's support for JD(S) in these three constituencies.

"Kolar, Hassan, and Mandya Lok Sabha seats are being given to JD(S). We should support JD(S)," he said. Signs of dissent within alliance The public proclamation of a tie-up and a seat-sharing arrangement notwithstanding, all is not hunky-dory within the BJP-JD(S) alliance, though.

The transfer of Kolar seat from BJP to JD(S) signifies a notable alteration in the political dynamics as the



"In Mandya constituency, political observers now keenly await Sumalatha's decision"

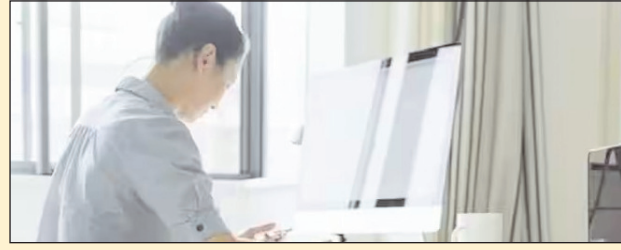
approach. Kolar, previously held by the BJP, is an SC reserved constituency. Sitting BJP MP S Muniyaswamy, who had won the seat in a David vs Goliath contest in 2019, defeating Congress veteran and former Union minister KH Muniyappa, had anticipated a renomination. Meanwhile, incumbent Mandya MP Sumalatha Ambareesh, who had expressed keen inter-

est in securing a BJP ticket from the constituency this time, has announced her plans to convene a crucial meeting with her supporters in Mandya on Monday. Earlier, JD(S) state president HD Kumaraswamy had unilaterally declared that the party would field candidates in three constituencies, including Kolar, without waiting for a final approval from the BJP brass. Kumaraswamy had also expressed confidence in his party's prospects as an independent entity in Hassan and Mandya - known as its strongholds. In Mandya constituency, political observers now keenly await Sumalatha's decision.

In 2000, 8% of CAs were women; today 30%

Delhi:

Women are currently a record 48% of Chartered Accountancy exam qualifiers and pass-outs. Women CAs now make up 30% of the pool, up from 8% in 2000. Also, 43% of 8.63 lakh students are female. New chances, an average annual pay of Rs 12.5 lakh for a newcomer, flexibility, and low tuition make outsourcing accounting and auditing to India appealing. Most notably, four of six women top the 2020 final and intermediate examinations and all top the 2021 old and new course tests. Women candidates repeated their 2021 suc-



cess the following two years. In the recent decade, 75 women have won CA tests at various levels. Following the 2020 National Education Policy, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India introduced a new course in 2021. Women's participation in accountancy, tax, and finance is rising rapidly, says ICAI president Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal. Indian chartered accountancy and

finance are expected to grow faster than in aging nations. Most countries outsource accounting to India, making us the hub. This lucrative remuneration package averages Rs 12.5 lakh after you pass. Latest campus placement's highest package was Rs 28 lakh; foreign was Rs 49 lakh "said. In 2023, 43% of 8.63 lakh applicants were women, up from 30% in 2019.

CBSE alerts schools about a bogus NOC case

Delhi: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has issued a warning that any school found to be acting in violation of the affiliation bye laws will face serious repercussions after it was discovered that a school had recently submitted a false no-objection certificate (NOC) for affilia-

tion reasons. "We urge all schools to strictly comply with the CBSE affiliation bye laws to avoid facing adverse actions", said the board. The seriousness of the problem is highlighted by the current occurrence. Any school found to be in violation of the affiliation

regulations would face immediate legal action from CBSE, the statement stated. Following the current incident, Delhi Police has received a request from CBSE asking them to register a formal complaint and take appropriate action against the offend-

LocalCircles Survey: 42% of parents claim school tuition climbed 30-50% post-Covid

Delhi: Parents are concerned about rising tuition rates as schools reopen for the new school year. LocalCircles found that one in two parents reported fees rising by 30% or more in the preceding two years. It indicated that 8 percent of parents reported a fee increase of more than 50%, while 42 percent reported a 30-50% increase.

They said that new books and other educational fees at the start of a session increased this. It indicated that 8 percent of parents reported a fee increase of more than 50%, while 42 percent reported a 30-50% increase. They said that new books and other educational fees at the start of a session

increased this.

Data reveals that reputed private schools in tier 1 and 2 cities charge Rs 1 lakh to Rs 4 lakh for annual all-inclusive fees. Between Rs 50,000 and Rs 2 lakh in tier 3 and 4 cities. However, Action Committee Unaided Recognised Private Schools President Bharat Arora said that fee hikes have been "reasonable".

"The school managing committee decides how much to raise the fee—sometimes 9-10% or even 2%. No school can raise fees without DOE approval, he said.

The LocalCircles study contained 27,000 parent answers from 312 Indian districts.

WFI takes over sports when the panel is dismissed

Delhi: After the suspension on the national federation was lifted, the Indian Olympic Association abolished the wrestling ad-hoc committee, stating that "there is no further need" for it to continue. The national federation now has full administrative control over the sport.

According to IOA, the decision was also influenced by the way the trials for the Olympics qualifying event next month went. Last December, following WFI's suspension by the Sports Ministry, the panel was established.

Family behind bars in molestation case, burglars decamp with Rs 17 lakh

NAGPUR: A family behind bars in a molestation case was stunned to find their house burgled after they were released on bail.

Wadi police said unidentified men made their way with valuables worth Rs 17 lakh from the house of one Arun Kumar Tripathi at Khadgaon Road in Dattawadi this week when the family was in jail on court orders for allegedly molesting a woman.

After getting bail on Thursday, the family



returned home, only to find their home ransacked with valuables missing. The Tripathi family approached the Wadi police to lodge a complaint of burglary. We also published the following articles

recently Three of a family commit suicide after revenue records of their family property found altered Subba Rao, wife Padmavathi, and daughter Vinaya tragically committed suicides near Vontimitta village. Suicide note

revealed they faced hardships due to property ownership alterations by the revenue department. Holi behind bars for Kejriwal after court gives ED custody till March 28

Arvind Kejriwal remanded to ED custody till March 28 over money laundering allegations linked to Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22. Legal arguments question ED's arrest procedures and approach, highlighting the need for causal link and necessity for arrest.

On cam: Tuskers go head to head at Kerala festival, miraculous escape for devotees

THRISSUR: Scores of onlookers at a temple festival had a miraculous escape when an elephant that was being paraded turned violent, attacked another elephant and then chased it for almost a kilometre and a half through a narrow road even as thousands of devotees who had gathered to watch the culminating ritual fled for their lives. According to police, eight people, including a child, were injured during the ezhunnellipu (displaying the deity in the open) procession held as part of the famous Arattupuzha Pooram festival late Friday night. Among those injured, the condition of the mahout Sreekumar and Narayanan, who fell from atop the elephant, is reported to be serious. The incident



occurred when the Upacharamchollu Piriyaal (ritualistic bidding farewell) was being held. The tusker Guruvayur Ravikrishnan, which was holding the thidambu (idol) of Thiruvadi temple, first attacked its mahout Sreekumar. He had a miraculous escape but with serious injuries. Then Ravikrishnan turned on an accompanying elephant Puthuppally Arjunan, which was holding the thidambu of Arattupuzha Sastha temple.

Videos of the incident, including one shot from a height, that went viral show the two elephants head to head for a few tense seconds, toe to toe, tusk to tusk till Arjunan yielded and turned tail. Ravikrishnan, in no mood to relent, gave chase. Temple festivals in Kerala often witness inhumanely overworked elephants turning violent and running amok but Friday saw one tusker chase another for more than a mile, zig-zagging through the thousands of Pooram fans.

5 crushed to death by dumper truck in Rajasthan's Jhalawar

KOTA: Two brothers and three others were crushed to death under the wheels of a dumper over a yet-to-be-known dispute in a village under Pagaria police station in Jhalawar district on late Saturday night.

Two accused individuals in the matter fled the scene after the crime and are yet to be traced. The five deceased were identified as Bharat Singh (22), his brother Dhiraj Singh (20), and the other three, Tufan Singh (33), Goverdhan Singh (28), and Balu Singh (20), all residents of Binnayga Fanta village under Pagaria police station in Jhalawar district. A dispute allegedly erupted between Ranjeet Singh, Dunger Singh (both around 20-22 years old) of the same village, and the



deceased Bharat Singh and others late Saturday night at around 11 pm, SHO at Pagaria police station, Vijendra Singh, told on Sunday morning. The reason behind the dispute was yet to be ascertained, but when the dispute did not resolve, Bharat Singh, his brother Dhiraj Singh, and three others on two separate bikes left for Pagaria police station to lodge a case against the two - Ranjeet and Dunger Singh. The five individuals on two bikes could hardly move half a kilometer in the village

when the two accused, Ranjeet and Dunger Singh, got into a dumper parked nearby and started it.

They drove it speedily after the two bikes and ran over the wheels over them, killing four of the five on the spot, while the fifth one died on the way to the hospital, the SHO said.

The two accused fled from the spot, leaving the dumper stationary, he added. The two accused,

Ranjeet and Dunger Singh, were reportedly drivers, while the owner of the dumper was reported

Cap helps cops identify Bengaluru cafe blast duo

CHENNAI: Two suspects in the Rameshwaram Cafe bomb blast in Bengaluru on March 1 were spotted in Chennai in Jan, a special branch CID police team in Tamil Nadu has reported to Bengaluru police.

A cap that one of the suspects, Musavir Hussain Shazib, was wearing helped police identify the duo after CCTV images showed their faces before they bought the cap. Soon after the blast that injured 10 people at the cafe near Whitefield in Bengaluru, National Investigation Agency (NIA).

"Show Raturaj's Face Too, He Is The Captain": Sehwag quips

Delhi: The five-time winners Chennai Super Kings upset Royal Challengers Bengaluru by six wickets in Chennai to start their campaign under new captain Raturaj Gaikwad on a positive note. Batting first, RCB scored 173/6, and CSK easily met the mark. It's never easy to replace a significant individual like MS Dhoni, and Raturaj Gaikwad is no exception. "You should feel honored. However, I want to attempt to walk in my own shoes, not someone else's," he stated prior to the competition. Irfan Pathan was also delighted by Raturaj Gaikwad's leadership, noting on X: "CSK pulled off a fantastic comeback after the first 26 balls. Raturaj made some amazing bowling adjustments when under duress. #RCB vs. CSK" Images of Dhoni preparing the field were shown during the game. Additionally, Dhoni

Ramannakunta goes dry, locals worry as groundwater plummets in abutting colonies



SECUNDERABAD: Up to last Dec, the century-old Ramannakunta, situated in the heart of the Secunderabad Cantonment, was a cesspool as it was filled with sewage water year-round. With the increase in temperature, the sewage water started to evaporate from Feb, and by March, it had turned into barren land.

The impact of the lake drying up has also been seen in the depletion of groundwater levels in the surrounding colonies. Residents of the colonies, including

Ganesh Nagar Colony, Sairam Colony, Sitarampur Colony, Ramreddy Colony, and Harshvardhan Colony were surprised to see the lake suddenly dry up. As of now, groundwater has plummeted up to one meter below ground level.

"We spent almost three days in the sewage water which overflowed from the lake due to a heavy downpour in 2020," said residents of Sitarampur Colony. They said they have never seen the lake completely dried up in the past five decades. STOI saw a few chil-

dren playing cricket in the middle of the lake. "We do not have a playground to play cricket, so we are utilizing the lake as a playground," they said.

SCB former ward-VI member, Pandu Yadav, said the then BRS govt sanctioned 30 crore to build a storm water drain between Harshvardhan Colony and Center Point Bridge at Bowenpally. However, the GHMC has not yet started works to divert sewage water from the nearby colonies into the lake.

GHMC nod for porous concrete

Hyderabad: To enhance groundwater levels in city by allowing rainwater to seep into ground, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is going to introduce pervious concrete. In collaboration with Re Sustainability Limited, an C&D management agency, GHMC has developed pervious concrete blocks and tiles. GHMC commissioner Ronald Rose directed officials and waste management agencies to produce porous concrete and tiles using recycled materials from construction and demolition sites.

A successful demonstration was held and a pilot project to lay porous concrete footpaths will be initiated. tnn Shree Cement forays into RMC segment with new plant in Hyderabad, launches Bangur Concrete Shree Cement expands into RMC segment with Bangur Concrete plant in Hyderabad. The company aims to boost brand equity, cost efficiency, and R&D efforts to emerge as a modern, green building materials firm. 'Concrete' evidence against Congress with income tax department, says Delhi high

court Delhi High Court dismisses Congress' petitions challenging income tax reassessment, citing late filing and substantial evidence of Rs 520 crore unaccounted transfers. Details include tax raid on MEIL, payments to MPs/MLAs, and violation of statutory provisions by the tax authority. SpaceX collaborates with US intelligence agency on \$1.8 Billion spy satellite project SpaceX and a US intelligence agency are working on a \$1.8B project to deploy spy satellites, improving surveillance capability.

Delhi tourism to organise heritage walks at 50 places

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

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

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

BJP may offer MNS RS seat vacated by Goyal, MLC nomination for Raj's son

Mumbai: In the event no arrangement works out to attain the 45+ seats goal in the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP may offer Rajya Sabha seat to an MNS nominee, preferably Bala Nandgaonkar, who had defeated OBC leader Chhagan Bhujbal from Mazgaon, said a top BJP leader. He further said Raj Thackeray's son Amit may be appointed on the legislative council from Governor's quota. Incidentally, one Rajya Sabha seat will be vacated as Union minister Piyush Goyal is contesting LS polls from Mumbai North. The top BJP leader spoke at length on the unexpected meeting between Thackeray and Union home minister Amit Shah on the possibility of an alliance between



BJP and MNS. The meeting was reportedly facilitated by deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis. "We do not know if BJP has offered a seat to MNS, but the sudden meeting assumes significant political importance," said the BJP leader. "BJP is expecting to reach an amicable deal and

ensure MNS supports the BJP for reaching the 45-plus goal," he said. Elaborating on his contention, the BJP leader said there's no doubt that Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde not only engineered split in the Shiv Sena, but also secured party symbol and name. However, despite securing support of 44 of 55 Shiv Sena legislators, there are doubts over the present status of Shinde's voter base. "We feel most legislators are with Eknath Shinde, but voters at the grassroots level, both in urban and rural areas, still owe allegiance to UBT president Uddhav Thackeray. BJP leadership believes that if voters prefer Uddhav Thackeray, it will be difficult to achieve the goal of 45-plus.

VBA to back Cong's Shahu Maharaj for Kolhapur

Mumbai: Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) chief Prakash Ambedkar said on Saturday his party would support the head of Kolhapur's royal family and Congress's official candidate for Kolhapur Lok Sabha (LS) seat Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj. Ambedkar said based on his party's ideology, it has been decided that VBA will give him full support and ensure his win. "We will take all efforts to ensure his win. VBA will work towards

it. We will take care that there are no instances like in the past," Ambedkar said. Ambedkar said he wasn't aware of seat-sharing talks in Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA). "They haven't communicated with us about what decision they have taken. Let them first solve their problem, only then can they talk to us. We will wait till March 26 and then make our stand public. We have already offered to support Congress on seven seats. So we are already

moving forward and there is no standstill. We have written to the Congress president and not to regional leaders. We expect them to inform us. Dislodging BJP is our target and we will not mind any small tussles or delays," Ambedkar said. "We don't have to inform anyone, we will inform the voters and the public... We are already taking meetings and protests and have a well-oiled election machinery... We have already galvanised voters and built the

party at district and city levels," Ambedkar said. Shahu Chhatrapati (76) is the 12th generation heir of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and great grandson of social reformer Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. Ambedkar last Tuesday offered VBA's support to Congress candidates in any seven Lok Sabha seats in a letter to its president Mallikarjun Kharge. The offer came even as it became apparent its chances of entering MVA were unravelling.

MCOCA wrongly applied, four acquitted of charges

Mumbai: Observing that there was no evidence to prove that the robbery even took place, a special court acquitted four men accused of being part of an organised crime syndicate and stabbing with a cutter and robbing a jewellery firm's office boy of 19 pieces of diamond ornaments at Andheri (E) in 2019. In the 74-page judgment copy, the judge also said both the then police commissioner and additional commissioner had granted sanction for invoking provisions of the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) without application of mind. While retired officer, Sanjay Barve, was the then police commissioner, DIG Manoj Kumar Sharma was the additional commissioner of police,

west

For charges under MCOCA to be invoked, a requirement under the Act is that there has to be more than one chargesheet against the head of the alleged crime syndicate in the preceding ten years

region. Both deposed as witnesses. For charges under MCOCA to be invoked, a requirement under the Act is that there has to be more than one chargesheet against the head of the alleged crime syndicate in the preceding ten years. Among

those acquitted are watchman Iqbal Isak (34), businessman Firoz Malik (37, auto driver Ramjan Khan (41) and Rakesh Singh (33) who was unemployed. Malik was alleged to be the gang's head. Referring to Sharma's deposition, special judge BD Shelke said that it was incumbent upon him to verify nature of offence registered against the accused and assess all investigation papers and also, assess chargesheet in respect of preceding crimes registered against them in last 10 years. "...the evidence came on record from his mouth referred above demonstrates that he has not taken this exercise and mechanically issued prior approval order. Thus, the prior approval order is not valid," the judge said.

Tamil Nadu's electricity demand crosses peak of 2023, touches 19,409MW

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu's electricity demand surged to a record high of 19,409MW on Friday, surpassing last year's peak demand (19,387MW on April 20, 2023) a month earlier than expected. By April, Tangedco officials expect the state's demand to go up by another 8%. Officials say the early spike in demand is due to rising temperatures pushing up use of fans and air conditioners, and sanction of a three-phase power supply for irrigation. "The maximum demand was recorded around 11 am on Friday, coinciding with peak solar hours. We met the need without any difficulty as solar power generation was good," said an official. When demand peaked, generation



from solar energy was 4,162MW, nearly touching the maximum capacity of 4,200MW. Tangedco officials anticipate the peak may exceed 20,000 MW by the month-end or early April, and go up to 21,000 MW this summer. The surge in demand began in Jan. Officials say it is normal to see an 8% year-on-year increase in power demand. The power demand in Jan went up

by 11% compared to Jan 2023. In Feb there was a 9% increase compared to Feb 2023. In March and April, the surge is likely to hover over 9%, officials said. To meet demand, Tangedco has entered into short-term power purchase agreements with gencoms and power swapping agreements with northeastern states, securing an additional 4,321MW for April. To keep costs in check, power swap agree-

ments have been signed. Chennai Thermal Power Station Stage III, which was recently inaugurated with an 800MW capacity, has commenced production at 260MW. This output is expected to increase after March 26, following the arrival of imported coal. Additionally, Vallur thermal plant units 1 and 2, which together have a capacity of 700 megawatts, will start generating power by March-end. Kudankulam Unit 1 will start generation in April second week. "By the time unit 2 of Kudankulam is shut down for fuelling in May, the wind season will begin and we should be able to manage the demand without much trouble," said officials.

Singer Anupam Roy is an alum of Texins

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

Unfortunately it didn't go our way: SRH captain Pat Cummins



NEW DELHI: Kolkata Knight Riders clinched a heart-stopping triumph over the Sunrisers Hyderabad in a pulsating encounter during the IPL 2024 season on Saturday. The match, marked by intense battles and nail-biting moments, culminated in KKR's victory by a slender margin of four runs, propelled by the explosive batting display of Andre Russell. An exhilarating half-century by Russell, comprising 64 off a mere 25 deliveries, adorned with seven towering sixes and three boundaries,

served as the cornerstone of KKR's challenging total. Additionally, Russell showcased his versatility by scalping two vital wickets while conceding 25 runs in his spell, thereby stamping his authority on the match. "Close game in the end, wonderful game of cricket. Unfortunately it didn't go our way. I thought for the most part, really happy with how we bowled," remarked SRH skipper Pat Cummins in the post-match presentation, acknowledging the captivating nature of

the contest. Cummins commended the valiant efforts of Klaasen, whose scintillating knock of 63 off 29 balls propelled SRH agonizingly close to victory. "It's one of those, goes one way or the other, amazing job by Klaas (Klaasen) and Shahbaz to get us back into the game and get us into that position," added Cummins, reflecting on Klaasen's heroic innings. Despite the defeat, Cummins found solace in SRH's resilient performance, identifying areas of encouragement amidst the disappointment.

Mustafizur Rahman's change of pace makes him world class, says DK

CHENNAI: Despite being stretched off the field at Chittagong last week, Bangladesh's Mustafizur Rahman was fizzing with energy and delivered a stellar performance, securing Chennai Super Kings' six-wicket victory over Royal Challengers Bengaluru here on Friday. In a mere span of 10 deliveries, Mustafizur, aka Fizz, decimated RCB's top order and completely shifted the momentum of the game by scalping four crucial wickets -- Faf du Plessis, Rajat Patidar, Virat Kohli and Cameron Green. On Friday night, the left-arm medium seamer had more variations in his pace than colours in an artist's palette. Apart from that, his leg-cutters and flexible wrist action were like precise brushstrokes. And, the Chepauk wicket turned out to be the perfect canvas for Fizz to showcase his masterpiece. Two well-curated leg-cutters at the right length accounted for du Plessis and Green's wickets. A slower ball sent Kohli packing, while a wobbly seam delivery deceived Patidar. Dinesh Karthik, who remained unbeaten to take RCB to a decent total, said Fizz's modification of the pace is what



makes it tough for batters to face him. "This (Chepauk) is a very good pitch. It's not the usual slow turn-up pitch that we probably were visualising in our minds. The ball skidded on a lot more here. It was good for batting. He (Fizz) bowled brilliantly. And he hit the right lengths. His slow ball came out well. "What makes it really tough is the fact that he can bowl at 138-139 kmph and then he has a slow one, which is very deceptive. He bowls at 120-125 kmph, which makes it really hard to line him up. So that's what is so special about him. And he's a world-class bowler," explained DK after the match. The absence of CSK's desig-

nated death bowler Matheesha Pathirana opened the doors for Fizz to get into the playing XI. And, the 28-year-old, who was picked up by CSK in the auction last year for his base price of Rs 2 crore, made the most of the opportunity. CSK bowling consultant Eric Simons said Fizz executed the plan seamlessly. "I think we will always look at the conditions, look at the balance, to decide (the XI). I think it's important to have somebody who does something a little bit different. We just felt that he (Fizz) does suit the conditions, but again, it's the simplicity of the plan that we put into place, and he executed beautifully today (Friday)," said Simons.

SC seeks All India Football Federation's response to corruption charges

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court took cognisance of amicus curiae Gopal Shankaranarayanan's application collating corruption charges flying thick and fast against the interim governing body of All India Football Federation (AIFF) and said it would soon finalise its constitution to pave way for fresh elections for office bearers. A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra took note of the amicus' application bringing to court's notice a series of corruption charges against the AIFF. The amicus said, "The current management of AIFF, despite being an interim body, has gone well beyond their mandate and recent developments highlighting the serious mismanagement taking place in AIFF has come to light. The AIFF corpus is being frittered away," Shankaranarayanan told the bench.

Sevilla FC seriously considering friendly in India, says club president Jose del Nido Carrasco

PANAJI: Jose Maria del Nido Carrasco grew up as the grandson of a Sevilla FC vice-president, son of a Sevilla president, and has held different roles at the six-time Europa League champions for 17 years. Now, he's the president of the Spanish club, looking to help grow the club internationally, particularly India. A lot of European clubs have joined hands with Indian clubs but none of the tieups lasted long. We want to establish ourselves as an option for



Indian football fans, and that requires perseverance and patience. We believe that the journey with Bengaluru United

brings together that necessary perseverance and patience. This is an association of football clubs, but we also have

common interests. We are clubs that look to the future with technology as part of their DNA. We believe that our relationship will last because we share two common pillars: vision of the future and ambition. We want the agreement to last a long time and in fact help Bengaluru's growth with technology and sporting methodology. We also trust that this season will end with promotion (from second division to I-League) and Bengaluru will confirm.

India, Afghanistan play out goalless draw in FIFA World Cup Qualifiers

NEW DELHI: India and Afghanistan played out a goalless draw as both teams struggled to convert their opportunities into goals in a gripping Group A fixture of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers. The match, held at the Damac Stadium, witnessed an end-to-end contest marked by tense midfield battles and sporadic attacking moves. Despite India's offensive intent from the outset, with forward Manvir Singh coming close to scoring on multiple occasions, neither side managed to break



the deadlock in the first half. The feisty encounter saw lunging tackles and strategic play, with Afghanistan relying on their pace and physicality while India focused on a passing game. India's Vikram Partap Singh, making his starting XI debut, posed

a constant threat to the Afghanistan defense, showcasing his versatility by drifting between the center and wing positions. However, the visitors struggled to capitalize on their attacking opportunities, leaving coaches Igor Stimac and Ashley Westwood visi-

bly frustrated on the sidelines. Manvir Singh had several chances to put India ahead, but his efforts were thwarted by Afghanistan's resilient defense. Despite controlling large portions of the game, India failed to convert their dominance into goals, with Afghanistan posing threats on the counter-attack. In the second half, Vikram Pratap Singh and Liston Colaco missed opportunities to break the deadlock, while Afghanistan also had their moments in front of goal.

'He sealed the game...': Sachin praises Harshit Rana's last-over

NEW DELHI: Kolkata Knight Riders clinched a nail-biting victory over the Sunrisers Hyderabad by a mere four runs, propelled by stellar performances from Andre Russell and Harshit Rana. Despite the explosive batting display by Sunrisers' Heinrich Klaasen, who notched an impressive 63 off just 29 balls, it was the

tense final over that ultimately determined the outcome of the match at Eden Gardens. Needing 13 runs in the last over, Sunrisers' hopes rested on Klaasen's shoulders as he continued his aggressive assault. However, Rana, entrusted with the daunting task of defending the target, displayed remarkable calmness under pressure. Despite conceding a six on the first delivery, Rana swiftly turned the tide by dismissing Shahbaz Ahmed and Klaasen in quick succession, sealing Kolkata's victory in dramatic fashion. Following Rana's heroics, cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar took to social media to commend the young pacer's courage and tactical brilliance. Tendulkar also praised the impactful contributions of Russell,

Klaasen, and Kolkata's Phil Salt, highlighting their pivotal roles in shaping the outcome of the match. "We witnessed 2 wonderful knocks by @Russell12A and Klaasen today. @PhilSalt1 led the charge first, followed by some brilliant power-hitting by Russell. Heinrich Klaasen ensured that Sunrisers Hyderabad came close to the target but some courageous bowling in the final over by Harshit Rana sealed the game," Tendulkar wrote on X, formerly Twitter. The match served as a testament to the unpredictable nature of T20 cricket, with momentum swinging back and forth until the very last ball. Kolkata's victory underscored their resilience under pressure, while Sunrisers' valiant effort fell agonizingly short in the end.

Ramandeep's innings set up the platform for Russell: SRH coach

NEW DELHI: Kolkata Knight Riders clinched a nail-biting victory against Sunrisers Hyderabad in a thrilling encounter at Eden Gardens, with SRH head coach Daniel Vettori acknowledging the crucial role played by KKR's Ramandeep Singh in setting the stage for Andre Russell's explosive innings. "Ramandeep's innings set up the platform for Russell," Vettori remarked in the post-match analysis, highlighting Singh's aggressive batting as the catalyst for KKR's late onslaught. Singh's cameo, which saw him smashing four sixes and a boundary, proved instrumental in providing momentum to the KKR innings. Vettori further elabo-



rated on the challenge posed by Russell's power-hitting prowess, stating, "His power is second to none." The SRH coach emphasized the difficulty in containing Russell on a batting-friendly surface like Eden Gardens, noting the imperative for flawless execution from the bowling side. Reflecting on the match dynamics, Vettori acknowl-

edged the pressure exerted by Singh's attacking innings, stating, "The shots he played were fantastic and put the pressure back on us." Despite the defeat, Vettori remained optimistic about SRH's prospects, particularly praising Heinrich Klaasen's aggressive batting display, which kept SRH in contention till the final moments. Looking ahead, KKR is scheduled to face

Royal Challengers Bengaluru in an away match on March 29, while SRH will take on Mumbai Indians at home on March 27. With both teams aiming to build on their performances, the upcoming fixtures promise to deliver more exciting cricketing action in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 season.

(With inputs from PTI)

Indian Super League: Two-window ban for Hyderabad FC

PANAJI: Hyderabad FC have been barred from registering new players for the next two windows after they were handed a transfer ban by the All India Football Federation's player status committee. The Indian Super League (ISL) club has been punished for repeat offences after defaulting on salaries to several players and officials. "The club is banned from registering any new players for two entire and consecutive registration periods. The club can register new players only for the next registration period following the complete serving of the relevant sporting sanction," the AIFF's player status committee said on Wednesday. The ban will be effective from the next registration window, starting mid-June to August end. The second transfer window is scheduled for January 2025 which effectively means Hyderabad cannot register players.