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

Indian Navy thwarts hijack attempt, rescues 21 crew members, including 15 Indians



NEW DELHI: Striking a major blow at the very heart of piracy emanating from the Gulf of Aden, Indian warship INS Chennai and its marine commandos thwarted the attempted hijack of a Liberia-flagged merchant vessel and safely rescued its 21 crew members, including 15 Indians, in north Arabian Sea on Friday evening. The Navy said the five to six armed pirates, who had boarded MV Lila Norfolk around 460 nautical miles east of Eyl in Somalia on Thursday evening, "probably abandoned" the merchant vessel after the "forceful warning" issued by Indian P-81 patrol aircraft through open channels as well as the "interception" by the 7,500-tonne guide missile destroyer INS Chennai. "Sanitization operations on the merchant vessel, deck by deck, by the marine commandos (Marcos) confirmed the absence of the hijackers. The 21 crew members (including six from the Philippines) were safely evacuated from the vessel's citadel by the Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said. Pirates who do not have a ship's crew under their direct control as hostages usually flee on skiffs to their "mother boat" on being confronted by a warship. Late on Friday night, INS Chennai was helping restore the power generation and propulsion of MV Lila Norfolk to ensure she could commence her voyage to her next port of call. The dramatic action on the high seas began on Thursday evening when the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO), a Royal Navy channel that serves as a conduit between military ships and merchant vessels in strategic waterways, sent out an alert that "five to six unknown armed personnel" had boarded MV Lila Norfolk.

"Sanitization operations on the merchant vessel, deck by deck, by the marine commandos

PM's Pariksha Pe Charcha records 1 crore registrations

NEW DELHI: Up from 38.8 lakh in 2023, the forthcoming Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC) has recorded one crore registrations so far with one more week left for the deadline. This year's edition, the seventh, will be held at the Bharat Mandapam on January 29, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with students, teachers, and parents from India and abroad. Two students and a teacher from each of the states and UTs and winners of the Kala Utsav and the Veer



Gatha competition event. According to a ministry of education (MoE) press release,

PPC has witnessed extensive enthusiasm among students nationwide eager to participate in the event and interact with the PM.

Online registrations via an MCQ competition is live on MyGov.in till January 12, 2024. Modi had conceptualised this interactive annual programme wherein students, parents, and teachers from across the nation and also from overseas interact with him to discuss anxieties related to examinations.

BJP slams AAP amid 'ED to arrest Arvind Kejriwal' claim

New Delhi: Reacting to AAP's charge that the Bharatiya Janata Party wants to arrest Arvind Kejriwal to prevent him from campaigning in the Lok Sabha elections, BJP on Thursday said the Delhi chief minister has been

behaving like a fugitive. Referring to Kejriwal skipping the ED summons over the liquor policy case, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva called AAP 'choron ki baraat' (a procession of thieves). "Since morning I have

been watching the 'Choron ki Baraat' (procession of thieves) making noise and mourning for Kejriwal. When you did corruption what happened that time? You (Kejriwal) are running away from the investi-

gation agency. You have been called three times by ED but you did not go there. Now you are mourning that you can be arrested. Delhi CM it's your responsibility to follow the rules but you are not following that," he said.

Ayodhya to welcome 1 lakh pilgrims per day after January 24

NEW DELHI: Anticipating a huge rush of pilgrims after the Ram temple consecration in Ayodhya, multiple departments of the Centre are in constant touch with the state machinery to facilitate visitors to the holy town. A senior government functionary said more than a lakh pilgrims are expected each day and efforts are on to ensure logistics are in place before the temple is opened to the public on January 24.

Senior officials from the Centre have been visiting Ayodhya frequently and many are camping there to supervise the consecration ceremony and also prepare for the influx of pilgrims. Tour operators and hotels are also having a busy time with a sudden spurt in queries and bookings by devotees. Ayodhya divisional commissioner Gaurav Dayal held a meeting with hotel owners in the city recently and directed them to spruce up rooms for hassle-free stays of visitors, both domestic and foreign.

There are over 100 hotels in Faizabad and Ayodhya, spanning luxury, budget, economy and unrecognised guest houses, besides dharamshalas, homestays and paying guest accommodation. Besides, four government guest houses have a total of 35 rooms. About 50 small guest houses are under construction and will be ready by November, district administration officials said. The Uttar Pradesh government has also issued paying guest certificates to more than 500 property owners.

Meanwhile, real estate body National Real Estate Development Council (Naredco) said it plans to organise a builders' conference in Ayodhya to tap its commercial and residential opportunities as the holy town. Naredco president G Hari Babu said there were opportunities to set up hotels.

Mosque panel moves SC against HC nod for survey

AGRA: In Mathura's Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah mosque row, the mosque management committee has approached SC with a special leave petition (SLP) against the Allahabad high court's December 14 order by which it had allowed an application for the appointment of a court commissioner to conduct survey of the premises. On



December 15 last year, the top court had refused to interfere with this order when an oral request was made to grant a stay. "The committee has now filed the SLP through advocate-on-record RHA Sikander formally challenging the HC order," said Tanveer Ahmed, secretary for the management committee of Shahi Idgah mosque.

In the SLP, the committee argued that "the HC ought to have considered its plea for rejection of the plaint before deciding on any other miscellaneous applications in the suit". It has sought for rejection of the plaint on the ground that the suit is barred by the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991. Referring to the 1991 Act, Ahmed pointed out t.

BJP plans cleanliness campaign ahead of Ram temple ceremony

NEW DELHI: In line with the suggestion made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP has planned a week-long cleanliness campaign at temples and pilgrimages across the country culminating in "Diwali celebrations" on January 22, the day when consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya will take place.

In his address during a recent visit to Ayodhya, Modi had appealed to launch a "Swachh Bharat" campaign from Makar Sankranti (January 14) to January 22, the day scheduled for the consecration ceremony. The party will involve all its elected representatives including MPs,

MLAs and panchayat representatives to execute the campaign for which the party functionaries have been assigned the task to identify places of worship where the cleanliness campaign ahead of the consecration ceremony will be launched. Party president J P Nadda has written a letter to all state

party presidents to make plans in this regard. He has also called a meeting of senior party functionaries on January 6 to take stock of the party's preparations to amplify the consecration ceremony, which the party says, is happening after a "long wait of over 500 years", a period that has witnessed a long legal battle.

Minister suggests framework for reporting hit-&-run cases

NEW DELHI: The road transport ministry has suggested a framework of online reporting of accidents by drivers soon after the incident to avoid applicability of "hit-and-run" provisions of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) and save them from potential mob fury. Drivers fleeing from sites and not informing police are liable

for up to seven year jail and fine as per the BNS. Though the law has not been enforced yet, truck, bus and taxi drivers have protested against the provision causing disruptions in the supply chain. The Centre has assured trucker and transporters organisation to consult them before enforcing this provision.

Responding to a question on the steps that the government can take to address the fears of heavy and commercial vehicle drivers, Union road transport secretary Anurag Jain said any driver fleeing from the spot after causing an accident that leaves people injured or dead is a serious issue.

Congress eyes 9 of 14 LS seats in Jharkhand

New Delhi Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee has informed its national leadership that it wants to contest nine out of 14 parliamentary seats in the state in the LS elections. The proposal was put forward by PCC president Rajesh Thakur and Congress legislature party leader Alamgir Alam on Thursday during a meeting with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi to discuss preparations for the polls and Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Congress contested on seven seats and JMM on four, leaving the remaining seats to their allies, RJD and the now defunct JVM-P (of Babulal Marandi, who has returned to BJP). Congress and JMM won a seat each while the other two allies drew a blank. Congress sources said.

Japan plane collision: Was it a 'textbook' evacuation or caution



Japan Airlines successfully evacuated all 367 passengers from an Airbus A350 wide-body jet after it collided with a Coast Guard plane at Tokyo's Haneda airport. The crew followed emergency protocols and prioritized panic control, guiding passengers using concise instructions. The crew performed visual checks to determine usable emergency exits and used megaphones to communicate due to a malfunctioning announcement system. Passengers praised the

efficiency of the evacuation, acknowledging that it potentially saved their lives. The incident has sparked a debate about the adequacy of current evacuation standards. Only 17 people suffered slight injuries when fleeing the Airbus 350 via evacuation slides and running for their lives on Tuesday evening as the plane blazed in Tokyo. The quick and effective evacuation of a Japan Airlines aircraft, which ignited after colliding with a Coast Guard plane during its descent.

Shinde committed to the "liberation" of the centuries-old structure

● "The site, situated on a hillock south of Kalyan, is claimed by both Hindus and Muslims"



MUMBAI/KALYAN:

Branding his Hindutva credentials, chief minister Eknath Shinde on raked up a longstanding dispute over Kalyan's Haji Malang Dargah, saying he was committed to the "liberation" of the centuries-old structure. The dargah trust has for its part requested Thane police for security for its "urs" to be held on February 24.

The site, situated on a hillock south of Kalyan, is claimed by both Hindus and Muslims. While there is a dargah there named after Sufi saint Haji Haji Abdul Rahman Malang, popularly known as Haji Malang Baba and the trust claims it is 800 years old, right-wing groups and

especially the Shiv Sena in Thane district from the 1980s has claimed it as a temple of Hindu saint Shri Macchindra Nath. The dispute has been pending in the courts. Shinde's mentor and late Sena leader Anand Dighe started the practice of visiting the site every year on the occasion of Magh Poonima and performing an aarti, and Shinde, who would earlier go with his mentor, has continued it since Dighe's death in 2001. In a speech at the Malangad Harinam Mahotsav, a religious gathering, on Tuesday, Shinde said acknowl-

edged the sentiments of the community in this regard. "I know your feelings about Malangad. Anand Dighe began the liberation movement for Malangad, after which we all started the salutation 'Jay Malang Shri Malang'.

I want to tell you that there are some things that can't be said in public. I know that there are beliefs you have inside your heart about the liberation of Malangad. But I'm saying this, Eknath Shinde won't stay quiet till he fulfills your inner wishes," he said.

In a letter to senior state officials, including Thane police commissioner, Nasir Khan, chairman of the Pir Haji Malang Saheb Trust which manages the dargah, stated that the trust apprehended trouble during the Haji Malang "urs" on February 24 and was requesting for security to ensure the marking of the "urs" and maintenance of law and order as well as communal harmony. The letter is not a response to Shinde's statement but is in the wake of the Malangad Harinam Mahotsav which takes place every year.

Telangana high court on set aside the CAT orders in favour of 13 IAS and IPS officers

HYDERABAD

Bringing the curtains down on the nearly decade-old IAS and IPS cadre distribution tussle, the Telangana high court on set aside the central administrative tribunal (CAT) orders in favour of 13 IAS and IPS officers and placed all of them at the disposal of the Centre which is their cadre controlling authority. A bench of Justice Abhinand Kumar Shavili and Justice N a m a v a r a p u Rajeswara Rao directed the 13 officers to put forward their grievance directly to the Centre. While disposing of the petitions filed by the central department of personnel and training (DoPT), the bench also directed the Centre to consider the officers' representations afresh in line with the guidelines of the Pratyush Sinha committee that oversaw cadre distribution during state bifurcation in June 2014. The bench reminded the advo-

A Vani Prasad, Vakati Karuna and M Prasanthi - who, despite having lived all their lives in Hyderabad, were shown as AP natives only because they were born in a hospital in AP.

cates representing the officers that a coordinate bench of the HC had already upheld the validity of the guidelines in former Telangana chief secretary Somesh Kumar's case and, hence, it was not going into its correctness. But it asked the Centre to be considerate in deserving cases.

"Give them personal hearing, if they seek," the bench said addressing Centre's counsel additional solicitor general B Narasimha Sarma. Sarma's assisting counsel G Rajshekhar Reddy said there will not be any change in the current status of the bureaucrats till the Centre had looked into their representations.

He also allayed fears that the Centre could relieve them from their current states like it happened in the case of Somesh who was relieved from Telangana within hours of HC judgment and told to report to AP. The bench said the only part of the CAT order it had difficulty in accepting was its move to make the allotments on its own, which was the job of the central government. Hence, we are remanding the matter back to the Centre," the bench said. The bench, however, did not dismiss the CAT findings questioning the way the committee and the authorities acted in the case of these 13 officers.

The bench recorded the contentions of three IAS promotee officers - A Vani Prasad, Vakati Karuna and M Prasanthi - who, despite having lived all their lives in Hyderabad, were shown as AP natives only because they were born in a hospital in AP. This change in domicile status altered their positions in the combined list and they were allotted to AP contrary to their choice of Telangana. While C Hari Kiran, the 2019 IAS topper, was shown as an SC candidate and put in reserved category despite a clear law to keep him in general merit category, his counsel S Rahul Reddy said while questioning guideline number 5.1 of Pratyush Sinha panel. Reddy said this guideline also went against the Supreme Court verdict. It was because of this guideline that Hari Kiran was allotted Telangana despite opting for AP, he said.

A fire erupted in the teaching block of the AIIMS

NEW DELHI: A fire erupted in the teaching block of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in the national capital on Thursday morning.

Seven fire tenders were dispatched to the location, and the fire was successfully extinguished, as reported by Delhi Fire Services. The fire extensively damaged furniture, a refrigerator, and office records located on the second floor of the director's building at AIIMS.

Interior parts of the city, do not have street name boards

Chennai: More than 5,000 roads, mostly in interior parts of the city, do not have street name boards, making it tough for commuters and visitors. As per rough estimates by the Greater Chennai Corporation, out of 35,000 roads in the city, 5,000 roads have no street sign boards, or have damaged stickers or rusty boards. Added areas of Ambattur, Madhavaram and Thiruvottiyur are the hardest hit as they had painted name boards which have got damaged.

D Neelakannan of Madhavaram said the street name boards have been damaged for five years but are yet to be replaced.

"In some streets, the stickers have peeled off or the boards have collapsed," he said. According to Tamil Nadu urban local body rules, both sides of the roads must have a blue-printed reflective street name boards carrying details of zone, ward and division numbers. In Sholinganallur, although boards are there, these basic details are missing. Sathish Galley of Sholinganallur said they had set up boards covering all the interior roads but details of wards and zones are yet to be printed.

Councillors said they are using their ward-development funds to fix name boards. Ward 12 councillor Kavi Ganesan said he had got estimates to fix 50 name boards in Thiruvottiyur and Kaladipet areas. "In a month, these 50 streets will get new name boards," he said.

K V Thilagar of ward 92 in Mogappair said more than 30 streets needed name boards. "I have used ward funds to set up boards in a dozen streets.

Ram Lalla to be installed in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple will remain a closely guarded

AYODHYA

The idol of Ram Lalla to be installed in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple will remain a closely guarded secret till the Ram temple consecration at 12.20pm on January 22, according to people associated with the 'pran pratishtha' ceremony.

Nobody would get to witness the face of the idol before the deity is finally enshrined as the lord of Ayodhya on his original seat after almost 500 years, sources involved in the preparations for the consecration ceremony said.

They said that as no photograph or video

of the three idols out of which one would be placed in the 'girbh griha' would be available, the official announcement on the selected idol would not make much difference as the disclosure would only reveal whether white marble or black granite has been used to carve the

idol. Sources said that the details of the proposed nagar yatra of January 17 were yet to be worked out. A member of Ram temple trust, Kameshwar Choupal, said, "So far, only an outline of the consecration ceremony has been prepared and details will be finalized soon.

Expressing discontent over the recent arrest of Srikanth Poojari

BENGALURU/ HUBBALLI

The main opposition BJP staged protests across the state, expressing discontent over the recent arrest of Srikanth Poojari, a self-proclaimed 'kar sevak,' in connection with a 31-year-old case related to the Ram temple agitation.

The protests, marked by fervent

chants of 'Jai Sri Ram' and 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai,' saw the detention of senior BJP functionaries, including leader of opposition R Ashoka and deputy opposition leader Arvind Bellad. Chief minister Siddaramaiah defended the arrest by highlighting Poojari's extensive criminal record.

He empha-

sized that Poojari faced charges in a staggering 16 cases, including bootlegging, Matka gambling, and being listed as a rowdy sheeter in two police stations. Siddaramaiah condemned the BJP's use of religious identity as a shield for criminal activities and warned against assigning caste and

religious labels to criminals. Siddaramaiah further argued that the arrest was not based on religious discrimination but on the necessity to maintain law and order. He presented data indicating that within the jurisdiction of the Hubballi D h a r w a d Commissionerate in 2023.

The girl managed to get an artificial limb but it is started peeling off at the foot

BENGALURU: Ten-year-old Manopriya from Shahpur in Yadgir district had to get her left leg amputated after an accident when she was six. The girl managed to get an artificial limb but it is started peeling off at the foot. The girl was in Bengaluru on Wednesday for the 26th Free Limb Fitment camp organized by Rotary Club Peenya and Sri Bhavan Mahaveer Vikalang Sahayathi Samiti, Jaipur, to get a fresh artificial limb.

"I was initially scared about Manopriya's future but after getting an artificial limb, she began doing everything, including walking two-and-

a-half km to school every day on her own. But the artificial limb is peeling off at the foot. I am very happy that she is getting a fresh limb now and will support her in whatever she wants to do in future," her father Hanumanthu, a labourer, told.

The seven-day camp took off and aims to provide free fitment of limbs for amputees and calipers for those affected by polio. According to the organizers, about 2,400 people from different parts of Karnataka have applied for artificial legs, which are tailored and customized for every benefi-

ciary with the assistance of 26 technicians from BMVSS, Jaipur. About Rs 18 lakh has been collected from individual donors and philanthropists for the camp. Shakuntala, II PU student from Siruguppa taluk, Ballari district, who lost her left leg in a road accident one-and-a-half years ago, said she hasn't been able to attend classes regularly and only writes exams. "I have come here with the hope of getting back to my normal life and wanting to study like everyone by going to college. I want to become a teacher and will fulfil my goal," she said.

6 hours of chaos as leopard strays into Gurgaon village

GURGAON:

A leopard strayed into a densely populated village in Narsinghpur, just off the Delhi-Jaipur highway, on Wednesday morning, triggering chaos as the big cat ran amok for hours trying to find a way out, till he was confined to a house and tranquilised.

On its way, the adult leopard ran into a 13-year-old boy and attacked him. The boy is being treated for bite wounds and is stable. Several families had a narrow escape as the panicked animal rushed into at least four houses. Locals said they spotted the leopard at 6.30am.

The animal slipped into a ground floor house, from where it jumped into a two-bedroom house, whose occupants managed to rush to their terrace just in time. The leopard that strayed into a densely populated Gurgaon village on Wednesday had been often spotted in the vicinity over the past month.

NCR experienced fog on morning, causing low visibility in various areas

NEW DELHI

Parts of Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) experienced fog on morning, causing low visibility in various areas.

The minimum temperature in Delhi was recorded at 9 degrees Celsius, and the maximum temperature is expected to reach around 20 degrees Celsius, according to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD). The IMD also predicted extreme cold in the coming days, with the minimum temperature dropping to 7 degrees Celsius on January 3.

The Met Department reported poor visibility in several regions: Bikaner, Jaipur, and Ajmer in Rajasthan, Jammu in Jammu Division, Ambala in Haryana, and Sagar in East Madhya Pradesh, all recorded visibility below 200 meters.

In Delhi, the visibility was 500 meters at Sardarjung and 600 meters at Palam. The Indra Gandhi International Airport was covered in dense fog, leading to delays in several flights. Indian Railways reported that 26 trains arrived late in the national capital due to foggy conditions. People without homes

sought refuge in night shelters across the city. One resident from Bihar, who was staying in a winter shelter tent, praised the facilities provided by the government, including free food and washrooms inside the tent. "All facilities are here. Blankets, food, water, tea, everything is provided," said Raju, a guard at the winter rescue tent. As the temperature dropped, people gathered around bonfires to keep warm. Despite the harsh weather and dense fog, rehearsals for the Republic Day parade continued at Kartavya path in Delhi. The Met Department issued a weather warning for today, stating that Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan would experience dense to very dense fog and cold to severe cold conditions. Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu Division of Jammu and Kashmir could expect fog at a few places. Residents in areas surrounding Delhi, including Agra, Meerut, and Mathura, expressed their discomfort due to the cold weather. In light of multiple accidents.

Indian Army represents the strength of 140 crore countrymen: Yogi

"Sikh regiment soldiers demonstrates bravery on Punjabi tunes during"



Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said that the Indian Army symbolizes the strength and courage of the 140 crore people of the country. Only a strong army can realize the vision of a secure and sovereign nation. The Chief Minister inaugurated the three-day 'Know Your Army' festival organized at Surya Khel Parisar, Lucknow. While thanking the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister for the 'Know Your Army' festival being organized outside the national capital of the country for the first time, he said, "It is a matter of pride that Lucknow-based Central

Command has been selected for this ceremony." CM Yogi formally inaugurated the festival by releasing colorful balloons into the sky. During this, the soldiers of the Sikh Regiment displayed their bravery on Punjabi tunes. The Chief Minister visited the exhibition featuring a display of army equipment and state-of-the-art weapons. He also took information from army officials about various weapons and military equipment. Addressing the event, the Chief Minister said that this is an opportunity for the youth of the state to

know the Indian Army and recognize their bravery and valor closely. Describing the bravery display of the Sikh Regiment as brilliant, he said that this is the ancient art of India, through which our skilled youth used to give a befitting reply to the invaders. He expressed joy that the Indian Army, by incorporating this ancient art of war, not only honored this tradition but also showcased the sacrifice and dedication of Sikh Gurus to inspire the youth of India. The Chief Minister further said that through the 'Know Your Army' festi-

val, we are not only getting the opportunity to see the exhibition of army equipment and weapons, but also to know closely and understand the power, valor and patriotism of the army. Through this event, people can learn about the army's weapons, their working style, and operational expertise, which is generally unknown to the public. "UP is the land of heroes. Our soldiers have made important contributions in every battle fought for the security of the country. While protecting the country, our soldiers have brought pride to the state. The state government is also fully committed to the welfare of serving and retired soldiers. The government provides a financial reward of Rs 50 lakhs to the families of martyrs and offers a government job to one family member", Yogi added. CM Yogi stated that the country is achieving self-reliance.

Ramotsav 2024-Yogi govt issues 'Paying Guest certification' to 75 new building owners in Ayodhya

Ayodhya

In line with the preparations of the consecration ceremony of Lord Ram to be held on January 22, an increasing number of people are being included in the Paying Guest Scheme in Ayodhya. More than 500 building owners have been connected with it so far. In this sequence, Commissioner Gaurav Dayal and District Magistrate Nitish Kumar presented certificates to 75 new building owners in the Commissioner Auditorium on Friday. The process of connecting new building owners through the scheme is progressing continuously. Notably, Ayodhya Development Authority's consultant Rakesh Singh and building owners were present during the distribution event. Provide better facilities to guests. Commissioner Gaurav Dayal requested that being a resident of Ayodhya, it is everyone's duty to provide



good facilities to the guests. He further appealed to the building owners to provide the best facilities to their guests, making them feel at home.

Keep the tradition of hospitality alive. District Magistrate Nitish Kumar said that by joining this scheme, everyone must keep the tradition of hospitality alive.

If we provide them with better facilities, our cultural relationship will strengthen, and more people will visit. Everyone should pay special attention to cleanliness and behave well towards guests. If

we take care of these aspects, guests will leave with pleasant memories, and they are likely to visit again. This will not only strengthen building owners financially but also contribute to the exchange of ideas, culture, and more. It is noteworthy that the Home Stay/Paying Guest Scheme is inspired by the spirit of 'Atithi Devo Bhava', which is an important scheme of the UP Government and is being run by the Tourism Department. Under the Paying Guest Scheme, building owners who have 2 to 5 additional rooms in

their house can join this scheme and benefit from generating additional income. Depending on the facilities in their rooms, they can earn daily rents ranging from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 2500 for accommodating travellers/pilgrims. Any building owner of Ayodhya who wants to avail the benefit of this scheme can contact the control room established by the Ayodhya Development Authority or call at the mobile numbers to get further information regarding the scheme 7607778924, 7607778926.

He expressed confidence the issue of military presence will be resolved through dialogue

New Delhi

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu said India not withdrawing its forces from the Indian Ocean archipelago will amount to disregarding the "democratic will" of the Maldivian people, and will imperil the future of democracy in the country. However, as he rejected any permanent military presence, the president backed defence cooperation with India, including in the form of efforts to build the operational readiness of the Maldives National Defence Force, saying it's based on mutual respect and trust. He expressed confidence the issue of military presence will be resolved through dialogue. The presence of foreign military personnel in the Maldives, without parliamentary approval, is against the letter and spirit of the Constitution, he said. Asked about his alleged tilt towards China, which he's expected to visit before travelling to India making him the first democratically elected president to do so, Muizzu said he was going to follow only pro-Maldives policy.

Excerpts:

Maldives has over the years turned into a hotbed of geopolitical rivalry, given its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, sitting atop crucial shipping routes. In that context, what sort of foreign policy can one expect your government to follow? The centre of gravity in global dynamics is indeed shifting from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. The majority of the shipping routes goes through the Indian Ocean, specifically in close proximity, or through the Maldives. The geographical location of the Maldives makes it quite attractive for external powers to pull the country into their orbit. We have to be vigilant and make realistic assessments of the geopolitical situation. There is very little margin for error—as one small misstep can result in losing the country's cherished values and its independence and sovereignty. Securing the Sea Lines of Communication is as vital to the Maldives and its stability and prosperity, as it is to the wider Indian Ocean region, and global trade and commerce.

UP's public distribution system is presently the best in the country: CM

Lucknow,

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath highlighted on Friday that prior to 2017, the state witnessed a 'food grain scam', where the underprivileged were deprived of their essential food supplies in various districts. "As soon as our government came to power in the state, we conducted raids on all the 80,000 fair-price ration shops in the state simultaneously, expos-

ing 30 lakh fake ration cards. Although ration was being issued in their names, those in need were not receiving it," he added. The Chief Minister launched a software (CATS-UPSIC) and a mobile app (Complaint and Appeal Tracking System - U.P. State Information Commission) at RTI Bhawan, Lucknow, to facilitate the e-filing and online hearing of

complaints and second appeals of the State Information Commission. During this, he said, "UP's public distribution system is presently the best in the country." He mentioned that currently, a large number of people in the state are getting food grains from ration shops at fair rates without any shortage or delay. This is resulting in an annual saving of Rs. 1200 crores for the state

government. Yogi further added that technology can become a powerful medium to bring changes in a person's life. With the launch of this software and mobile app, no person will have to physically come to the State Information Commission office for their complaints. Expressing his happiness, he said that today Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in the country.

Can't summon bureaucrats at drop of a hat: Supreme Court to High Courts

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court framed a procedure to restrain courts from summoning bureaucrats at the drop of a hat and set aside illogical orders of Allahabad high court such as taking into custody UP's finance secretary in contempt proceedings and issuing bailable warrants against the chief secretary for not implementing its orders to provide domestic helps to retired chief justices and judges. The UP government

moved the SC challenging the HC's orders, prompting a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra to examine the contentious issue keeping in mind the separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary.

Writing the judgment, CJI Chandrachud said the chief justice of a HC did not have the power under Article 229 of the Constitution to make rules relating

to post-retiral benefits for former CJs and judges of the HC. Hence, the Allahabad HC CJ could not have framed rules provisioning domestic helps for retired CJs and judges, the bench said. The SC said it noticed Allahabad HC frequently summoning bureaucrats and held that orders requiring presence of government officials in the court should be issued in rare circumstances. The CJI said courts must refrain from summoning.

The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) on slammed the Shinde-Fadnavis government

MUMBAI: The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) on slammed the Shinde-Fadnavis government over the reported handing over of the Mahanand Dairy to the Gujarat based but centre-run National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB). Officials said that due to difficulties in milk collection

and distribution, and mounting losses the Mahanand Dairy board passed a resolution and has sent a proposal to the state government to hand over the management of Mahanand to NDDDB. Mahanand is a state government undertaking, once known for its profitability and supply of milk

across the state. Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut said Mahanand Dairy was once the glory of the state, but now that the dairy will be taken over by NDDDB. Mahanand is a venture of the Maharashtra State Cooperative Milk Federation Limited (MSCMFL) and is one of the top coopera-

tive dairies in the state. Mahanand is similar to Amul in Gujarat or Nandini in Karnataka but has suffered heavy losses in the recent past and hasn't been able to sustain the brand, officials said. "Mahanand, Gokul, Varana, Chitale we have many milk brands in Maharashtra.

Initial target is to achieve it in the first half — could carry out the first one independent of the planned abort tests

BENGALURU: Isro, which is gearing up to demonstrate at least one uncrewed mission under Gaganyaan this year — initial target is to achieve it in the first half — could carry out the first one independent of the planned abort tests on the special test vehicle, the first of which was done in October 2023. S Somanath, chairman, Isro, told TOI: "We're working on both — the first uncrewed mission and the second abort test on the test vehicle (TV-D2). Depending on the readi-

ness, we will decide which one is to be launched first," indicating that the first uncrewed mission could even happen before the TV-D2.

He said the abort missions are only a prerequisite for the crewed mission and not the uncrewed ones and added that the first uncrewed mission will not carry the service module while the space agency is targeting to send the half-humanoid, Vyomitra. "We will finalise on whether Vyomitra will go as part of the first one at a

later stage.

We'll need to carry out a minimum of two successful uncrewed missions before the final configuration and we should be able to launch at least one this year. The initial target is for the first half of 2024," Somanath said.

The uncrewed missions are precursors that will test various technologies ahead of the crewed Gaganyaan mission which will demonstrate human spaceflight to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

Arrests a builder who took Dawood gang help for his projects

MUMBAI:

Enforcement Directorate (ED) on arrested builder Vijay Machindar of Ornate Spaces in a money laundering case based on a police complaint lodged by an investor accusing the company of selling off seven of the 14 flats booked in Grove Tower in Oshiwara to others. Machindar proposed the Grove Tower on a plot as free sale in the market for developing buildings for UTI employees. He

received a commencement certificate from MHADA authority. He took Rs 450 Crores from Punjab National Bank and other bankers for the project. Machindar had also raised around Rs 70 crores by offering allotment letters and selling around 70,000 sq. feet area to 34 purchasers in the sale component. He was in a financial crisis and allegedly took help of Dawood gang. to get back allotment

Yogi govt initiates preparations for UP Police Constable Civil Recruitment Examination

Lucknow,

Following Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's instructions, concrete preparations have been started for the UP Police Constable Civil Recruitment Examination 2023 proposed on February 18. Proposal for examination centers in zones a n d commissionerates Uttar Pradesh Police Recruitment and Promotion Board has started the process of determining examination centers along with their capacity. Under the proposal, the government can conduct examinations at about 6,500 examination centers. The total capacity of these examination centers will be more than 31.75 lakh. The selection of examination centers will be based on basic parameters. Only those centers that meet the standards related to the examination hall have been included in the final list. It is noteworthy

that the Yogi government has recently released the notification for the UP Police Constable Civil Recruitment Examination 2023 for more than 60 thousand positions. The examination is proposed on February 18. Proposal for examination centers in zones a n d commissionerates Uttar Pradesh Police Recruitment and Promotion Board has proposed 6484 examination centers with a total capacity of more than 31.75 lakh. Out of these, 4844 examination centers have been proposed in the zones and 1640 examination centers have been proposed in the commissionerates. Out of the proposed centers in zones, the highest number of 832 examination centers will be in Lucknow, with a total capacity of over 4 lakh. In Bareilly, there will be 741 examination centers.

Editorial

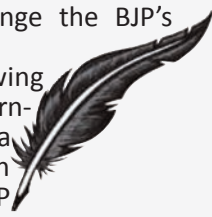
The comparison is largely banal and fallacious

The comparison is largely banal and fallacious. The BJP of 2004 under Atal Bihari Vajpayee lacked the aggression and electoral determination of the Modi establishment, had failed to grow the organisation in uncharted areas, and was heavily dependent on coalition partners like Chandrababu Naidu who eventually let it down by getting wiped out at the ballot. It lacked the current BJP's might at either booth-level management or social media warfare. The party under Atal and LK Advani achieved remarkable feats, but as a political force, it was still a baby dino coming out of the egg and breaking into a sprint. The BJP under Modi and Shah is a bounding, fearsome beast fully in control of its intent and actions. Now, majestically racing from its three state victories to the forthcoming inauguration of the Bhavya Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, the party looks unassailable. Even mainstream media hostile to it have started declaring that Narendra Modi's third term in office is inevitable. There lies the greatest danger for the BJP and Modi. Although the most dominating victories have never slowed the party down with ego or ennui and only increased its hunger for more success, even a glimmer of complacency before the 2024 general elections may upset its best-laid plans.

Here are reasons why.

First, if the BJP becomes over-reliant on the heartland, too self-assured after its past and recent sweeps in the north and west. Although the party sends the highest number of MPs from south India to Parliament, it has a fraction of its heartland influence in the peninsula so far. The Congress and the rest of the Opposition waste no breath to drive in the perception that the BJP is not the party of the south. It will relentlessly play on the so-called north-south divide. In the east, Bihar can be a challenge. Tejayshwi Yadav's RJD is a resurgent force. The I.N.D.I. alliance's political play over the OBC census and proportional reservations have failed in the last spate of elections, but might find traction in Bihar where Yadavs are extremely politically influential. While upper caste Bihar voters are vocal and may give the impression of their dominance, certain backward castes can silently upset the equation. Also, this time the BJP is going to fight polls without JDU unlike in 2019, unless Nitish Kumar bowls another googly and joins the NDA at the last moment. In Bengal, the BJP enjoys growing popular support despite the wanton slaughter its supporters faced after the 2021 assembly elections. That is mainly because of the TMC's brazen corruption and appeasement politics. But a large section of its cadre feel the state organisational leadership could be a lot more united and aggressive. They also feel arrests of high-profile TMC leaders are long overdue and could catapult the party to unprecedented success. In Maharashtra, the BJP is in the kitchen with too many cooks, many of whom like Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde its cadre and support base do not fully trust. In Punjab, the party is heading for the polls without its traditional ally, the Akalis. Unless, again, things change in the coming days. The south is a blue ocean for the BJP, with slowly growing islands of influence in Tamil Nadu and Telangana. The party recently suffered a rout in its strongest southern bastion, Karnataka. In Kerala, its vote share has been growing despite demographics skewed against its Hindutva politics but seats have been elusive. A socio-political coalition with a section of Christians, who are alarmed at the rise of Islamism in the state, could significantly change the BJP's fortunes.

With disenchantment growing against Jagan Reddy's government, Andhra Pradesh has a yawning political vacuum in the Opposition which the BJP can exploit.



Shadow Warrior | Qatar Saudi to Russia and US, Indian diplomacy in full swing

India is apparently playing geopolitics and geoeconomics games better these days. That is the conclusion from a flurry of activity as 2023 draws to a close. First was the release of Vishnu Dev Radhakrishnan from a Saudi jail after 5+ years of imprisonment on charges of 'blasphemy'. The son of a retired Air Force officer from Kerala, he was an engineer at Aramco in Saudi Arabia. It appears that he had been provoked on Twitter into a mild criticism of things held holy by Muslims (as a reaction to similar criticism of Hinduism) and that he had been reported to the authorities by Muslim Kerala workers in the kingdom. Furthermore, as of 19 December, Zahack Tanvir, a non-extremist Muslim Indian working in Saudi Arabia, has been similarly denounced (possibly by Pakistanis) and has been arrested by the authorities. There is no further news about him, but he has been a prominent advocate of Indo-Arab relations and a critic of, for example, the Muslim Brotherhood. The Indian authorities need to take up his case. Jaishankar in Moscow: Are India's relations with the US-led West strained? In Vishnu's case, it was not clear why the Indian foreign service had not been able to prevail upon the



Saudis, as a friendly nation, to release him into Indian custody. I wonder about Zahack the same way now: he has been a voice of reason in an often-fraught relationship between Muslim and Hindu Indian expatriates in the Middle East and deserves help and support.

The fact that Vishnu has finally been released is a positive sign of the ability of Indian diplomacy to make things happen. There have been many criticisms about the Indian foreign service, including their lack of manpower as well as their lack of support for Indian businesses in the countries that they serve in. If, finally, diplomacy is becoming a force multiplier, that is good news. The big story in West Asia is of course the case of the eight former Navy men sentenced to death by Qatar in

October. They were working on contract to an Omani-owned company and advising Qatari entities. To begin with, they were arrested in August 2022 on unspecified charges after having worked for five to six years reportedly on the induction of small Italian submarines into the Qatari Navy. They were held in solitary confinement and even denied access to families and to their embassies. Then came the bombshell on 26 October: they were sentenced to death for allegedly "spying for Israel". Since this happened in the aftermath of the 7 October invasion of Israel by Hamas and India's declaration of support for Israel, it could be surmised that India was being 'punished' by Qatar, which of course hosts senior Hamas leaders, and has been trying to play an intermediary role in the conflict

and ceasefire. Maybe they were being over-zealous.

But there is another intriguing possibility, which is that it was part of the US Deep State's continuing assault on India. There was the Justin Trudeau "credible allegation" that Khalistani Hardeep Singh Nijjar was executed on command from India, and then there was the allegation that an Indian drug dealer named Nikhil Gupta had put out a hit on Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. There was a slew of action and lots of noise around all this, and allegations that Pannun was himself an "asset" of the Five Eyes intelligence network.

Qatar hosts one the biggest US military bases anywhere, and it has been alleged that the rulers of Kuwait know that the US has a threat hanging over its head: they could withdraw support, in which case the tiny, rich country will be immediately taken over by random adventurers. Therefore, whatever the US Deep State wants, Qatar will oblige. Incidentally, Qatar has donated about \$4 billion to US universities, which some have called a carrot to professors. In any case, there must have been a flurry of diplomatic action. India duly paid \$2.5 million, the second tranche of its annual contri-

but of \$5 million to the UNRWA, the relief agency for Palestinian refugees. Whether there were other, hidden, contributions to mollify Qatar is not known.

The other shoe also dropped: which was geoeconomics. I have long been a proponent of 'buyer power': someone who is a big customer has power over the supplier. India is Qatar's third biggest buyer of liquefied natural gas (LNG), buying \$8.32 billion worth of the stuff this year, over half of its LNG imports. But there are other suppliers available. Notably, India holds 30 per cent (through ONGC Videsh, Oil India and Bharat Petroleum) in a large LNG project in Mozambique. There were prominent recent announcements from India about this project, and how soon this might come online. It had been put on hold because of an insurgency, but should go onstream in a while, and could supply a large portion of India's needs. Secondly, Russia is a big exporter of LNG. The recent visit by S Jaishankar to Moscow was conspicuous: it was a dog-whistle to Qatar (as well as to the US, of course). The effusiveness with which President Vladimir Putin met the MEA (he almost never meets anybody below the head of state,,

Red Sea port deal is bad news for Africa

Somaliland is a self-governed territory in the Horn of Africa and not a separate country. It is internationally recognised as a part of Somalia. It is a delicate status quo. But on Monday, Abiy Ahmed tore it apart. He agreed to recognise the break-away state in exchange for a long-held desire — access to a Red Sea port. That is what Ethiopia is getting in return — the port of Berbera. "We are very happy, and we thank the Ethiopian Prime Minister as we sign the agreement here. We allow them 20 km (12.4 miles) of our sea and they will also recognise us as an independent state. They will become the first state to recognise Somaliland after the signing of this MoU," said Somaliland President Muse Bihi Abdi. It is an opportunis-

tic move. Ethiopia has long wanted access to the sea; its Prime Minister recently called it an existential question. That is, access to the Red Sea was an existential question for Ethiopia — one that may eventually lead to war. He was criticised for inflaming regional tensions, and on Monday, he made a passing reference to his inflammatory rhetoric. "This will be the starting point for our cooperation with the brotherly people of Somaliland to grow and develop together in cooperation and to ensure our common security. As we have repeatedly stated previously, we do not wish to use force on anyone, rather, we will use what we have cooperatively. This is the good news we bring to all the people of Ethiopia, Somaliland and all the

peace and development loving people on this first day of the new year," said Ethiopian Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed. Now one may think this is an improvement, a move away from war, but one must look at the bigger picture. Somaliland is a disputed territory. It declared independence from Somalia back in 1991 — 33 years ago — but no country has recognised it yet, and neither has the United Nations. This is because both Somalia and Somaliland are home to the same people.

They also share similar religious compositions, and they are adjacent territories. History and political differences have led to the situation between them., which is why the world refuses to recognise Somaliland's independence.

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and One Future Alliance

Leading the bandwagon of positive developments was the economy which continues to be the fastest-growing in the world, barely two years after the pandemic-ridden downturn. At 7.3 per cent growth and \$3.732 trillion GDP (\$13.119 trillion- PPP 2023), it remains the fifth largest economy of the world. The single-minded focus of the Indian government has correctly been on conflict avoidance, no unnecessary involvement in geopolitical wrangling, yet secure borders and balanced relationships which can sustain crises. This has ensured steady growth without obstacles. It's the model that China's Deng Xiaoping followed from 1978, by toning down rhetoric, establishing stable borders, a distinct lack of aggressiveness, with advancement in capability through technical education and the modernisation of agriculture and technologies. China followed that for several years before adopting its aggressive stance of today. The year 2023 witnessed the repositioning of India after the pandemic, shedding some of the reticence and loss of faith that may have entered in the system due to the setbacks in the economy and the manufacturing sector in India. There was sufficient confidence for the nation to launch its own Chandrayaan-3 in a moon exploration mission placing India among

the few nations with a successful space exploration programme which gave a boost to the confidence of the scientific community. It is that confidence which will continue to hold good as we look at the technological transformation in AI, cyber, quantum and other technologies. It's in the domain of G20 where India scored maximum brownie points in creating a niche position. The ability to steer a draft resolution without any negative references to the war in Ukraine was an achievement in deft diplomacy. The ability to position itself as the voice of the Global South was another achievement. India made strong interventions in strengthening the Global South, including through the African Union becoming a permanent member of the grouping and by triggering concrete action-oriented, G20 outcomes for the Global South. By introducing the 13th vertical in the agenda through the inclusion of disaster risk reduction India gave a firm direction to concern for disasters, particularly risk financing, infrastructure and early warning. Before dwelling on some key geopolitical aspects which proved challenging it's also important to mention the range of activities from a civilisational angle. The G20 motto of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' sought to internationalise a core idea of Indian humanism. A human-centric

global system, the idea of sustainable development, research on climate resilient grains, the Global Initiative for Global Health, our success in developing Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and One Future Alliance to implement DPI are important too. While 2023 had the vehicle of G20 to position India as a leader in much of this we have to seek similar avenues to maintain a continuum in 2024. In geopolitics,

the developing strategic partnership with the US continued but with a few small hiccups. It has come a long distance since 2005 when the first signals of cooperation in the military field were mooted and the threat from a rising China was just beginning to be felt. The US does not wish to confront China in open conflict on Taiwan or any other issues but is ensuring its linkages are well established so that a range of options would always be available should a confrontation be inevitable. India remains one of the most important elements in that strategy. The relationship has sequentially emerged with the development of trust and greater engagement. Obstacles do emerge from time to time to cause erosion in the strength of the partnership, such as all the issues concerning India's strong relationship with Russia once the Ukraine war got underway. On this India maintained a largely neutral.

Acquisition of foreign ports, owning of terminals

On 23 December, Houthi rebels carried out an armed drone attack against Liberia-flagged chemical tanker MV Chem Pluto with a crew of 20 Indians headed for New Mangalore Port from Saudi Arabia. On 23 December, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that those who attacked the India-bound ship will be found — after all, India is the net security provider in the Indian Ocean. Two days later, India deployed Brahmos armed warships — INS Calcutta, INS Kochi, INS Mormugao, INS Chennai and INS Vishakhapatnam — to patrol the Indian Ocean Region to secure

shipping lanes. Earlier, on 19 December, the US-led International Red Sea Response Force called Operation Prosperity Guardian, was flagged off by US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin. Consequent to Houthi rebel threats to the Red Sea, international container traffic is taking a longer route via the Cape of Good Hope even as many large cargo-carrying companies have suspended operations. This has increased oil prices, cost of freight and hiked insurance bonds. Cost escalation is estimated anything between four to

10 per cent. For India, additional costs will include longer duration of cargo via Cape of Good Hope, and double handling of cargo transshipment as no deep sea port is fully operational in India. Vizinjam, is only partially ready and was inaugurated on 15 October, ironically with the docking of a Chinese crane-carrying vessel three years after Galwan. Acquisition of foreign ports, owning of terminals at foreign ports and use of such ports for logistic facilities and security purposes along India's shipping lanes are essential to ensure safe and uninterrupted movement of

trade to and from Indian shores. Also vital are well-developed deep sea ports with modern cargo handling facilities with speed and efficiency which India lacks. India's maritime strategy is inadequate not just because there is no national security strategy but also because the port infrastructure, the merchant ship-building industry and the economic grand plan have not been juxtaposed leave alone that the first two assets figure low in international rating. This is even though 95 per cent of India's trade by volume and 68 per cent by value move.

Fortis Launches Advanced 'Fortis Institute of Blood Disorders' for Specialised Treatment

" This state-of-the-art facility, dedicated to the specialised of blood cancers



Gurugram: Fortis Healthcare proudly announces the inauguration of the Fortis Institute of Blood Disorders. This state-of-the-art facility, dedicated to the specialised treatment of blood cancers and disorders, represents a critical step in addressing the urgent need for a comprehensive institute. Designed to focus on the diverse spectrum of blood disorders, the Institute integrates paediatric and geriatric care, advanced transplant procedures, and hematology expertise, all under one roof. The Institute also introduces revolutionary CAR-T cell therapy, NexCAR19™ (Actlycabtagene autoleucl), to its extensive network of Bone

Marrow Transplant centres in Mohali, Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Mumbai, and Bangalore. This initiative is supported by a commercial collaboration with ImmunoACT, an IIT-Bombay spin-off and pioneer in India's first fully indigenous and commercially approved gene-modified cell therapy. NexCAR19™, India's first market authorized CAR-T cell therapy, offers a new ray of hope for treating B-cell lymphomas and B-acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in patients aged 15 and above, who have previously found

limited success with other treatments. Dr. Ashutosh Raghuvanshi, MD & CEO, Fortis Healthcare, said: "The establishment of the Fortis Institute of Blood Disorders is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to medical excellence and patient-focused care. The integration of advanced CAR-T cell therapy across our Bone Marrow Transplant centres in India sets a new benchmark in the treatment of complex blood cancers. This initiative is a key part of our mission to offer the highest stan-

dard of care in precision medicine and comprehensive healthcare solutions." he Institute is recognized as one of the largest centres in India and the SAARC region for bone marrow transplant and blood disorder treatments. With a team of over 20 eminent haematologists, haemato-oncologists, and stem cell transplant specialists, it has achieved a remarkable milestone of over 2500 successful bone marrow transplants, serving a diverse patient base from more than 18 countries.

How Physiotherapists Are Transforming Children's Health with Posture

Gurugram : In recent research findings, a significant surge in respiratory challenges among children has been identified over the past five years. Beyond the impact of pollution, key contributors include poor posture and insufficient physical activity. The prevalent use of devices such as mobile phones and excessive laptop usage has notably contributed to unhealthy postures, sedentary lifestyle particularly when children spend extended periods on beds, causing strain on the middle spine where ribs are connected and on cervical spine which affects brain function. There are numerous studies which show how breathing, one of the prime functions is affected by lifestyle factors such as sedentary behavior, excessive screen time and forward head posture. It can have considerable effects on the morphology and cervical functions. Kids with a forward head posture may find it hard to breathe properly. They might end up breathing through their mouths, making their immune system weaker. This can result in incomplete inflation of the lungs and narrower air passage. "Addressing this issue requires a holistic and

The prevalent use of devices such as mobile phones and excessive laptop usage has notably contributed to unhealthy postures, sedentary lifestyle particularly when children spend extended periods on beds, causing strain on the middle spine where ribs are connected and on cervical spine which affects brain function. There are numerous studies which show how breathing, one of the prime functions is affected

integrated approach, encompassing habits that promote correct posture during sitting and standing, coupled with efforts to enhance performance and stamina. Core stability and breathing exercises emerge as crucial components in fostering not only physical well-being but also confidence and elevated energy levels" Dr Isha Sehdev Co-Founder EEZALIGN Clinic While emergency situations may warrant the administration of medication like dilators and steroids for breathing difficulties, a pattern of reliance on such interventions can significantly impact overall child health and development. The addictive nature of external support further compromises the natural immunity built within the body.

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18 forms of Ramleela from India and abroad

Ayodhya
The Yogi government has decided to organize performances of over 18 forms of Ramleelas from India and abroad in Ayodhya to showcase the global significance of Lord Shri Ram. Additionally, various cultural, traditional folk arts, and spiritual programs will be organized. The decisions were taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday. With this, the Yogi government aims to propagate Lord Shri Ram as the center of faith not only in India, but also as a symbol of global faith. Various popular Ramleelas from India and abroad will be staged while Ramleela is staged in the traditional local styles in various states of India, several forms of Ramleela are also performed overseas. In this context, to enhance the glory of the consecration ceremony of Lord Ram in Ayodhya, the staging of various Ramleela forms will take place in different cultural centers of Ayodhya from Makar Sankranti (January 15) to January 22. It is noteworthy that as the 'Navya Ayodhya' is set to showcase its cultural and spiritual richness after 500 years, on January 22, 2024, Lord Shri Ram will be seated in his grand temple by PM Narendra Modi. To make this occasion unique, unforgettable, and spiritual, artists from India and abroad will perform Ramleela based on the Ramayana, while on the other hand, cultural programs based on folk traditions will also be organized. Through this event, the Yogi government aims to make tourists and devotees coming to Ayodhya, including the present and future generations, aware of the ideals and values of Lord Shri Ram. Ramotsav seeks to tie the entire world in one thread Ramleela troupes of countries such as Nepal, Cambodia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia, and more have been invited to the Ramotsav celebrations. Additionally, Ramleela troupes from states such as Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Karnataka, Sikkim, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and Chandigarh will present various events based on the life of Lord Shri Rama.

CPDO, North and Fine Organics Industries Ltd. celebrated Farmers Meet

Chandigarh: The Central Poultry Development Organisation (NR), Chandigarh, Govt. of India and Fine Organics Industries Ltd, Mumbai (Known as solution provider and promoting treating life naturally) had jointly celebrated Farmers Meet at CPDO Campus Industrial Area Phase-I, Chandigarh on this Friday 5th January,

2024. The Farmer's Meet was inaugurated by welcome address of Dr. Kamna Barkataki, Director, Central Poultry Development Organisation (NR) Chandigarh. The function was also graced by Sh. D.K.Kapila, Ex Chief General Manager, NABARD, Dr. Vinod Kumar, Principal & Journalist Maharishi Dayanad Public School,

Chandigarh, Sh. Rahul Mahajan, Founder Organic Sharing, Chandigarh, Dr. Parth Avinash Sutar, Technical and Marketing Manager, Fine Organics Industries, Mumbai, farmers from different Northern states of India like Ambala, Sonipat, Shimla, Meerut etc attended the meet. In the welcome address of the farmers meet the Director, CPDO(NR)

Chandigarh initially welcomed the dignitaries and felicitated them. She also encouraged the farmers to adopt good poultry farming practices. It is followed by the address of Sh. D.K.Kapila, Ex. Chief General Manager NABARD who explained the different schemes and also reflected the practical ways to get benefit of Govt. schemes

Buzz grows over Shringla entering Lok Sabha election fray from Darjeeling

New Delhi: Could former foreign secretary and G20 coordinator Harsh Vardhan Shringla be a potential Lok Sabha candidate in 2024 from Darjeeling? Posters that emerged all over this West Bengal hill town over the New Year weekend have generated some buzz to the effect. The posters, featuring the 61-year-old Shringla in a suit, in his avatar as president of the Darjeeling Welfare Society, and simply greeting everyone for

the new year, seem innocuous. Still, the launch of the society elections, in mid-2023, and the spread of the poster has everyone guessing. Wrap up the year gone by & gear up for 2024 with HT! Click here On Tuesday, Shringla's only response when asked about the posters was a counter question -- on whether there were a lot of them around town. In September, after the launch of the society,

he had brushed off a similar question. "Don't believe media speculation," was what he said then. The secretary of the society Dechen Chimi Wangdi said that the society's objective was to work towards the welfare of the people of Darjeeling. The state Bharatiya Janata Party unit has supported the move. Party member Sanjib Biswas said: "All of us would want a professional after having seen politicians for the last three terms."

ED raids BJP leader Manoj Wadhwa's residence in Karnal

Raid also took place at the house of former INLD MLA in Haryana

Karnal: ED raid continues for the second day at the house of Karnal BJP leader Manoj Wadhwa in Haryana.

The team had searched the documents in his house located in Sector 13 yesterday and from this morning the records are being searched in his other house in Sector 32, 33. However, what was recovered during the raid? It has not been disclosed by the authorities yet. At the same time, till now Rs 5 crore cash, 3 gold biscuits,

more than 100 bottles of foreign liquor, made in foreign countries, have been recovered from the premises of former INLD MLA from Yamuna Nagar, Dilbag Singh, who is a partner in the mining of Manoj Wadhwa. Documents of several properties, 4 illegal foreign rifles and other things have been recovered. Family members are being

interrogated since yesterday. According to the information, former Deputy Mayor Manoj Wadhwa and his family members are being interrogated by the team officials from 6 am tomorrow. Apart from Karnal, records are being scrutinized by the team in their other institutions also. These documents are also being examined.

Ashok Gurjar on becoming BJP district president again

Kaithal: Young BJP leader Pradeep Bhardwaj Dhand expressed happiness over the appointment of BJP District President Ashok Gurjar Dhand by visiting his establishment in New Anaj Mandi Dhand on being made the District President of Kaithal BJP and congratulated him by giving him a flower bunch. Giving thanks to Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal, State President MP Nayab Singh Saini, Haryana in-charge Biplav Dev, State General Secretary Phaniendra Nath Sharma and BJP high command. After this, while talking in a meeting at his establishment in New Anaj Mandi Dhand, Pradeep Bhardwaj Dhand said that the BJP high command has made District President Ashok Gurjar the District President again after seeing his ability.

USAID-SUPPORTED SAMRIDH BLENDED FINANCE FACILITY SUPPORTS CIPACA WITH INR 2 CRORE FUNDING TO STRENGTHEN CRITICAL CARE SERVICES IN RURAL HOSPITALS

Gurugram
The SAMRIDH Healthcare Blended Finance Facility, a multi-stakeholder innovation and financing platform supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by IPE Global, has provided financial assistance of INR 2 Cr to CIPACA, a leading service provider for Intensive Care Units (ICU) in rural India. The assistance is provided as a Recoverable Grant and is being used to set-up ICUs in partnership with small hospitals in the district, towns, and taluks in Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, and Maharashtra. This initiative will strengthen the infrastructure and operations of selected hospitals, establishing them as Centers of Excellence for ICU care and providing accessible and affordable healthcare solutions to underserved communities. In India, small rural hospitals face challenges such as resource limitations, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of skilled healthcare professionals, in delivering critical care services. CIPACA

overcomes these challenges by collaborating with hospitals in smaller towns, delivering high-quality ICU services that are both accessible and affordable to rural populations. The solution is supported by a 24/7 committed staff of professionals. The company has so far established ICUs in over 10 Indian states and partnered with 20+ hospitals at the district and taluk levels. CIPACA's innovative drop-in ICU concept has demonstrated its ability to enhance patient care, contributing to saving 1,00,000+ lives nationwide. The financial support from USAID-supported SAMRIDH, further accelerates the expansion of these high-impact solutions, marking a significant milestone in bolstering healthcare in rural India. Dr. Raja Amarnath, MD, CIPACA, emphasizes the importance of this collaboration stating, "CIPACA works with the motto to help its partner hospitals become more self-reliant. At every Taluk level, there is a great need for tertiary-level ICU care services. We can save more lives by setting up ICUs

HDFC Bank Acts As a Sponsor and Destination Bank For Facilitating ASBA in Secondary Market

SEBI has permitted this from January 1, 2024

Ambala/Hisar: HDFC Bank, a leading Clearing and Settlement bank of NSE & BSE in the Cash & Equity Derivatives segments, acted as a Sponsor and Destination bank for "Trading supported by Blocked Amount in Secondary Market" that kicked off from January 01,

2024 on the Indian Stock Exchanges. SEBI and Stock Exchanges permitted Trading in Cash segment through block mechanism, on optional basis, for Secondary Market from January 1, 2024 on the lines of ASBA for Primary Markets where investor's funds will continue to remain in their savings account with the required funds being blocked instead of the investor having to upfront transfer the amount to the broker's account for placing the

Trades. The bank has been able to support this new initiative of SEBI through integration of its systems with that of Exchanges and respective Clearing Corporations. This system integration facilitates investor validation, block creation, release, revoke, execution and end of day reconciliation and reporting. The UPI backed technology solution of block / release of funds helps investors meet margin and settlement obligations seamlessly.

Delhi high court has disposed of Trinamool leader plea

New Delhi

The Delhi high court has disposed of Trinamool leader Mahua Moitra's plea against the notice to vacate her government-allotted house after her expulsion from the Lok Sabha, saying she should approach the Directorate of Estate.

Moitra had filed a plea with the high court requesting directions to quash the notice to vacate the house by January 7. The court, while disposing of her plea, said she should approach the body seeking permission to retain her government accommodation beyond January 7. The court directed the government to take steps to

Mahua was expelled from the Lok Sabha after the ethics panel found her guilty of "unethical conduct". She was accused of accepting gifts from businessman Darshan Hiranandani in return for posting his questions on the Adani Group in the Lok Sabha. Moitra had said she shared her parliamentary login credentials with the businessman to have his staff type out her questions on the official platform.

evict her only in accordance with law. The court has also permitted Moitra to withdraw her plea. The Directorate of Estates is a department under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs that administers and man-

ages the estates of the Central government, including accommodations. Justice Subramoniun Prasad said the rules permitted the authorities to permit overstay of a resident for a certain time period.

"Move a representation before the Directorate of Estates and their action will be taken in accordance with the law," the judge said. Mahua Moitra had asked the court to quash the Directorate of Estates'

December 11 order. She had urged the court to give directions to the government body that she could retain the house till the results of 2024 general elections were declared. Mahua was expelled from the Lok Sabha after the ethics panel found her guilty of "unethical conduct". She was accused of accepting gifts from businessman Darshan Hiranandani in return for posting his questions on the Adani Group in the Lok Sabha. Moitra had said she shared her parliamentary login credentials with the businessman to have his staff type out her questions on the official platform.

"Affiliate organisations of the BJP are going to make India a Hindu country"

Bengaluru

Amid intense political row over the arrest of Srikanth Poojari who was allegedly involved in the violence after Babri Masjid demotion in 1992, the BJP shared a video of Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah refusing to enter a temple. Calling him anti-Ram, the BJP said this is the real face of Siddaramaiah. A major row has begun in Congress-ruled Karnataka ahead of the inauguration of Ram Temple on January 22

as Srikanth Poojari got arrested in old cases. Siddaramaiah said there was no politics and it was mere coincidence that the arrest took place before the inauguration of the Ram Temple. Srikanth has been involved in 16 anti-social activities including illegal liquor sales, gambling, Siddaramaiah said, "If such individuals are not arrested and are allowed to roam freely, even Lord Rama cannot forgive this," Siddaramaiah said. Siddaramaiah's son Yathindra courted a

fresh controversy as he said India will be like Afghanistan and Pakistan if it becomes a Hindu Rashtira. "Pakistan and Afghanistan have been bankrupted by the dictatorship in the name of religion... Affiliate organisations of the BJP are going to make India a Hindu country. If this is allowed then our country will also become Pakistan and Afghanistan..." he said. 'Godhra-like incident in Karnataka' In another controversy, Congress MLC BK

Plea in Supreme Court alleges caste discrimination in jails

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday issued notices to the Centre and 11 states on a petition that said prison manuals across the country perpetuate caste discrimination. The petition also said that prisoners are allocated work depending on their caste, which also determines where they are lodged in the

jail. "The caste realities of the carceral system in India entails a range of discriminatory practices, including the division of labour determined on the basis of caste hierarchy, and caste-based segregation of barracks.

A bench headed by CJI Y Chandrachud said the plea "raises an impor-

tant issue," and asked solicitor general Tushar Mehta to assist the court on behalf of the Centre. The petition has made states of UP, Odisha, Jharkhand, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Punjab and Tamil Nadu as parties in the petition, besides the Centre.

Congress should attend Ayodhya event

Mumbai

Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi and Adhira Ranjan have been invited to the consecration ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22. The Shiv Sena (UBT) underlined that the "soul" of the Congress party is Hindu and that the party should attend the Lord Ram temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya if they have received the special invitation, keeping aside the political difference. The Uddhav Thackeray-led party is an ally of Congress in Maha Vikas Aghadi and also a member of the INDIA bloc of opposition parties. as received any special invitation for the Ram temple consecration ceremony then it (the leaders) should go to Ayodhya. What is wrong with it?" the Shiv Sena (UBT) asked in an editorial in the party's mouthpiece Saamana, according to PTI. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, parliamentary party chairperson Sonia Gandhi and the party's leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury have been invited to the consecra-

tion ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22. However, the Congress has not yet clarified its official stance on whether its top leaders will attend the event. Last week, the party said that it would decide about attending the event at an "appropriate time" Shiv Sena (UBT) also said that it is wrong to say that the BJP is the "beholder of Hindutva" as claimed by that party.

It pointed out that the Congress has equally contributed to the growth of Hindu culture, it added, reported PTI. "The Congress never opposed the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya. Former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was of the opinion that Ram temple should be constructed in Ayodhya. It was on the instructions of Rajiv Gandhi that the famous serial Ramayan was telecast on Doordarshan," the edit said. The Shiv Sena (UBT) also took a dig at the BJP, saying the Babri mosque wouldn't have been brought down if the prime minister at that time was from that party. PV Narasimha Rao was the prime minister when the structure was razed in December 1992.

Traditional 'tankas' given modern update under MGNREGA

Barmer (Rajasthan)

The Centre has adopted western Rajasthan's traditional rainwater harvesting system 'tankas' by constructing a large number of such storage tanks with reinforced concrete cement near PMAY houses to battle water scarcity in the arid region. Traditional 'tankas' are earthen rainwater storage tanks constructed by the people of Barmer district and other parts of western Rajasthan to collect water received during showers between July and September. "However, the water stored in the traditional 'tankas' gradually becomes contaminated due to its earthen structure and does not last for the entire year

"So, the Centre has adopted the method under MGNREGA (Rural) scheme but instead of earthen tankas, is constructing

"Depending on the age of the aircraft and metal fatigue, a young plane may withstand that particular landing but for subsequent landings the structural integrity can fail leading to structural fail-

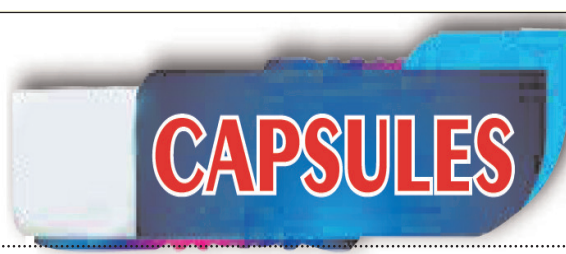
water storage spaces made of reinforced concrete cement to provide uncontaminated water to the people for a longer period of time," Barmer Collector Arun Purohit said. The district has 2,971 villages, locally called 'dhanis', and respective gram panchayats are the imple-

menting agencies. He said other measures are also being adopted to ensure water supply to far-flung villages in the district that shares a 228-km-long international border with Pakistan. These include the supply of water from the Indira Gandhi Canal and the Narmada Project along with the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) scheme. "We are targeting to reach out to 4.25 lakh households under the JJM scheme. Of these, we have already covered 1.25 lakh households," the collector said. After the JJM scheme is completely implemented, every household will have tap connection and surface water will be available to all households in the district, he said. Head of Kurla village, Devaram Choudhury, said water scarcity is a major problem in the region and sources are few and far-flung.

Karnataka man cuts teacher's nose after children pluck few flowers

Belagavi

A man chopped off the nose of an anganwadi teacher in a fit of anger after her school children plucked flowers from his garden in Belagavi district, police, adding that the accused has been arrested. According to police, the incident occurred on Tuesday at Basurte village in Belagavi district. The accused, Kalyani More, picked up a fight with the teacher Sugandha More (50) and chopped off her nose. A profusely bleeding Sugandha was admitted to a private hospital in Belagavi where she received a blood transfusion. The anganwadi centre, operated by the women and child development department for the past 20 years.



Jitendra Awhad's comment sparks row

Maharashtra leader Jitendra Awhad's comment that Lord Ram was never a vegetarian as he couldn't live in the jungle for 14 years being a vegetarian has sparked a major controversy in the state at a time the BJP demanded January 22 -- the consecration day of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya -- to be declared as a dry day and a day on which all non-vegetarian food should be banned. The Nationalist Congress Party MLA (Sharad Pawar faction) said Lord Ram was a Bahujan and a non-vegetarian and was a hunter. "We don't read history and forget everything in politics. Ram is ours. Of us Bahujans. Who used to hunt to eat... Ram was never a vegetarian. He was a non-vegetarian. How can a man who lived in the jungle for 14 years remain a vegetarian," Jitendra Awhad said. BJP MLA Ram Kadam said had Balasaheb Thackeray been alive, Shiv Sena's Saamana newspaper would have criticised the 'Ram non-vegetarian' comment. "But today's reality is they (Uddhav Sena) do not care if somebody makes fun of the Hindus. They are indifferent, as cold as ice. But when the election comes, they will talk about Hindutva..." Ram Kadam tweeted on Thursday.

Bengaluru records 10-year high in fatal accidents in 2023

Bengaluru: An analysis of fatalities in road accidents revealed that 70% of these incidents involved two-wheelers, with issues such as non-usage or improper use of helmets saw a 10-year high in fatal accidents in 2023, according to the data released by the traffic police department. A total of 909 individuals lost their lives in 880 fatal accidents on the city's roads last year. In comparison, 2022 reported 772 deaths in 752 accidents. The overall number of accidents surged from 3,822 in 2022 to 5,004 in 2023. The data also highlighted an upward trend in fatalities over the last five years, depicting a concerning rise in road safety. In 2018, Bengaluru recorded 663 road fatalities, followed by 746 in 2019, 621 in 2020, 621 in 2021, 752 in 2022, and a staggering 880 in 2023. Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) MN Anucheth however said that even though the number of accidents is high, the average number of fatalities is coming down. "If you look at the accidents per one lakh vehicles in the city, the numbers are declining. The accident fatality rate (deaths in road accidents for every lakh vehicle population) in 2019 was 8.77 and has dipped to 7.5 in 2023," he said. Anucheth pointed out that the addition of over 2.5 million vehicles in the last four years contributed to the overall increase in accidents. The data also showed that the number of vehicles in Bengaluru has increased by 58% over the last 10 years. In 2013, there were 49 lakh vehicles and in 2023, the city recorded 1.2 crore vehicles. An analysis of fatalities in road accidents revealed that 70% of these incidents involved two-wheelers.

Assam Police issues guidelines Safety Road

Assam

In the wake of an accident that claimed 12 lives on their way to a picnic, the Assam Police on Wednesday issued a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the regulation of picnic parties. The guidelines for such trips include prohibiting movement in the dark and asking picnickers not to play loud music inside vehicles. "In this atmosphere of pomp and gaiety, sadness struck because of road traffic accidents during the vehicular movement of these picnic parties. Hence, it is felt impera-

tive that a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) be in place to regulate the movement of these picnic parties," the police said. The Assam Police said, "No loud music on the vehicles to be allowed.. There should not be any movement of picnic parties before sunrise and after sunset." The guidelines prohibit overcrowding in vehicles used for picnic transportation and trading illicit liquor in or around picnic spots. Local police have been directed to conduct frequent raids on dhabas and establishments where illicit liquors are sold.

Manipur

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken suo motu cognizance of a Hindustan Times report on the killings of 13 people in a single incident in ethnic violence-hit Manipur last month and issued a notice to the state government reminding it of its duty to protect citizens. Police said that village defence volunteers killed the 13 men after they entered a Kuki area on December 4. This was the highest single-day toll in the clashes between Meities and Kukis, which have roiled the state since May 3 and left around 200 people dead and over 50,000 displaced.

NHRC issues notice to Manipur over killing of 13 people last month

This was the highest single-day toll in the clashes between Meities and Kukis, which have roiled the state since May 3 and left around 200 people dead and over 50,000 displaced. In its notice, NHRC called the incident "alarming and disturbing", indicating "a lapse on the part of the law enforcing agencies and the forces deployed there to ensure peace and law and order".

In its notice, NHRC called the incident "alarming and disturbing", indicating "a lapse on the part of the law enforcing agencies and the forces deployed there to ensure peace and law and order". It asked the state

police to submit a report on the status of the first information report and the steps taken to prevent such incidents. An officer said that Manipur Police have filed a reply and provided the details. He did not elaborate.

Dalit man assaulted in Karnataka over loan

Bengaluru: A Dalit man and his sister-in-law were assaulted by some upper-caste people in Mulabagilu taluk of Kolar district after he requested for repayment of a loan, police. According to a complaint filed by the Dalit man Hanumantha (28), around 10 people from the village attacked him and his sister-in-law with stones and knives.

A complaint has been filed against ten people at Nangali police station. "Police arrested five people on Tuesday, while the remaining five are currently absconding.

What the batters must be thinking after the manic Day 1 of the India vs South Africa second Test

Newlands

It's a difficult thing to do but for a moment, leave aside what the batters must be thinking after the manic Day 1 of the India vs South Africa second Test at Newlands in Cape Town. Think about the fans. Everyone will have a story to tell. It was one of those "where were you when..." days in Test cricket. Where were you when South Africa were bowled out for 55 - their lowest Test score since readmission to international cricket in 1991? Where were you when Mohammed Siraj became the first Indian pacer to complete a five-wicket haul in the first session of a Test match? Where were you when 23 wickets - the most in South Africa - fell on the first day of a Test match? Where were you when India went from 153/4 to 153 all out losing six wickets - the most any team in any format has lost at the same score in international cricket - in 11 balls?

As entertaining as it may sound -- Be honest, bowlers dominating proceedings is always more exciting. Seeing the stumps fly is always more adrenaline-rushing than the ball being whacked -- the 23 wickets that fell on Newlands gave rise to two unavoidable questions

Ravi Shastri felt a "dump" would have been enough to miss the last six wickets of the Indian innings. Sachin Tendulkar was in disbelief seeing South Africa not only bat again on Day 1 but also lose three wickets in the second innings in between his way back home. As entertaining as it may sound -- Be honest, bowlers dominating proceedings is always more exciting. Seeing the stumps fly is always more adrenaline-rushing than the ball being whacked -- the 23 wickets that fell on

Wednesday in Newlands gave rise to two unavoidable questions. Drawing similarities between say an Ahmedabad turner and a Newlands unpredictable strip is not the best way forward to debate on Test pitches. Both are extremes and both should be looked at with a prism of doubt. The problem arises when turn is looked at with the corner of an eye while pace and steep bounce are considered tough Test match cricket. That's as classist and unfair as it gets.

Unpredictable awkward bounce or excessive lateral movement is as dangerous as low bounce or sharp square turn. With the (unimportant) third question settled, now let's come back to the original two questions. Did 23 wickets fall because of the pitch? No. Have modern-day batters forgotten how to bat in Test cricket? No. Then? The answer to this is never straightforward. When two sides get all out on the same day of the Test match and three more wickets tumble in one of their second innings, it cannot be because of the pitch alone, neither can it be due to poor application of the batters. It's a combination of both. But like in most scenarios, there is always a dominating contributor and in this case, it was the pitch. There were obvious instances like the one David Bedingham got from Siraj or how it was impossible for Ravindra Jadeja to control the awk-

Why India's Siraj is the deadliest fast bowler when on a roll

Newlands

Mohammed Siraj is what they cutely refer to as a 'roll bowler'. As in, when he gets on a roll, he is impossible to stop. Stop taking wickets, that is. Thrice last year, in One-Day Internationals, Sri Lanka felt the full fury of the 'roll bowler'. In Thiruvananthapuram in January, his opening spell of 7-0-20-4 sent the Islanders plummeting to 73 all out and defeat by 317 runs, their heaviest in the 50-over format. In September in Colombo, in the final of the Asia Cup at a packed and shell-shocked

Premadasa Stadium, his figures at one stage read 5.2-1-7-6 (he finished with six for 21) as the hosts were cleaned up for 50. And at the Wankhede Stadium in November, in the World Cup, he produced a first burst of 4-2-5-3, Sri Lanka shot out for 55 in response to India's 357 for eight. At Newlands on Wednesday, the 'roll

The Newlands-familiar assert that they haven't seen a better spell of fast bowling, just as they insist that they haven't seen a day one strip at the venue

bowler' was at it again, translating his white-ball heroics to the traditional, more celebrated five-day version. Passable but no more in the first Test against South Africa in Centurion the previous week when senior pro Jaspit Bumrah was largely left to fight a solitary battle, Siraj roused himself into action on a blistering day with an unforgiving sun beating down harshly.

The Newlands-familiar assert that they haven't seen a better spell of fast bowling, just as they insist that they haven't seen a day one strip at the venue with more pace. Dean Elgar, in his farewell Test, would hardly have imagined

that he would bat twice - and be dismissed twice - in one day when he opted to bat under clear blue skies. But he certainly hadn't contended with the 'roll bowler', the Hyderabad destroyer who showed skill, smarts, heart and stamina in an extended nine-over burst that sent the Proteas catapulting to 55 all out, their lowest Test score since their international readmission in 1991. That India find themselves in a decent position to square the series after one day of the second Test owes itself almost entirely to the magic of Siraj. Nine relentless overs of hostility fetched him six for 15; those are the cold, hot stats.

Rain and poor light ruined most of the rest of the second day

Sydney

Australia opener David Warner was dismissed for 34 in his farewell cricket test against Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Ground on before rain and poor light ruined most of the rest of the second day. Play was interrupted in the middle session with Australia at 116-2 in reply to Pakistan's 313. The lights were on at the SCG and the conditions were gloomy, but the decision to take players from the field for bad light was met with boos from the crowd and criticism from former players.



Players stayed off for a further 40 minutes while 25,000 fans remained in attendance, before rain began to fall and the day was officially washed out.

Marnus Labuschagne will

resume on 23 on Friday morning with Steve Smith on 6. On Day 1, Gritty Pakistan hit back from looming disaster to finish with 313 on the back of fighting half-centuries from Mohammad Rizwan, Agha Salman and

Aamer Jamal on the first day of the third Test against Australia on Wednesday.

The tourists, staring down a meagre innings total when reduced to 96 for five after winning the toss, went on the counter-attack to frustrate the Australians late in the day at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Rizwan clubbed 88 off 103 balls, number nine Jamal smashed four sixes in a spirited 82 off 97 and Salman hit 53 off 67 to give the tourists renewed hope after a car-crash start to the innings.

Shaheen hits back after Wasim, Waqar accuse him of 'solely'

Sydney

Pakistan's pace spearhead was rested from the Sydney Test keeping the five-match T20I series against New Zealand in mind. Afridi is supposed to lead Pakistan for the first time as their new T20I captain on the New Zealand tour starting from January 12. The decision was heavily criticised by greats of Pakistan cricket Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis. Wasim went on to state that the decision was Shaheen's alone and not the team management's. During the third Test,

Shaheen, while speaking to the host broadcasters, cleared the air and confirmed that it was the call of the team management. "I played two games, and a lot of overs to be honest. They're just managing my workload, the medical team and team management decided to take a rest for this (Test)," Afridi said in an interaction with the broadcasters during Lunch on Day 1 in Sydney. Afridi bowled 45.1 overs in the first Test in Perth and picked up two wickets. The left-armer had a much better outing in the Boxing Day Test.



Last time Elgar was walking back to the pavilion in Test cricket

Cape Town

Day 1 of the second Test between India and South Africa ended up being a nightmare for batters from both sides. South Africa were the first to bear the brunt of the pitch as Mohammed Siraj's career-best figures of 6/15 led the way in India bundling the hosts out for a record-low score of 55. India seemed set to build a giant lead in the early stages of the third session with Virat Kohli three runs away from his half-century and KL Rahul seemingly getting set. This was after a quickfire partnership of 55 off 75 balls between Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill. However, India incredibly went from being 153/4 to 153 all out in the 34th and 35th overs of their innings, thus bringing South Africa back out to bat again. It meant that Dean Elgar, South Africa's stand-in captain who is retiring from international cricket after this Test, came out to bat for his second innings of the match, and the last innings of his international career, on Day 1 itself. The left-hander chopped a Siraj delivery back onto his stumps in the first innings. He ended up being applauded off the field on the first day as well after falling to Mukesh Kumar dismissed him for 12 runs. It was a typical Mukesh Kumar delivery. The key here was the fact that he came around the wicket. His nagging line and length meant Elgar had little option but to play at it. The ball straightened ever so slightly instead of coming in with the angle to find the outside edge of Elgar's bat and Kohli did the rest in the slip cordon.

After taking the catch, Kohli gestured towards the dressing room and bowed down as if to suggest a plan had worked out perfectly for them but quickly realised it was the last time Elgar was walking back to the pavilion in Test cricket. Kohli and the rest of the Indian cricketers cut short their celebrations. Siraj was the first to run to Elgar to shake hands and pat him on the back. Kohli followed. The former India skipper gave him a tight hug. Then came Bumrah followed by others before Elgar then walked off to a standing ovation from the Newlands crowd.

Seamer Mohammed Siraj played a pivotal role

Cape Town

The second and final Test between South Africa and India at Newlands witnessed an extraordinary, back-and-forth first day, concluding with the Proteas standing at 62 for three in their second innings, trailing India by 36 runs. The day saw 23 wickets fall, along with the setting of several records on Wednesday. Aiden Markram, with an unbeaten 36, and David Bedingham, at 7 not out, will aim to build a solid partnership on the second day to set a challenging target for India. Seamer Mohammed Siraj played a pivotal role, achieving a career-best 6-15 as India bowled out South Africa for a mere 55 in the first innings. Despite India's promising position at 153 for four in reply, a stunning collapse ensued, resulting in the loss of six wickets without adding a run—the first instance of such an occurrence in test

cricket. The visitors encountered multiple unwanted milestones, with six batsmen dismissed for ducks, equaling a previous record.

The first two innings, lasting 349 balls, marked the second-fewest deliveries in 147 years of Test cricket. South Africa faced setbacks as well, losing captain Dean Elgar twice in the day, scoring four and 12. Mukesh Kumar (2-25) and Jasprit Bumrah contributed to South Africa's struggles in the second innings, leaving them teetering at 62 for three at the day's close. However, right before the final delivery of the day, a rather dramatic moment took place in the middle, as India star Virat Kohli walked near the stumps and swapped the bails in a repeat of the previous Test. Kohli had performed the act to success in Centurion; taking cue from Stuart Broad's similar act during the Ashes.

Shastri's commentary during India's Record collapse in 2nd Test sends internet into frenzy

Cape Town

The second Test between India and South Africa raced along on an extraordinary first day in which 23 wickets fell. India bundled South Africa out for 55 and were looking steady at 153/4 in the second session before it was their turn to have some egg on their faces with the bat in hand.

India's collapse began with Lungi Ngidi taking three wickets and turning the tables on the visitors in the 34th over. In the very next, Kagiso Rabada

dismissed Virat Kohli, who was three runs away from his half-century, Siraj was run out and Prasidh Krishna edged one to slips. India thus lost six wickets for no runs in 11 balls leading to stunned reactions from all over the world. Former India head coach Ravi Shastri, who was in the commentary box at that point, summed up the situation in a hilarious manner and the clip has gone viral since then. "Yes 153/4, 153 all out. If someone went around the corner for a

dump and has come back, India has been bowled out for 153!" Shastri said on commentary, prompting audible laughter inside the box. "Or a drink, or whatever they have gone for. If they turned away from the game for a little bit," Mbangwa then said. Here's how social media reacted to Shastri's hilarious commentary on India's world record collapse India and South Africa's first innings lasted 349 balls, the second fewest in 147 years of Test cricket.

The only shorter instance was 287 deliveries between Australia and England in 1902. While South Africa's score of 55 was their lowest in the longest format in nearly a century, India's six ducks are the joint most for any team in an innings. SA's first innings total was also the lowest by any team against India. At stumps on Day 1, South Africa lost three more wickets in their second innings. They are still 36 runs away from making India bat again.

Siraj led the way as India dismantled the South African batting lineup in the first session of the second Test

Cape Town

Mohammed Siraj led the way as India dismantled the South African batting lineup in the first session of the second Test in Cape Town on Wednesday. The Indian pacers ran through the South African lineup like hot knife through butter and the hosts

were bundled out for a record low score of 55 runs. It is the lowest score for the Proteas in Test cricket since 1932 and they could last just 23.2 overs. Siraj ended with figures of 6/15. It is also the lowest score by any team against India in Test cricket, going past the 62 that New

Zealand were all out for at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai in December 2021. The lowest score by any team at their own home ground against India was 83 by Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in February 1981. Siraj was on the money from his first over itself and

eventually gave India the breakthrough with the wicket of Aiden Markram in the fourth over of the day. Siraj went on to bowl an extended spell in which he took five wickets and then returned to take his sixth. The fast bowler drew a lot of plaudits from all quarters with a number of

former India players praising him on social media, including the Sachin Tendulkar. Siraj is the first Indian to take five wickets in a single session of a Test match since 2011. Since 2016, he is also the second Indian pacer after his teammate Bumrah to take six wickets in a single session.

The Inc. co-founder unloaded more than \$475 million worth of shares



New Delhi

Mark Zuckerberg sold nearly half a billion dollars of Meta Platforms Inc. shares in the final two months of 2023 after a two-year hiatus in which the company's stock price hit its lowest in seven years. The Meta chief executive sold shares on every trading day between Nov. 1 and the end of the year, unloading nearly 1.28 million shares for about \$428 million, according to a Tuesday regulatory filing.

Before this period, Zuckerberg had not sold Meta shares since November 2021. The company's share price

● **Marc Benioff, Zuckerberg's peer in the tech world, also sold shares nearly every day in the second half of 2023. The Salesforce Inc. co-founder unloaded more than \$475 million worth of shares during the period**

rebounded 194% last year from a seven-year low near the end of 2022. Meta shares outperformed those of every other major tech giant except Nvidia Corp. last year and is now near its September 2021

record high. Zuckerberg, 39, owns about 13% of Meta and has a net worth of about \$125 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, making him the seventh-richest person in the world. Meta did not reply to a request for comment.

Marc Benioff, Zuckerberg's peer in the tech world, also sold shares nearly every day in the second half of 2023. The Salesforce Inc. co-founder unloaded more than \$475 million worth of shares during the period, selling about 15,000 shares — about \$3 million — every day.

Lobo is also a former colleague of the current Tech Mahindra

New Delhi

Tech Mahindra, one of the biggest IT firms in India, has announced that it has appointed Richard Lobo as the company's global Chief People Officer (CPO). Tech Mahindra announced the same on Wednesday through an X post. Richard Lobo was the executive vice president of rival IT firm Infosys previously, but will now be taking on this global role in Tech Mahindra. The HR veteran is being onboarded as part of the leadership restructuring under new CEO Mohit Joshi, reported. Tech Mahindra wrote on X, "With over 25 years of experience in HR

transformation, employee experience, diversity, and inclusion, Richard is set to lead the #HR charter at @Tech_Mahindra. Together, we'll continue to scale people processes, drive sustainable growth, and create an unparalleled working environment based on our people-first principles." The IT firm's CEO Mohit Joshi reshared the Twitter post and wrote, "Welcome aboard, Richard. Your people-first approach to empower organisations in the new world of work and passion for nurturing young leaders will serve as a catalyst in shaping our future. Look forward to taking

#TechMahindraOnwards AndUpwards, together." **About new Tech Mahindra CPO Richard Lobo**

Richard Lobo, before being roped into the new role at Tech Mahindra, was a part of IT giant Infosys for over two decades. Lobo spent 22 years at Infosys and resigned in August 2023, and took on the role as HR consultant and strategic advisor at edtech firm BYJU'S. Lobo is also a former colleague of the current Tech Mahindra CEO Mohit Joshi. Before this, Harshvendra Soin was both the CHRO and head of marketing at the IT firm but will soon be shifting to Australia.

Bitcoin continues to go strong after breaching \$45,000 mark

New Delhi

For the first time since April 2022, cryptocurrency Bitcoin crossed the \$45,000 mark on Tuesday, touching its 21-month high. Bitcoin, which is the world's largest cryptocurrency, recorded a hike of 6 percent, January 6. Bitcoin was up by a total of

6.43% on , touching its all time high since 2022 at \$45,317.67. A day after breaching the historic mark, Bitcoin continues to go strong, up by a little less than one percent. On January 3, the Bitcoin rates were recorded at \$45,257.70, not close to dipping below its 21-month high. The rates

were 0.70 percent higher than the closing price of the cryptocurrency. This also led to an overall surge in the cryptocurrency market in the first few days of January. With the Bitcoin prices surging above \$45,000 for the first time in months, the rates of the cryptocurrency in India.

CAPSULES

PNB hikes FD interest rates

Punjab National Bank has announced that it has hiked its fixed deposit (FD) interest rates on amounts below 2 crore. Now offering better returns on FD, the bank hiked up to 50 basis points (bps) on certain tenures. Meanwhile, PNB has also announced the reduction of FD rates for some buckets. The new rates of the bank will be implemented from January 1, 2024. The bank has hiked interest rates on the tenure of 180 to 270 Days by 50 bps. Through the new FD rates, general citizens will be able to get up to 6 percent returns. Meanwhile, PNB hiked the interest rates by 45 bps on 271 Days to less than 1 year tenure, fetching 7.25 percent returns for general citizens. PNB has hiked rates by 45 bps from 6.80% to 7.25% for the 400 day maturity fixed deposit. Further, the bank has revised the rates from 3.5% to 7.25% to general citizens on deposits maturing in 7 days to ten years.

While the FD rates for majority of the tenures have been raised, PNB has also cut FD rates on 444 days by 45 bps from 7.25% to 6.8%. As per the revisions in rates, Punjab National Bank will be offering an interest rate ranging from 4% to 7.75% on FDs maturing in seven days to ten years for senior citizens, and 4.3% to 8.05% for super seniors.

Fixed deposit rates of ICICI, HDFC, SBI, BoB

The State Bank of India (SBI) hiked interest rates on fixed deposits on December 27, 2023. For deposits below ₹2 crore, SBI offers rates ranging from 3.5 to 7% on deposits maturing in seven days to ten years, while senior citizens will get 50 bps extra. Bank of Baroda has raised its interest rates by 125 bps in December 29 for deposits under ₹2 crore. General costumers will get an FD interest in the range of 4.25 % to 7.25%

The gold and silver prices in India are back to the former rate after the rates declined

● **The prices of gold spiked up on January 5, 2024, with the rate of one gram of 24K and 22K gold fixed at 6397 and 5865 respectively**

New Delhi

A day after showing a significant spike, the gold and silver prices in India are back to the former rate after the rates declined steeply for gold and marginally for silver on Thursday. Before this, gold prices were stable for three days. Gold and silver prices showed a decline of 270 and 3 per 10 gram of metal on Thursday, while it had risen by

the same amount yesterday. Gold and silver prices had remained unchanged from December 30 to January 2, after which they were spiked yesterday.

The prices of gold spiked up on January 5, 2024, with the rate of one gram of 24K and 22K gold fixed at 6397 and 5865 respectively on Monday. Silver prices also showed a marginal hike at 78.90 per gram. For one gram of 24K of the yellow metal, on the other hand, buyers must pay 6397 (one gram), 51,176 (eight gram), 63,970 (10 gram) and 6,39,700 (100 gram). Here are the city-wise rates for gold today.

City 22K GOLD PRICE (Rs/10 GMS) 24K GOLD PRICE (Rs/10

GMS)
Delhi 58,650 ₹63,970
Mumbai 58,500 63,820
Kolkata 58,500 63,820
Bengaluru 58,500 63,820
Chennai 59,150 64,530

It must be noted, however, that the daily rates mentioned above do not take into account GST, TCS, and other levies; this, therefore, means that these are only indicative. Only a local jeweller can give you the exact price for that day.

Silver prices : Check city-wise rates After gold prices saw a steep decline of 270, the silver prices also took a hit today, down by 3 per 10 grams of the metal. Silver prices today were fixed at 78.60 per one gram in the national capital, seeing a change of 0.30.

SoftBank veteran now a billionaire CEO of Palo Alto Networks

New Delhi

Nikesh Arora has a track record of securing substantial compensation packages throughout his career. As the current CEO of Palo Alto Networks Inc, a cybersecurity firm, his role has catapulted him into the billionaire ranks. Arora's overall net worth now stands at \$1.5 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. This remarkable achievement distinguishes him as a rare example of a non-founder tech CEO who has achieved billionaire status. Arora

was granted a significant compensation package, including \$125 million in stock and options upon joining Palo Alto Networks in 2018. In 2023, Arora leveraged his position and exercised some of his stock options, selling almost \$300 million worth of shares. Despite this substantial divestment, Arora remains well-positioned to continue accumulating wealth at Palo Alto Networks. Arora's 2023 compensation package comprises a potential maximum of 750,000 stock awards, subject to

specific performance criteria. Currently valued at over \$220 million, the company justifies this substantial award by citing Arora's impressive performance in his initial five years, averaging "\$102 million of value each year. Acknowledging Arora's substantial vested ownership and the anticipated vesting of additional amounts in the coming years, the company's Board of Directors deemed it necessary to grant a meaningful equity award. This decision aims to ensure that the award

remains a significant incentive for Arora, recognising his pivotal role in the company's success. In 2014, Nikesh Arora was recruited by Masayoshi Son of SoftBank Group Corp., with the expectation that he could be Son's successor. In his first year at SoftBank, Arora received an extraordinary compensation package of \$135 million, setting a record in Japan and making him the world's highest-paid executive at that time. Notably, during his tenure at Google, Arora earned the title.

The corporation has received communication order for interest

New Delhi

The corporation has received communication/demand order for interest and penalty from Office of the Commissioner of CGST & Central Excise, Chennai North Commissionerate on January 1, LIC said in a regulatory filing. The demand pertains to wrong avilment of

Chennai against the said order within the prescribed timelines, it said. There is no material impact on financials, operations or other activities of the corporation, it added. The company received a demand order for interest and penalty of about 116 crore for Telangana state for short payment of GST

Input Tax Credit (ITC) and non-payment on tax on turnover wrongly declared as non-GST supply in GSTR-1 for 2017-18, and 2018-19, it said. The corporation shall file an appeal before the Commissioner

(Appeals), Chennai against the said order within the prescribed timelines, it said. There is no material impact on financials, operations or other activities of the corporation, it

added. The company received a demand order for interest and penalty of about ₹116 crore for Telangana state for short payment of GST for 2017-18.

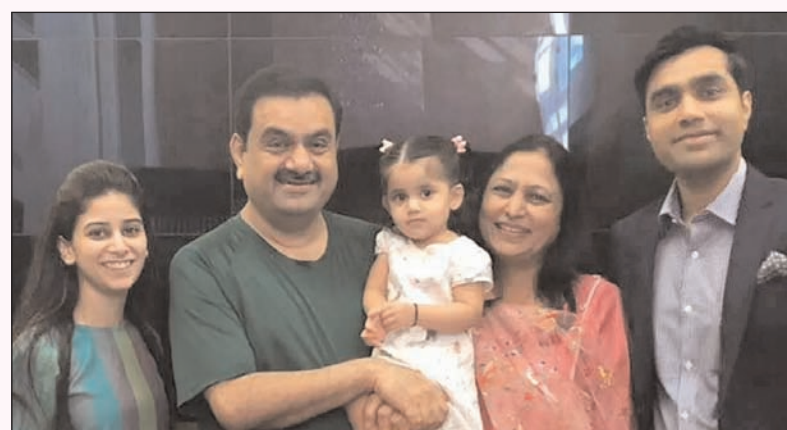
The demand for Telangana came a day after LIC on January 1 received a similar notice demanding about ₹806 crore for short payment of GST for 2017-18 along with interest and penalty for Maharashtra.

Supreme Court's judgment into Adani-Hidenburg issue

● **"The court emphasised that market regulator SEBI was conducting a "comprehensive investigation," and its conduct "inspires confidence." Highlighting the limited power of the court to enter the regulatory domain of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in framing"**

New Delhi

In what is considered a favourable ruling for the Ahmedabad-based conglomerate, the group's stocks soared by up to 12 per cent on Wednesday, contributing to an overall market capitalisation gain of over ₹15 lakh crore. As a result of these gains, Gautam Adani's family surpassed Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries, reclaiming the title of India's wealthiest promoter, Business Standard reported (the news report is behind paywall) , the net worth of the Gautam Adani family increased to 9.37 lakh crore, up from 8.98 lakh crore



a day earlier. In comparison, the net worth of the Mukesh Ambani family slightly decreased to 9.28 lakh crore from 9.38 lakh crore during this period.

Supreme Court's judgment into Adani-Hidenburg issue On Wednesday, the Supreme Court declined to transfer the investigation into allegations of stock price manipulation by the Indian corporate giant to a special investigation team or the CBI. The court emphasised that market regulator SEBI was conducting a "comprehensive investigation," and its conduct "inspires confidence." Highlighting the limited power

of the court to enter the regulatory domain of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in framing delegated legislation, the apex court directed SEBI to promptly conclude the two pending investigations, preferably within three months. A bench led by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said that reliance on newspaper articles or reports by third-party organisations like the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) to question a comprehensive investigation by a specialised regulator does not inspire confidence.

3 to 4 per order in major markets

New Delhi

Zomato, the publicly listed food delivery platform, has raised its platform fee from 3 to 4 per order in major markets, as per details on its app. This rate adjustment came into effect on January 1, INC24 reported. On New Year's Eve, the platform fees were reported to have been temporarily increased to as much as ₹9 per order in specific markets, as mentioned by sources. On Sunday, December 31, Zomato experienced an unprecedented surge in order volume during New Year's Eve, surpassing all-time highs. Deepinder Goyal, the CEO, shared on X that the order count exceeded the cumulative orders recorded by the food delivery platform for New Year's Eve over the previous six years.