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

Supreme Court pulls up SBI, tells it to disclose bond numbers linking donors

● "In a related issue, responding to EC's plea for return of the original documents relating to electoral bond"



NEW DELHI: Supreme Court on Friday took strong exception to State Bank of India not revealing to Election Commission the invisible alpha numeric number embossed on the now banned electoral bonds, used for nearly five years by corporate houses to donate big amounts to political parties, despite clear court directions to furnish every detail of the bonds, donors and recipients. "We take exception to SBI's action in not furnishing the alphanumeric numbers (embossed invisibly) on bonds," a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai, J B Pardiwala

and Manoj Misra said. The bench also included as guest members three judges from the UK SC and its admonition of the largest bank effectively conveyed to the visitors the assertive and decisive character of India's apex court. The bench posted the matter for further hearing on Monday. It directed SBI to respond by Monday to the of Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) pointing out the lapse on the bank's part whose chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara was put on notice for initiation of contempt proceedings by the court on

March 11 when it had dismissed the bank's plea for time till June 30 to furnish all details of electoral bonds to EC. On March 11, SC gave just 30 hours to SBI to furnish to EC all details, including identity of bond purchasers, donors and the amount they contributed, and recipient political parties along with the amount credited to their accounts. The details furnished by SBI were uploaded by EC on Thursday evening. However, SBI did not share the alphanumeric code — key to link the donor and the recipient political party. Also, the

data was furnished in two separate silos — one relating to buyers of electoral bonds and the amounts; second, recipient political parties and the amounts. This rendered matching the donors with recipients a difficult task and frustrated the February 15 judgment of the five-judge constitution bench that voters must know who donated how much to which political party. In a related issue, responding to EC's plea for return of the original documents relating to electoral bond donations to political parties.

Dump Left, Congress, give BJP a chance: PM Modi in Kerala

PATHANAMTHITTA/ KANYAKUMARI/HYDERABAD: PM Narendra Modi, who held rallies and meetings in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana on Friday, just a day ahead of code of conduct coming into force, asked people of Kerala to dump Communists and Congress and give BJP a chance. Later, he said INDIA bloc can never bring development to Tamil Nadu and hence it should be defeated in the elections along with DMK and Congress. Addressing an NDA election campaign meeting at Pathanamthitta in Kerala, Modi said people of the state would break out of the alternating cycle of LDF (Left Democratic Front) and UDF (United Democratic Front) govts and show their love for BJP with votes this time. He also slammed the rival fronts, saying they



were faking a rivalry in Kerala as they were hand-in-glove in Delhi. Citing the example of Tamil Nadu where the last Congress govt came to power in 1962 and UP, Gujarat and Bihar where Congress has been out of power for over four decades, he said once Congress or Communists were ousted from power, they would never return. Communists have failed to return to power after they lost in Tripura and Bengal, he said, terming both the Communist ideology and ideas of Congress as outdated. Addressing a public meeting in Kanyakumari in Tamil

Nadu, Modi said INDIA coalition has a series of scams against its name while BJP boasts projects. "When we have 5G, optical fibre achievements, they have 2G scam. We have Khelo India to improve sporting talent but they have Commonwealth Games scam. We have UDAN scheme but even in defence, they have a scam in helicopter procurement. DMK benefited a great deal from these scams," he said. The PM then went on to list the various projects his govt brought to Tamil Nadu. Modi said DMK was

against the culture and tradition of Tamil Nadu. He charged the party with boycotting the Ayodhya temple consecration and banning its telecast, necessitating the Supreme Court's intervention. "DMK even boycotted the Sengol ceremony, the pride of Tamils and Tamil kings, in the newly inaugurated Parliament," he said. The PM described in detail how he saved five Tamil Nadu fishermen sentenced to death in Sri Lanka through diplomatic channels. "How could I sleep after learning that?" he told the crowd. "It is the sin of DMK that is affecting fishermen who must cross into Sri Lankan waters for a livelihood," he said. In Hyderabad, Modi made an important pit stop at Malkajgiri, India's most populous Lok Sabha constituency with nearly 31 lakh voters.

US probes Adani, cos over bribery charges: Report



US prosecutors are investigating Adani Group for potential bribery, focusing on founder Gautam Adani. The probe includes scrutiny of Adani entities and individuals linked to the company for alleged misconduct in India and involves the US Attorney's Office in New York. The probe, which is also looking at Indian renewable energy company Azure Power Global Ltd., is being handled by the US Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York and the Justice Department's fraud unit in Washington, said people familiar with the matter. US prosecutors have widened their probe of Adani group to focus on whether the company may have engaged in bribery as well as the conduct of the company's billionaire founder, according to people with direct knowledge of the matter. Investigators are digging into whether an Adani entity, or people linked to the company including Gautam Adani, were involved in paying officials in India for favourable treatment on an energy project, said the people, who asked not to be identified discussing the confidential effort. The probe, which is also looking at renewable energy company Azure Power Global, is being handled by the US attorney's office for the eastern district of New York and the Justice Department's fraud unit in Washington, said people familiar with the matter. "We are not aware of any investigation against our chairman," Adani Group said in an emailed statement.

Samudrayaan to explore ocean bed by 2025-end: Rijiju

NEW DELHI: Samudrayaan mission set to explore ocean bed by 2025-end, the earth sciences minister Kiren Rijiju has said. The minister's announcement soon came after an underwater acoustic telephone, developed by National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) for the submersible project, was successfully tested on March 9 at



a depth of about 500 metres in the Bay of Bengal. The ministry, in a tweet, said, "Underwater acoustic telephone indigenously developed in-house by MSS Group of MOES

NIOT for manned submersible has been successfully tested up to 500 meters depth in BoB (Bay of Bengal) on board Sagar Manjusha (research vessel). Deployment preparation, operation and functional testing of underwater acoustic telephone was successfully conducted." Similar to the Gaganyaan mission

in which 2-3 astronauts will be sent to space in 2025, India will send its scientists to study the deep ocean 6,000 metres in its own Samudrayaan by the end of next year. India's deep-ocean submersible, 'Matsya6000', which will take scientists into the depth of the ocean, is "well on course" and could be tested by the "end of this year".

Don't think companies donate only to escape ED: Sitharaman

MUMBAI: Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday denied there was any quid pro quo in contributions to BJP through electoral bonds (EBs) and raids on corporates by ED. In response to a question at The Economic Times Awards for Corporate Excellence in Mumbai, Sitharaman dismissed such allegations as loose talk. "Linking it (buying of bonds) with



ED (action) is like sitting and having a cup of tea in the lounge and having a little merry chat," she said. "You don't know where a donation went. Did they give bonds only to govt controlling ED or did

they give it to govts run by other parties?" she said. "Do you know for each one of ED cases in this context, was it before or was it after? Maybe it was before, and even after that ED chose to go and visit those who came around & said, 'I want to give donation, please save me'." There's a lot of "homework" to be done on the bond data submitted by State Bank.

Many Pak 'persecuted' minorities have not heard of India's CAA

ISLAMABAD: Amit Kumar, a trader from Sanghar district in Pakistan's southern Sindh province, has his bags packed to move to India at the earliest opportunity. "I am seriously considering settling there. At least I won't get killed because of my faith," he said, claiming he now lives the life of "a second-class Pakistani citizen". Amit belongs to a growing tribe of religious minorities in Pakistan apparently looking for an exit but largely unaware of the intricacies of India's Citizenship Amendment Act. CAA, a hot-button topic in India, is



meant to grant citizenship to minority Hindus, Parsis, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Christians who fled persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh before Dec 31, 2014. Over the last two decades, dozens of Pakistani Hindu refugees have trooped to India in the face of socio-political and religious tensions that left them feeling vulnerable in the Muslim-majority country. Abductions, blasphemy charges, attacks on places of worship and forced conversion of Hindu girls are some of the reasons for this slow but steady exodus. Iqbal Masih, a resident of Islamabad's Christian colony, is

unaware of CAA but not averse to immigrating if he is eligible for Indian citizenship. "Had I known such a law was in the making, I would've made an attempt to migrate long ago." Representatives of minority groups say they need to understand the significance of CAA before taking a view on the law. For a number of Pakistani Hindus, Sikhs and Christians, most of them economically underprivileged, immigration isn't an option for reasons other than the limitations of CAA. "Given our social and financial status, it would be more challenging for us to start afresh in India. 0w9

Electoral bonds: Biggest donor contributed over six times net profit

Future Gaming & Hotel Services Pvt Ltd wasn't just remarkable for the fact that it contributed more through electoral bonds (Rs 1,368 crore) than any other single entity between April 12, 2019 and Jan 24, 2024. Even more remarkable was the fact. 89 that this was equivalent to more than six times its combined net profit of Rs 215 crore for the last three years for which data is available. The list of corporate entities that donated more than Rs 50 crore through EBs during this five-year period includes a few others that have seemingly parted with more than they earned by way of profits. Then there are some who would appear to have given away a sizeable chunk of their earnings.

Ahead of delivery, Army raises Apache attack chopper squadron

NEW DELHI: Ahead of the delivery of six Apache attack helicopters from the US from May onwards, the Army on Friday raised the squadron for the heavy-duty choppers at Jodhpur along the western front with Pakistan. The Apache squadron was raised in the presence of Army Aviation's director general Lt-General Ajay Suri and other officials. "The delivery was to commence from February, but it has been slightly delayed. The IAF has already inducted 22 of the Boeing-manufactured Apache helicopters under the Rs 13,952 crore deal inked with the US in September 2015. The Army, in turn, will get six choppers under the Rs 5,691 crore deal inked

in February 2020. Dubbed "tanks in the air", the Apaches are armed with Stinger air-to-air missiles, Hellfire Longbow air-to-ground missiles, guns and rockets. "The Apaches are primarily meant to provide integrated combat aviation cover for the 'strike corps' of the Army," the officer said. The Army and the IAF are also slated to induct 156 indigenous Prachand light combat helicopters, which are capable of offensive operations in high-altitude areas like Siachen Glacier and eastern Ladakh, in the years ahead. They will add to the 15 such choppers (10 IAF and 5 Army) already inducted under the first Rs 3,887 crore contract for them.

Celebrating Extraordinary Contributions to Society: The Diplomatic Awards Shines on Women's Day

New Delhi: In a dazzling display of recognition for outstanding achievements, the prestigious Diplomatic Awards unfolded at the Eros Hotel in New Delhi on International Women's Day. Hosted by the multi-faceted Dr. Sanjanaa Jon, renowned Filmmaker, Social Activist, Philanthropist, and International Fashion Designer, alongside Dr. Asif Iqbal, President of the Indian Economic Trade Organization (IETO), the event was a testament to honoring remarkable individuals who have significantly impacted society. The Diplomatic Awards on Women's Day took a unique turn by acknowledging the invaluable contributions of diplomatic spouses. Wives of diplomats and Diplomatic community were felicitated



for their commendable achievements, recognizing their substantial role in shaping the societal and national landscape. Additionally, the event also bestowed honors upon dynamic women entrepreneurs from India, highlighting their impactful contributions to society. The Dignitaries Awardees and are as follows: HE Alem Tsehaye

Woldemariam Dean Ambassador Eritrea HE Muawia Elbukhari Ambassador Sudan Mrs. Maha Mubarak Adam Elhadi Spouse of Sudan Ambassador Awardee, Mrs. Tin Tin Htwe Win Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Myanmar, Aruna Oswal Oswal Group Philanthropist, Prof. D.K. Giri & Ms. Susan Editors of the book "Preventing

Violence Against Women", Ms. Linda Editor Plenipotentiary Diplomatist, Ms. Huma Chief Editor in Financial Express, Dr. Renu Choudhary, Prof. & Head SRM University, Mrs. Zalikatu Boubacar First Secretary, Niger Embassy, Dimitrios Sideris Consul of Greece Diplomat Awardee, Zena Chung Korea Aruna Oswal, PVR

Shalu, Blossom Kochar, Gurleen Anand Trade Commissioner, Latin America, Kalicharan Evergreen Environmentalist Humanist Awardee, Pritam Saluja Entrepreneur Empowering Women Humanitarian Activist, Bidisha Pandey Trade Commissioner, Seniorita Isaac, Vasundhara Nattes This gathering of primarily Diplomats and Diplomatic community luminaries and trailblazers served not only as a celebration of accomplishment but also as an inspiration for future generations. The Diplomatic Awards underscored the importance of recognizing diverse talents and contributions, especially on a day dedicated to celebrating the achievements of women.

ZARI JAIPUR Reveals the Highly Awaited UDHARAN



Jaipur: ZARI JAIPUR, a prominent fashion brand, recently hosted a captivating evening during the Jaipur Times Fashion Week, showcasing a harmonious blend of Legacy, Tradition, Craftsmanship, Emotions, and a Contemporary outlook. The focal point of this spectacular event was the presentation of their themed collection, Udharan, for the upcoming Spring/Summer 2024 season, held at the Jaipur Marriott. Ankit Palawat, Director at ZARI JAIPUR, expressed, "Udharan goes beyond being a mere fashion show; it sets an epitome

for all, where every stitch and detail narrates a story of craftsmanship, elegance, and innovation. Each garment in our collection is deeply entrenched in the essence of gotta, marodi, zardosi, paying homage to the garments passed down through generations. Udharan encapsulates everything Zari stands for: 'Udhaaran pyaar ka,' 'Udhaaran kalaakari ka,' 'Udhaaran Apnepan ka,'" added Preet Palawat, Creative Director at ZARI JAIPUR. Founded in November 2005, ZARI has established itself as one of the leading players in

Women's Ethnic wear nationwide. The brand is synonymous with originality and exquisiteness, offering a wide range of full trousseau collections, including designer Lehenga, Suits, Sarees, Gowns, and Indo-Western outfits. ZARI boasts a strong presence in both online and offline retail, with locations in Indore, Raipur, Udaipur, and Bilaspur. The flagship store is located in Jaipur. With 6 retail stores, wholesale across 80 cities and 5L+ buyers, a huge manufacturing unit, ZARI provides direct or indirect employment to more than 2000 people.

Women now account for nearly 48% of Ayushman hospitalisations

NEW DELHI: Women account for nearly 48% of authorised hospitalisations under Ayushman Bharat-PM Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), data accessed by TOI show. Top officials in National Health Authority (NHA), implementing agency of the scheme, told TOI that since its launch in 2018, 6.5 crore hospitalisations have been made under the scheme which involved treatment cost of Rs 81,979 crore. Of this, 3.2 crore hospitalisations for Rs 39,349 crore involved women. Officials said scheme utilisation by women beneficiaries

has been higher than that of men in 10 states/UTs - Meghalaya (68%), Arunachal Pradesh (57%), Chhattisgarh (56%), Mizoram (54%), Nagaland (53%), Jharkhand (51%), Tripura (51%) and J&K (50%). According to NHA documents, top specialities under PMJAY which were utilised more by women than men are - cancer (56%), ophthalmology (54%), otorhinolaryngology or ENT-related (51%), and neonatal care packages (57%). "Enrolment under AB-PMJAY scheme is steered by thousands of ASHA and

aangaenwadi workers across states/UTs. Women also constitute a significant percentage of healthcare providers at local units (AB-Health Wellness Centres). This has helped increase utilisation of the scheme among women, who have traditionally lagged behind in health-seeking behaviour," a senior health ministry official said. He added that another key change brought in by the scheme which helped increase women's involvement in healthcare scheme was individual enrollment. "Before AB-PMJAY.

Indian Army tops the chart at Snow Marathon



Hissar: The Snow Marathon which has the distinction for being the highest marathon witnessed the dominance of the Indian Army at its third edition. Shabir Hussain of Ladakh Scouts won the 42 km - full marathon title at the picturesque snowclad mountains of Jana falls near Manali. The reigning champion Tenzin Dolma from Manali ruled the women's category. Due to the recent avalanches in Lahaul, the annual event of Snow Marathon could not be held at Sissu (situated at 10,000 feet in district Lahaul & Spiti) as blocked roads enroute to the venue posed challenges to organizers. Hence this edition was shifted to the snowy hills of Jana Falls. This edition was organised by Reach India and Himachal Tourism

Department wherein more than 200 runners from India and abroad exhibited their dominance in four categories. Runners from Russia, US, UK and Sri Lanka also marked their presence in the event. Indian Army's Tsewang Nangdan won the half marathon while Hemlata emerged as the champion in women's category. Jigmet Stubden, again from the Indian Army, won the ten-kilometre category while Sakshi stood first in the women's category. Armaan Thakur won in the five kilometre race Organizer Rajiv Kumar expressed his satisfaction over its staging and said Snow Marathon has truly made a mark in the Indian adventure sports calendar in a very short span of time. More than 200 marathoners from across the country.

Congress avoids strong words for TMC over West Bengal list

NEW DELHI: Stung by Mamata Banerjee's announcement of all 42 candidates for West Bengal, Congress eschewed strong words for the Trinamool Congress leader, and instead said the party is trying hard to keep all INDIA allies together, and that doors of partnership between them have still not been shut. Congress president Mallikarjun

Kharge said an alliance to jointly fight BJP would be preferable, claiming that alliance can happen any time till the date of withdrawal of candidatures. Congress spokesman Jairam Ramesh, however, betrayed bitterness by remarking, "I don't know what pressure was there on TMC, but as far as we are concerned, we want to strengthen INDIA

alliance in West Bengal... So let's see what happens." State Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Sunday claimed that Mamata is fearful of PM Modi. "Mamata is worried that if she joins INDIA Alliance, she will have to face Modi. She is worried that if ED and CBI start visiting TMC on Modi's orders, it could pose a risk.

Once the BJP betrays BJD, ex-mantri Jena rejoins the Congress

Delhi: Former Congress politician and Union minister Srikant Jena returned to the party, denouncing the BJP's



increasing closeness to the BJD in Odisha and asserting that the INDIA bloc will defeat the "unholy alliance" in his home state. Jena stated, "Some things were unclear before, but they are now clear. I had meetings with K C Venugopal, Ajoy Kumar, and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge. After a lengthy conversation, everything is resolved. Despite his absence, I have been working for Congress," he declared, alluding to the circumstances that resulted in his expulsion from the party in 2019. Even though Kumar claimed that a planned alliance would just formalize their previously unofficial agreement, Jena claimed that the people of Odisha are upset with the coalition.

400-seat target to amend Constitution: Karnataka BJP MP Anantkumar Hegde

KARWAR: Uttara Kannada BJP MP Anantkumar Hegde has ignited controversy by saying his party needed to win 400 Lok Sabha seats this time to "amend" the Constitution and erase the damage wrought by Congress over the years. He had made similar comments in 2019. Addressing BJP workers in Siddapur taluk on Saturday, Hegde said Congress had amended the Constitution "many times" and adopted "anti-people" policies.

"We can undo this damage only by winning two-thirds majority in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, and we must hold power in at least 20 states to amend the Constitution," Hegde said.

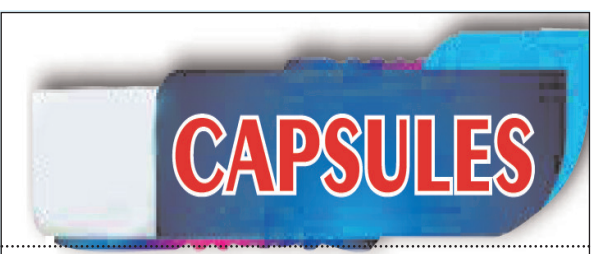
The MP stressed this as the "intent" behind BJP's current slogan of "Ab ki baar, 400 paar (this time, more than 400 seats)". Congress seized on the comment, saying Hegde had "given away his party's conspiracy" to junk "BR

Ambedkar's Constitution". BJP distanced itself from the remarks, describing them as "Hegde's personal views and not of the party". In a post on X, BJP said it would seek explanation from the MP and reaffirmed its "unwavering commitment" to upholding the Constitution. In 2019, Hegde had declared that "we have come to change the Constitution". Following a blowback, mainly from Congress, the MP was forced to apologise.

Some believe the row cost him a Union cabinet berth. Hegde's current statement comes amid a strong pitch by that BJP was preparing the ground to change the character of the Constitution and "deny the dented rights enshrined in the document prepared by Ambedkar". Hegde pointed out how BJP fell short in implementing the Citizenship Amendment Act. He said it faced stiff opposition in the Rajya Sabha.

HP renewed crisis

Delhi: In what may be a new dilemma for the Himachal government, six Congress MLAs who voted against their party nominee, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, in the Rajya Sabha elections, arrived in Uttarakhand alongside three independents. The rebel MLAs flew to Dehradun on a chartered plane and drove to their accommodation 30km from Rishikesh on Char Dham. Two Himachal BJP legislators, Vikram Thakur and Trilok Jamwal, are also reported to be "monitoring the developments and ensuring the arrangements" with the nine MLAs, according to Uttarakhand sources. Himachal assembly Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania dismissed the six MLAs for breaking the Congress whip and not voting on the state budget hours after cross-voting.



No seat-sharing issue between INDIA bloc members in J-K

Delhi: A Congress office-bearer claimed INDIA bloc members in Jammu and Kashmir are in talks to share seats with NC and PDP for the next parliamentary elections. Every party is entitled to as many seats as possible. Monga's comments followed the National Conference (NC)'s announcement that it would contest all three Kashmir Valley seats without giving the PDP a seat. J-K has five Lok Sabha seats, including two from Jammu, and Ladakh has one. At the last election, the NC won all three valley seats and the BJP won two Jammu seats and one Ladakh seat. All six J-K and Ladakh seats are under discussion. "It's terrible that the Supreme Court ordered Jammu and Kashmir elections.

DMK and Congress agree to share 10 Tamil Nadu seats

Delhi: Before the Lok Sabha elections, the ruling DMK and Congress struck a seat-sharing pact in Tamil Nadu. The Congress will contest 9 Tamil Nadu seats and Puducherry's single seat. The seat formula repeats the DMK's 2019 formula. Nine of 10 2019 congressional seats were won by the Congress. In front of AICC leaders KC Venugopal and Ajoy Kumar, DMK president and chief minister M K Stalin and TNCC chief K Selvaperunthagai sealed the pact. According to Venugopal, the DMK-led combine will win all 40 seats in TN and Puducherry since their 'connection' is "is intact". "We are pleased to create a formal alliance with DMK in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Congress will run for 9 Tamil Nadu seats and 1 Puducherry seat. We will back DMK and allied candidates for the remaining seats. We will win all 40 Tamil Nadu seats "KC Venugopal, Congress MP. Kamal Haasan's Makkal Neethi Maam is in the DMK-led alliance but has no Lok Sabha seats. It received one seat in the 2025 Rajya Sabha elections. To help the nation, Haasan joined the DMK-led alliance. Will not argue. He claimed he joined the DMK-led alliance for the country, not a post. MK Stalin's party gave the Communist Party of India, CPIM, and Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi two seats apiece. The Indian Union Muslim League and Kongu Desa Makkal Katchi each have one seat.

No copy kept, EC tells SC to return info furnished in sealed cover

NEW DELHI: With the Friday deadline for publication of electoral bond details fast approaching, Election Commission has realised it would not be in position to fully comply with Supreme Court's March 11 direction, which included publishing on its website by March 15 the EB data it had supplied in two tranches to SC during pendency of petitions questioning validity of the bonds.

Cashless" treatment to all road crashes in Chandigarh

NEW DELHI: The road transport ministry announced launching a pilot programme to provide "cashless" treatment to all road crashes in Chandigarh, which will entitle such victims to get treatment of up to Rs 1.5 lakh and for a maximum of seven days. Based on the outcome of the pilot programme, expansion of the cashless treatment facility to the entire country will be considered, it said. The ministry said the pilot programme is aimed at establishing an ecosystem for providing timely medical care to the road crash victims, including during the golden hour (first hour from accident). TOI had on Jan 31 first reported about the govt proposal to cap the amount for cashless treatment. The National Health Authority (NHA) will implement the pilot programme, in coordination with police,

hospitals and State Health Agency (SHA). Several studies have found that around half of road deaths can be prevented by providing quick medical care in the first one hour of a crash. In 2022, India recorded the maximum ever 1.68 lakh road deaths. Sources said an assessment by the ministry has found that average medical expenses in around 97% of road crash cases is approximately Rs 60,000. Only a small number of victims need long hospitalisation and intensive care. The cashless medical treatment will cover crashes caused by motor vehicles on all types of roads.

The Ayushman Bharat (PM-JAY) packages for trauma and poly-trauma cases are also being co-opted in this scheme. "Claims raised by hospitals for providing treatment to be reimbursed from the

Motor Vehicle Accident Fund. The programme will be implemented through an IT platform combining the functionalities of e-DAR application of transport ministry and Transaction Management System (TMS) of NHA," govt said.

The road transport ministry has carried out inter-ministerial consultation for the scheme, which was introduced in the Central Motor Vehicle Act in 2019. The scheme will have no burden on the public exchequer as insurance companies will bear the expenses. "It will be a fraction of the third party insurance premium they collect from vehicle owners. Reducing fatalities by providing faster medical care will ultimately benefit the insurance firms as their compensation outgo will reduce significantly," said a government official.

In high spirits: One-third liquor thekas to be helmed by women

Lucknow: Just as whisky is not only a man's drink, the liquor business is not for men only — at least in the City of Nawabs. As per latest data as many as 370 out of 1,046 liquor shops in Lucknow have been allotted to women entrepreneurs this fiscal. In high spirits: One-third liquor thekas to be helmed by women in Lucknow this yr

From April 1, the women shop owners will take over the reins of more than one-third of the business which has been predominantly dominated by men in the past. Officials said that overall participation of women has increased by 7% compared to the previ-

ous year in Lucknow and more shops have been taken over by women this time. Though no special incentives or relaxations are offered to the women, the upwards trend shows that women are no more hesitant to take a plunge into the alcohol trade. District excise officer of Lucknow, Rakesh Singh said, "35% of the total licenses issued for the next financial year have been obtained by women entrepreneurs. As numbers of female applicants have been going up over the past three years, their participation is also increasing in the same proportion." The maximum interest

among the women has been for IMFL liquor shops through which trade of whisky, vodka, rum, gin and wine takes place followed by beer shops. Sushila Jaiswal, a licensed-beer shop owner from Hazratganj, said, "It is not difficult to manage the retail stores as technology tools are available for close monitoring. CCTV cameras with sound systems would be installed at the shop and I would oversee the business. Also, the liquor business has become robust and transparent over the past five years." Meanwhile, only five country made liquor shops.

"Nagpur is a hub for immigrants from Ghotki

Four years after the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) was passed in Parliament, the law became applicable from Monday. The govt had passed the Act but the rules were not notified, due to which CAA had remained merely on paper so far. There is a sizeable population of

Hindu immigrants from Pakistan, most from Sindh and Balochistan. "Nagpur is a hub for immigrants from Ghotki district of Sindh province. Those from Balochistan come from different cities like Dalbandin, Mastung to even the province's capital Quetta," says

Jhambia. The CAA brings relief to persons from communities like Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, Christians and Buddhists who reached India before December 31, 2014, from countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan or Bangladesh.



SC: Sans motive, celebratory firing deaths aren't murder

New Delhi: SC has termed as "unfortunate" practice of celebratory firing during marriage ceremonies, which often lead to "disastrous consequences". While adjudicating an appeal filed by an accused, who was convicted for murder as his celebratory firing during a marriage ceremony caused death of a person, a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and S C Sharma held that a person could not be held guilty of murder in such cases if there was no motive and prior enmity and it should be a case of 'culpable homicide not amounting to murder'. The bench quashed his conviction under IPC Section 302 and held him guilty of an offence under IPC Section 304 Part II and awarded him a sentence already undergone (eight-year jail term).

30-yr-old labourer stabbed to death in Ghazipur, 1 held

New Delhi: A 30-year-old man was allegedly stabbed to death in east Delhi's Ghazipur. The accused, identified as Shishpal (23), has been arrested. Police received information on Tuesday morning about a stabbing incident at Bakra Mandi in Ghazipur. The victim, Dharmendra, was rushed to a hospital, where he was declared dead. An FIR was registered under section 302 (murder) of the IPC. "Both were labourers and were sitting together when they had an argument and Dharmendra was stabbed," the officer said. In another case, the body of a man missing for the past few days was found in a DDA Park on. A missing report for a man named Ajay Dwivedi was filed on Saturday at the Maidan Garhi.

PSU banks lead decline in complaints with regulator

Mumbai: RBI's integrated ombudsman has recorded a decline in the volume of grievances from regulated entities in FY23. Grievances dropped to 2.35 lakh in FY23 — a nearly 39% reduction from the 3.8 lakh recorded in FY21. This marks the second year in a row with a significant decrease in complaints, following last year's drop to 3 lakh. Between 2020-21 and 2022-23, the public sector banks category experienced the most substantial fall in grievances, declining from 1.75 lakh to 1 lakh. This signifies a 41% decrease or 72,830 fewer complaints. Conversely, within the same



period, the non-banking financial companies category saw an increase in grievances, climbing from 31,158 to 33,072 — an rise of 1,914 complaints. Despite a sharp decline in grievances from the public sector, private, and for-

eign banks compared to the pandemic years, complaints against payment banks rose from 2,168 in FY21 to 3,456 in FY23. Regarding categories, most grievances are related to mobile and electronic banking. From 2020-21 to 2021-22,

this category saw a modest reduction in complaints from 44,385 to 39,388, yet the proportion of overall complaints increased from 13% to 14.7%. However, from 2021-22 to 2022-23, there was a significant rise in complaints (from 39,388 to 39,855) and their share of the total (from 14.7% to 20.3%). The decline in complaints was due to the drop in grievances under the 'others' category, which dropped from 3.4 lakh in FY21 to 2.7 lakh in FY22 and further to 1.9 lakh in FY23. We also published the following articles recently: Delhi assembly gives chief secretary a week for sewage complaints.

CAA: The state will have the least number of applications on the portal

NEW DELHI: Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on claimed that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is completely significant in the state as there will be "least number of applicants". "CAA is completely insignificant in Assam; the state will have the least number of applications on the portal," CM Himanta Sarma said in a press conference. Himanta has also said that he will be the first to step down if even one person, who has not applied for the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state, gets citizenship under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA). The Assam chief minister said the Act is very clear that the cut-off date for application of citizenship is December 31, 2014, and in Assam,



with the updation of the National Register of Citizens, people who applied for it and did not find their names in that list, will only apply for CAA. The chief minister's statement comes days after the central government notified Rules for the CAA, which would grant citizenship to undocumented non-Muslim migrants who entered India on or before December 31 from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Act has been a major point of contention in Assam, which witnessed widespread protest in 2019 after the citizenship amendment turned into the law of the land. The protest also entailed incidents of violence in the state, including the state capital Guwahati.

Celebrating sushi in Delhi



An exhibition titled 'Love Sushi by the Japan Foundation, in association with the Embassy of Japan and India International Centre, is on display until March 10 at IIC's Art Gallery. Celebrating sushi in Delhi. Did you know that Japan is not the birthplace of sushi? There are few things that have the ability to bridge cultural differences, remain versatile, and also

be everyone's favourite. Sushi is one of them. While sushi with spicy mayonnaise may be Delhi's own version of the specialty, different parts of the country have modified this classic depending on the taste and local ingredients. It is also an aspect that makes sushi the best-known example of Japanese cuisine among foodies. But did you know that Japan is not the

birthplace of sushi? Sharing similar interesting facts about sushi and how Japan adopted the dish in its original form and modified it to suit its natural environment, an exhibition titled 'Love Sushi by the Japan Foundation, in association with the Embassy of Japan and India International Centre, is on display until March 10 at IIC's Art Gallery.

A Revanth Reddy is likely to lay the foundation stone

HYDERABAD: AIMIM president, Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi said chief minister A Revanth Reddy is likely to lay the foundation stone for metro rail works at Falaknuma in the Old City on March 7.

Slamming the BJP for accusing the AIMIM of not developing the Old City and claiming that it would develop it if voted to victory in Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat, Owaisi said he had asked the chief minister to come to Old City to lay foundation stone for metro rail project for MGBS-Falaknuma corridor.

Owaisi "Welcome to the Old City. Who is stopping anyone? The state govt should give more funds for road-widening in this part of the city, get works started immediately on metro rail corridor, shift Chanchalguda jail and establish a KG to PG campus in its place, take up and complete Musi rejuvenation project, shift the Armed Reserve section from Petlaburz and utilise the place for development projects. AIMIM wants development," he said addressing a gathering of party leaders, MLAs, MLC and corporators on the occasion of 66th annual revival day celebrations.

Man gets 3-week parole to arrange for fine amount

New Delhi: Delhi High Court has granted three weeks' parole to a man convicted under the NDPS Act on the ground of arranging funds for payment of fine in terms of the sentence awarded to him. "This court is of the considered opinion that since the parole apart from re-establishing social ties, is sought on the ground of arranging funds for payment of fine, there appear to be sufficient reasons for releasing the petitioner on parole," said Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta. The single judge bench observed that there were sufficient reasons for releasing the convict on parole, subject to him furnishing a personal bond of Rs 25,000 to the satisfaction of the jail superintendent. One Harish Yadav was convicted and sentenced to 10 years. Later, he was further sentenced to simple imprisonment of six months in default of payment of fine. Yadav submitted before the court that he had already undergone imprisonment of almost nine years and 11 months till date.

HI to identify core group at women's Nat'ls

Bengaluru: The Indian women's hockey team's fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago raised the profile of the game and created awareness. But the failure to qualify for the Paris Games has set the sport back by at least a decade. Chief coach Janneke Schopman's exit amidst allegations of gender disparity and toxic work environment only added to the turmoil. To put women's hockey back on track will be an arduous task and the reality is not lost on Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey. The Senior Women's National Hockey Championship starting in Pune on Wednesday, may well mark a new beginning, but the former India skipper emphasised on strengthening the foundation. "This edition is crucial for Indian hockey. The Nationals are usually conducted in September-October, but given the circumstances, we decided to advance it. Many Indian players are either injured or retired, so we need to put together a fresh core team and move forward. Hockey India did not want to wait for another six months to do that," Tirkey told. With the Nationals for both men and women losing their sheen due to the absence of international stars, Tirkey said measures have been taken to make amends. "For a player to make the core group, it is mandatory that he or she plays the National Championships, unless under exceptional circumstances. If there are no international engagements, players should turn up for their respective state units. International players

Editorial

Building trust in the oceans

India's focus on its land borders has historically stemmed from past learnings from medieval-era invasions and in the current era, involved conflicts over land borders or around states contiguous to its boundaries. It is only in the last few decades that the role of the Indian Navy has gained prominence, as India aims to step up to a larger role in the global power hierarchy. In 2020, as India and China clashed in Galwan, several analysts pointed towards the need to use India's natural maritime advantages in its regional rivalry with China and in more effective power projection as an emerging and responsible global force. Keeping in mind India's ambitions in steering regional geopolitics, the role of the Indian Navy emerged from the shadows of India's arsenal to take on a more prominent role. Aside from developing its capabilities, India has recently played an active role in humanitarian and rescue missions, thus stamping its growing reputation as a responsible and capable maritime power. In the process, the navy has become a chief instrument in providing teeth to the country's aspirations outside the region. The Indian Navy is increasingly being seen as a capable and confident naval power that can be relied upon to make the seas a safer zone. "I think the scale of India's naval deployment is quite unprecedented, and in some ways this represents the confidence the Indian Navy has in its own abilities and the requirement to be seen as a benevolent regional player that is not simply looking after its own interests but also the interests of the global common," says Harsh Pant of the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi. As the war wages in Gaza and with the Yemen-based Houthi rebels attempting to broaden the war by mounting attacks against passing ships, the US has retaliated by striking the Houthis. The war occasionally threatens to spill over to other parts of the region aside from the environmental risks that sinking of ships pose to the coral reefs in the region. Amidst this, India has made its presence felt by deploying warships and surveillance east of the Red Sea against any attack by the Houthis and pirates. In this context, it must be said that the Indian naval presence has made it safe for the conduct of commercial trade in the region.

With the states around India possessing limited capacity to use naval capabilities in the high seas, there has been a regular concern around the lack of law enforcement in the seas as pirates have continued to enjoy the largesse of terrorist groups, smuggling contraband, trafficking and attacking commercial vessels and affecting trade. "Maritime power is more than a matter of policing the commons or accumulating and projecting military force in the littorals. Sea power is equally about creating prosperity for the people and meeting the needs of national development," writes Abhijit Singh, Head of the Maritime Policy Initiative at the Observer Research Foundation. It was China that sent its naval ships to the Gulf of Aden two decades ago to ensure that commercial vessels were safe from pirates. Over the years, China has muscled its way into the Indian Ocean Region and in doing so, has raised concerns about its intent of colonial expansion. On the other hand, an expanding Indian role in protecting waters is building its credibility as a naval power that has both the capacity and the willingness to deploy naval assets to protect the sea lanes of communication, without attracting the unease that China's ulterior aims in its investments in ports and infrastructure projects have aroused. India's consistent patrolling is a reassuring presence in the deep waters.

that cuts through ideological swamps. Over the last few months, the navy has rescued ships attacked by pirates and also, two ships that were hit by missiles.

Growth trajectories of its states

India's economic progress is a composite reflection of the growth trajectories of its states. Given the federal structure of the country, each state operates with a degree of autonomy in implementing policies that drive their individual economies. This results in a broad spectrum of growth rates across states, highlighting significant disparities. For the nation to achieve holistic growth, it is imperative for all states to experience economic advancement. Despite this, there is a notable discrepancy in the attention paid to fiscal matters at different levels of government. The Union Budget, detailing the central government's finances, often

garners substantial scrutiny and debate for its potential impacts on the nation's economic direction. In contrast, state budgets, which are crucial for addressing local needs and fostering regional development, do not attract a similar level of public and analytical scrutiny. Fiscal capacity, the government's ability to generate revenue from available tax and non-tax bases, is crucial for several reasons. First, it underpins a government's ability to provide essential public goods and services. These range from healthcare and education to infrastructure and defense, which are fundamental for the welfare of the citizenry and the smooth functioning of the

economy. Without adequate fiscal capacity, governments may struggle to maintain these services at levels that meet public demand and expectations, potentially leading to social unrest or a decline in the quality of life. Second, fiscal capacity is vital for economic development and growth. Governments need resources to invest in infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, and digital networks, which are critical for enhancing productivity and competitiveness. Such investments not only improve current living standards, but also set the stage for future economic expansion. The Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) in 2017 and the World

Bank in 2015 highlighted the risk of economies falling into a 'middle-income trap' where they are unable to transition to high-income status due to inadequate fiscal capacity among other factors. Moreover, fiscal capacity is essential for macroeconomic stability. It allows governments to manage economic cycles more effectively, applying fiscal stimulus in downturns and restraint in booms to maintain economic stability. The Covid-19 pandemic's impact on Indian states underscored this point, as reduced fiscal capacities constrained their ability to respond effectively to the crisis and its economic repercussions.

A new factor very strong element in elections

The BJP has been the fastest in announcing the first list of candidates for the upcoming Parliamentary elections. This is typical of its working style, where it works as a 24/7 electoral machine. In sharp contrast, the largest Opposition party, the Congress, is lumbering along on a much too delayed Nyaya Yatra, with the de facto party chief miles away from headquarters, and seat adjustments within the INDI alliance far from complete.

Many people were surprised at the number of new names in the BJP list, including the jettisoning of heavyweights in favour of fresh candidates. Some of this could, indeed, as some people allege, be tainted by subjectivity. The supreme duo in the party is apparently not well-disposed to those whose loyalties are suspect, or who are not subservient enough, or who could even remotely pose a challenge. But this factor is not unique to them. In almost every political party in India, the lack of inner-party democracy is transparent, and arbitrary decisions, purely on the subjective choice of the suprema, are par for the course, even more so in the rash of dynastic parties all over the country.

This being as it may, there is a new factor that has increasingly become a very strong element in elections: data.



Gone are the days when the primary form of electioneering was posters and rallies. Today, while these still have their role, what decides their content, their location, and even their timing, is guided by finely honed data. This data decides what the messaging should be, where rallies should be organised for maximum impact, and what their chronological sequencing should be.

The 2014 parliamentary elections, in which Narendra Modi emphatically triumphed, saw the first widespread use of data in both the planning of an election campaign and the selection of candidates. In the last ten years, this data-driven process has become far more sophisticated, complex and

accurate. Based on scientific surveys, cross-checked against multiple factors, political parties can check the on-ground, realistic popularity of candidates, irrespective of what they claim, what 'status' they enjoy, and how many times they may have won before. This assessment is combined with changing demographics, caste considerations, local issues, grassroots party organisation, strength of possible opposing candidates, and new faces within the party that may have appeared, to create an algorithm that can zero in, if done competently, on who is the best choice for a particular constituency.

However popular some political leaders were when they first won a seat, and

often won them again, anti-incumbency against the same face can become a critical factor. Often, candidates after they win, rest on their laurels, fail to fulfil their promises to the voters, neglect the constituency, or are widely perceived to be corrupt. In the past, their earlier reputation as winning candidates was taken at face value. No more. The mood of the public is dynamic and can never be taken for granted. If a charismatic leader from the opposing side has diligently worked in a constituency, has proven his or her sincerity in addressing the needs of the people, and is physically available on the ground, when by contrast the elected incumbent, although at one time popular, is missing, the voting pattern can change dramatically. This is precisely what the role of data plays in assessing the winnability of a candidate, and the need to retain or replace him or her. Data also determines messaging for an election. What are the issues a party should focus on, both generically and at the micro level? A generic message may appear to have large popular support, but it needs to be buttressed in each constituency by due emphasis on local issues which affect people of that particular area. This too can now be accessed by a competent database and individualised briefs given to

candidates. For instance, in Bihar, a survey showed that the biggest problem for most rural citizens is that of drainage and the absence of naalis to drain water out, especially after the monsoons. In UP, to give another example, one of the biggest problems farmers have to deal with is damage to crops by bulls, who cannot be culled and are left to fend for themselves. The short point is that the nature of election planning has changed. A new symbiotic relationship has emerged combining field data and number crunching in war rooms where the ubiquitous weapon is a computer. It is for this reason that political parties, who have done their homework, can announce candidates well in time to give them a first-mover advantage. In this process, many candidates are replaced, and new faces are announced. Winnability is the key criterion. In the 2019 West Bengal Assembly elections, Prashant Kishor, on the strength of precisely this form of data, dropped dozens of sitting candidates. Many of them then joined the BJP, but their unpopularity became a liability for the BJP. The BJP is by and large, following the same script, and that is why you see so many apparently established faces in the party not figuring in the party's list of candidates.

Strength of acceptance: Hinduism's legacy of tolerance

In the words of British writer Annie Besant, "Hinduism is the soil into which India's roots are stuck, and torn out of that, she will inevitably wither as a tree torn out from its place. And if Hindus do not maintain Hinduism, who shall save it? If India's own children do not cling to her faith, who shall guard it? India alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one." Hindus and Armenians share several striking similarities. Both cultures bear the weight of ancient civilizations, enduring centuries of history on their resilient shoulders. Each has confronted existential threats from expansionist empires harbouring genocidal intentions yet has managed to persevere against the odds. Both boast revolutionary heroes, such as the Chapekar brothers and

Soghomon Tehlirian, who bravely sought retribution against the oppressors of their people. Moreover, both communities have suffered territorial losses, witnessing the creation of new nations on lands once integral to their civilisations. They have also experienced the unsettling reality of historical enemies aligning against them. In addition, both Hindus and Armenians have found themselves confronting Western indifference and ignorance, bordering on Hinduphobia and Armeniophobia, respectively, in the contemporary world. Those who harbour animosity towards our existence exhibit striking parallels amongst themselves. Their intolerance is palpable, mirroring a worldview wherein the dominance of their community is deemed

inevitable. They display a resolute unresponsiveness to peace proposals, often resorting to warmongering tactics. Furthermore, they demonstrate a preposterous tendency to distort history, selectively discarding facts that do not align with their narratives. In ancient times, long before Christianity had made its way to Europe, the apostles of Jesus Christ journeyed to distant lands, including Armenia and India, to preach the gospel. Among them, Bartholomew and Thaddeus introduced Christianity to Armenia, while the Apostle Thomas brought the teachings of Christ to India. Notably, within the global spiritual movement of Ananda, founded on the principles of Swami Paramhansa Yogananda,

Why Israel must redefine notion of victory or else it risks losing war?

Accountability and Operation Grapes of Wrath against Hezbollah in the 1990s the IDF operations have followed a predictable pattern, barring few exceptions – the IDF operations commence with air force strikes killing a few terrorist leaders followed by a ground offensive when the group is still unbalanced, largely using standoff weapon systems. However, the terrorist groups recover soon and fight back. The IDF finds it difficult to keep the pressure and a negotiated settlement is sought, with international support, to terminate the war. Thereafter, Israel enjoys a limited period of peace before the next round of violence starts. The Israeli military doctrine is heavily biased in favour of the overwhelming use of air power and precision strikes, which the terrorist groups can counter by concealing fighters and resources, minimising electronic signatures, and using the Gaza Metro. The Israeli strategy euphemistically called the 'mowing the grass' strategy could never find a permanent solution to the raids by Hamas and other terrorist groups. To counter the predictability in operations, almost a decade ago, the IDF

had conceptualised a plan involving large-scale ground manoeuvre and capturing the three largest cities in Gaza - Gaza City, Khan Yunis and Rafah – in two weeks. For some reason, the plans were shelved and never implemented. During the tenure of Gadi Eisenkot, 21st Chief of Staff of the IDF, a plan codenamed, Operation Lightning Strike was also developed to overcome some of the challenges to ground manoeuvre. This was attempted in May 2021 with partial success, hence could not be repeated after the 7 October attack. In the wake of the 7 October attack, the IDF had no plans for operations in the depth area, once the ground offensive began and had to hurriedly make one from scratch. On 20 October 2023, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant announced IDF's three-phase plan – air and ground campaign to destroy Hamas and its infrastructure, followed by low-intensity operations to destroy pockets of resistance and finally the creation of a new security regime and withdrawal of IDF. The IDF conducted air campaigns and stand-off attacks before initiating ground operations on 27 October. By then the element of surprise

was lost and the Hamas and Islamic Jihad fighters had dispersed among the population and prepared defences. The ground offensive has been launched in three successive phases, starting with capturing, and clearing Gaza City on 27 October. followed by operations in Khan Yunis at the end of December 2023. The IDF is yet to commence ground operations in Rafah – a far cry from the plan of a decade ago which mandated simultaneous operations in the three cities to terminate within two weeks. Within 48 hours of the attack on 7 October, Israel was able to mobilise 350,000 reservists, and in the initial days of operations, there were five divisions, consisting of around 10,000 to 20,000 soldiers each operating in the Gaza Strip. In the first three months, the tempo of operations was fierce, which is reflected in the casualties suffered by Palestinians and infrastructure destroyed. After that, the operational momentum reduced and by February 2023, the last of the reserve units were withdrawn from Gaza and only two divisions - the 98th and 162nd — are still operating with reduced strength.

TRANSRAIL LIGHTING LIMITED FILES DRHP WITH SEBI

Vatika Times GURUGRAM :

Transrail Lighting Limited ("The Company" or "TLL") has filed its Draft Red Herring Prospectus ("DRHP") with market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI") and BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited. The Company is one of the leading Indian engineering, procurement and construction ("EPC") companies with integrated manufacturing facilities for lattice structures, conductors, and monopolies. TLL has a track record of four decades in providing comprehensive solutions on a turnkey basis globally and have been a trusted and longstanding partner in the power transmission and distribution sector. The Company plans to raise fund by offering equity shares of face value 2 each ("Equity Shares") through Initial Public Offering.

The total offer size comprises of Fresh Issue of Equity Shares aggregating up to



4,500 million (450 crore) and an offer for sale of up to 10,160,000 of Equity Shares ("Offer for Sale") by Ajanma Holdings Private Limited. (The "Promoter Selling Shareholders"). (The "Offer") The Company proposes to utilize the net proceeds from the Offer towards funding incremental working capital requirements upto 2,500 million (250 crore), funding capital expenditure upto 909.02 million (90.90 crore) and balance amount for general corporate purposes. (The "Objects of the Offer") According to the CRISIL Report, TLL has also reported the highest growth in its revenue from operations at 35.1% among its peers in Financial Year ended March 31, 2023.

Inga Ventures Private Limited, Axis Capital Limited, HDFC Bank Limited and IDBI

Capital Markets & Securities Limited are the Book Running Lead Managers to the Offer. (The "BRLMs")

About The Company: Transrail Lighting Limited has a footprint in more than 58 countries like Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon, Finland, Poland, Nicaragua etc. including turnkey EPCs or supply projects.

As of September 30, 2023, the company has undertaken EPC of 33,500 circuit kilometers ("CKM") transmission lines and 30,000 CKM distribution lines, domestically and internationally. Transrail Lighting Limited provides EPC services in relation to substations up to 765 kilovolts. The company has presence in all the power transmission and distribution segments and majorly in high voltage and extra high voltage segments.

ICICI Pru MF curbs flows into mid, small-cap funds

MUMBAI: ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund on Tuesday said it will not accept any fresh investment in mid-cap and small-cap funds, effective March 14 until further notice. I-Pru MF joined a long list of fund houses that have over the last few months stopped inflows into small-cap funds. Some fund houses have suspended inflows into mid-cap funds, too. These decisions have been taken to insulate investors in these funds from excessive market volatility and loss in value of investments in case of sudden slide in stocks

from these market segments of the market. On, Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch had also flagged about froth building up in mid and small-cap funds, referring to high valuations. The regulator had also, through MF industry trade body Amfi, alerted fund houses to strengthen their risk management mechanisms relating to schemes belonging to these categories to safeguard investors.

Sebi chairperson has also announced that the regulator is currently carrying out stress testing for mid-cap and small-cap funds, and

the results would be out this Friday.

On Tuesday, I-Pru MF said that it was suspending fresh and additional purchases of units of these two funds through lump sum mode and also switch-in options from any other schemes of the fund house. Fresh registrations through SIP mode and systematic transfer plan, however, shall continue but the upper limit will be capped at Rs 2 lakh per PAN per month in each scheme. In quarterly SIP, this limit is enhanced to Rs 6 lakh, while in daily SIP it's capped at Rs 10,000.

Now in Nepal, Scan & Pay With UPI

Delhi: The introduction of UPI for cross-border transactions has been announced by Phonepe Payment Service of Nepal and NIPL, the international division of NPCI. With UPI-enabled apps, Indian customers may now make quick UPI payments at a variety of business outlets in Nepal. Indian consumers



can easily accept UPI payments from merchants connected to the

Fonepay network. The Global Fintech Fest in September 2023 in India marked the launch of the Indo-Nepal UPI payments program. The collaboration is live and enables person-to-merchant UPI transactions between India and Nepal using QR codes.



Youth should help themselves in making the society drug free by staying away from drugs: Ramchandra Jadaula

Kaithal: Former Director HAFED and famous social worker Ramchandra Jadaula, while calling upon the youth to stay away from drugs, Ramchandra Jadaula said that the youth should stay away from the demon of drugs, because drug addiction can destroy the youth in any case. , is not appropriate for the society and the country. While talking in a meeting at his establishment in New Anaj Mandi Dhand, Ramchandra Jadaula said that in order to bring out the youth who have sunk in the quagmire of drug addiction, the youth should selflessly come two steps ahead and offer their support. Needed We all should take an oath that we will neither consume drugs under any circumstances nor allow the youth and others living around us to consume drugs. Only then will our society come out of the grip of addiction and a healthy and happy society will be established. Former Director Jadaula said that the entire country is proud of the talent and ability of the youth who have become successful by holding high positions and the youth should take inspiration from the successful youth power and achieve success by holding high positions in the country and the state. And should make an important contribution in the upliftment and development of the society. Ramchandra Jadaula said that if a person has courage, he can achieve every milestone and overcome big difficulties, because the stronger the morale of a person is to overcome the challenges, the sooner success will kiss the person's feet. He said that today's era is the era of competition.



holds a little over 29% stake in ITC but it is not the promoter of the company. BAT's top management has been talking about monetising part of its stake in ITC for three to four months, provided it could successfully navigate India's strict foreign holding rules in tobacco companies. BAT had indicated that it's holding in ITC would not fall below the strategically important 25% mark. "They (BAT) will continue to remain a major shareholder in ITC," a source told. On Tuesday evening, BAT through a statement said that after the completion of this block trade, "BAT will remain a significant shareholder of ITC. , with (about) 25.5% holding." The global tobacco major intends to part with its proceeds from stake sale in ITC to pay dividend this and the next year.

HDFC Bank To Organise 'Xpressway Two Wheeler Loan Mela' in Delhi NCT and Haryana

HISAR/AMBALA: HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, will be organizing a 'Xpressway Two Wheeler Loan Mela' across its branches in Delhi NCT and Haryana on 19th and 20th March 2024. Over 500 branches across these regions will host the loan drive in partnership with leading two wheeler brands and regional dealerships which will be present at the branches to showcase vehicles to customers. For eligible customers, the bank will provide on-the-spot loan provisions.

HDFC Bank provides a host of loans to its customers at affordable interest rates. The 'Xpressway Two Wheeler



Loan Mela' drive is envisioned to provide customers easy access to two wheeler finance especially in the

SURU (semi-urban and rural) locations. The Bank will provide an end-to-end solution for processing loan requests

with a variety of repayment configurations and minimal paperwork. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Mr. Arun Mediratta, Branch Banking Head – North 1 said, "The Mega Two-Wheeler Loan Mela offers a great opportunity for customers to avail finance with ease for their favourite vehicles. We have invited leading two-wheeler manufacturers and auto dealers to display their latest models at our branches. We are confident that customers will benefit from this Mela." For the quarter ending December 31, 2023, HDFC Bank's two-wheeler loan book size was Rs 11,300 crore.

ITC's top shareholder BAT to sell 3.5% stake for \$2bn

KOLKATA: British American Tobacco, one of the world's largest tobacco products companies that is also the biggest shareholder in tobacco-to-FMCG major ITC, is selling about 3.5% stake in the Indian conglomerate, aiming to garner about Rs 16,800 crore (about \$2 billion). London-headquartered BAT will sell nearly 44 crore shares of ITC at a price band of Rs 384-400 through block deals on Wednesday, the deal's term sheet showed. At the lower end of the price band, the shares are priced at a 5% discount to the stock's Tuesday close on the BSE at Rs 404. ITC's block deal will be one of the largest in India. The biggest block deal in India was executed in May 2020 when global pharma major GSK had sold 5.7% in FMCG major HUL for about Rs 25,600 crore. BAT

holds a little over 29% stake in ITC but it is not the promoter of the company. BAT's top management has been talking about monetising part of its stake in ITC for three to four months, provided it could successfully navigate India's strict foreign holding rules in tobacco companies. BAT had indicated that it's holding in ITC would not fall below the strategically important 25% mark. "They (BAT) will continue to remain a major shareholder in ITC," a source told. On Tuesday evening, BAT through a statement said that after the completion of this block trade, "BAT will remain a significant shareholder of ITC. , with (about) 25.5% holding." The global tobacco major intends to part with its proceeds from stake sale in ITC to pay dividend this and the next year.

National Stock Exchange (NSE) Celebrates First 5 Listings on NSE-SSE

GURUGRAM : The Social Stock Exchange (SSE) of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) achieves yet another milestone of celebrating its first five listings on the NSE-Social Stock Exchange (SSE) Platform – by Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM), Transform Rural India, Mukti, Ekalavya Foundation; and SGBS Unnati Foundation. This remarkable event took place at the National Stock Exchange's (NSE) Headquarters in Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC), Mumbai, commemorating a significant step forward in impact-driven finance. These listings have resulted in the fund mobilization of approximately INR 8 Crore which will be utilised for several developmental projects across the areas such as education, skill development, agriculture, livelihoods women empowerment



etc. The event, celebrated with enthusiasm, witnessed the presence of respected Smt. Madhabi Puri Buch, Chairperson, SEBI, Dr. R. Balasubramaniam, Chairman, Social Stock Exchange Advisory Committee, SEBI; Shri Ashwani Bhatia, Whole Time Member (WTM), SEBI; and Shri A. Balasubramanian, MD & CEO of Aditya Birla Sunlife AMC; and brought together several distinguished dignitaries, officials, and representatives from Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) and other stakeholders. Smt. Madhabi Puri Buch, Chairperson, SEBI said, "Non-profit organisations play a

pivotal role in facilitating inclusion of all citizens into the mainstream of the country. In order to play this role effectively, they need access to donors and their contributions. The SSE has a critical role to play in this by fostering Trust and Transparency in the social sector." Dr. R. Balasubramaniam – Chairman, Social Stock Exchange Advisory Committee, SEBI, shared "Apart from opening up a new financial pipeline for social sector development in India, the Social Stock Exchange will democratize participation of a large number of people in making India a developed nation.

Aakash Educational Services Limited announces Educational Scholarships for April 2024 Admissions

Palwal: Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL), a national leader in test preparatory services, has announced various scholarships prior to the commencement of its new session scheduled to begin in April 2024 to enable students to realise their dream of becoming doctors and engineers. The first scholarship is the Instant Admission Cum Scholarship Test (iACST), offering up to 90% scholarship for admission into Medical, Engineering, and Foundation courses. Additionally, Aakash will provide special discounts to children of martyrs, defense personnel and terrorism-affected individuals. Mr. Anup Agarwal, Chief Business Officer at Aakash Educational Services Limited, stated, "We are dedicated to providing accessible and impactful educational opportunities for



students across India. Through initiatives like iACST and our scholarship programmes, we aim to empower deserving students to achieve their academic and career aspirations. We are proud to continue our tradition of supporting the education of children of our brave Armed Forces personnel and are committed to fostering excellence and inclusivity in education." The Instant Admission Cum Scholarship Test (iACST) offers students immediate scholarship awards and opportunities for instant admission. Students can take the exam online and

receive details of their earned scholarships instantly, enabling them to secure instant admission under the expert guidance of Aakash faculty. The online iACST, lasting 60 minutes, can be taken between 10 AM and 8 PM on designated exam days. Catering to students in Class VIII to XII, iACST serves as a platform for them to showcase their potential for careers in Medicine or Engineering. Scholarships awarded through iACST are applicable for admission into Medical, Engineering, and Foundation classroom.

World Bank maps out plans to further boost lending by \$100 bln-plus over a decade

WASHINGTON: The World Bank on Thursday proposed steps that would boost its lending to developing countries by an additional \$100 billion over a decade as part of an ongoing reform process aimed at helping the bank expand its mission to include climate change. In a 24-page report to the joint ministerial committee that oversees the bank and the International Monetary Fund, the bank's management said it would ask shareholders to approve a hybrid capital measure and a new portfolio guarantee platform that together could boost lending by over \$100 billion. That amount would come on top of measures already being implemented that will boost the bank's lending to developing countries by up to \$50 billion.

Chocolates with betel instead of cocoa, but just as delicious

NEW DELHI: Unable to offer any explanations for the unsubstantiated comments on PM Modi made by its AI platform Gemini, American tech giant Google said a 'sorry' to the govt and called the platform 'unreliable', minister of state for IT & Electronics Rajevee Chandrasekhar has told. "We had sent them a notice, seeking an explanation on the unsubstantiated results thrown up by Gemini regarding a particular query on PM Modi. hey replied and said, "Sorry, the platform is unreliable," the minister said as the govt announced that AI platforms will now need a 'permit' from the state to operate in the country.

Mobile phone manufacturing jumps 21 times to Rs 4.1 lakh crore

NEW DELHI: Mobile phone manufacturing in value terms jumped 21-fold to Rs 4.1 lakh crore in India in the last 10 years as government policy measures like PLI played a critical role in attracting global players to boost local production, industry body ICEA said in a statement. India now produces 97 per cent of its total mobile phone demand locally and 30 per cent of the total production in financial year 2024 is meant for export, the India Cellular and Electronics Association said. "Mobile phone production surged from Rs 18,900 crore in 2014-15 to an estimated Rs 4,10,000 crore in FY'24, registering an increase of 2000 per cent. In 2014-15, mobile phone exports from India were a mere Rs 1,556 crore. The industry expects to end FY24 with an estimated export of Rs 1,20,000 crore. This would mean a 7500 per cent increase in exports over a



decade," ICEA said. According to a note on manufacturing, in the field of smartphones, Apple and Samsung, have played a crucial role in boosting mobile phone exports from the country. India manufactured devices are being exported in large volumes to the UK, Netherlands, Austria, and Italy besides Middle East and North Africa and South American markets, the note said. "30 per cent of production in FY'24 will now be meant for exports. The industry expects to end FY'24 with an estimated export of Rs 1.2 lakh crore. Driven by this

export growth, mobile phones have now become India's 5th largest export as an individual commodity," the industry body said. In May 2017, the Indian government announced the Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP) to promote the domestic production of mobile handsets. This initiative helped build a robust indigenous mobile manufacturing ecosystem in India and incentivized large-scale manufacturing. From just 2 mobile phone factories in 2014, India now has become the second largest mobile phone producer in the world

How India-EFTA trade pact will benefit Indians

NEW DELHI: India on Sunday signed a trade and economic partnership agreement with the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) to boost trade and investments between the two regions. Under this trade pact, EFTA commits 100 billion dollar investment in India for the next 15 years. After a hiatus of nearly 16 years, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) members — Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland—finally reached an agreement. Negotiations, initiated in 2008, were halted in November 2013 but resumed in October

2016. Over 21 rounds of negotiations, the parties worked towards their conclusion. This agreement marks a milestone in FTA history, as it includes a dedicated legal commitment to promoting targeted investment and job creation. **'Watershed moment'** Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the signing of the trade agreement as a 'Watershed moment', underscoring a collective dedication to fostering open, fair, and equitable trade. "The Tenth of March 2024 marks a new turn and a watershed moment in the bilateral relationship between

India and EFTA countries," PM Modi said. He said the global leadership of the four nations in innovation, R&D across diverse areas such as digital trade, banking and financial services, transport and logistics, industrial machinery, biotechnology, pharma, chemicals, food processing, and clean energy, will open up new doors of collaboration. "Heartiest Congratulations and best wishes to the negotiators and signatories involved in the signing of India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)," Modi said in a written message.

AU Small Finance Bank aims to become universal bank in 3-5 years

NEW DELHI: AU Small Finance Bank, which received RBI's approval to merge Fincare Small Finance Bank with itself last week, aims to become a universal bank or full-scale bank in the next 3-5 years. "This year we want to stabilise the merger first and really

want to showcase to the world that the team can manage complex issues of merger in terms of technology integration, people management, product availability, customer service and offerings," AU Small Finance Bank MD and CEO Sanjay Agarwal said. Although the Fincare

branches would become outlets of AU Small Finance Bank from April 1, the entire integration process would take 9-12 months, he said. "The way we have grown ourselves in the last 28 years, the ultimate destination is universal (banking licence).

India signs free trade agreement with European Free Trade Association

NEW DELHI: India and the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) on Sunday signed free trade agreement in the presence of Union commerce & industry minister Piyush Goyal. Speaking about the agreement Goyal said, "EFTA commits \$100 billion investment in India under free trade pact in the next 15 years." "It is a momentous occasion. The signing of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Free Trade Association marks the culmination of nearly

15 years of hard work, tremendous energy, and effort," he added. Federal councillor Guy Parmelin, speaking on behalf of the EFTA Member States, said, "EFTA countries gain market access to a major growth market. Our companies strive to diversify their supply chains while rendering them more resilient. India, in return, will attract more foreign investment from EFTA, which will ultimately translate into an increase in good jobs...All in all, the TEPA will allow us to make better use of our economic potential and

create additional opportunities for both India and the EFTA States," Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin, speaking on behalf of the EFTA Member States, said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a written message also congratulated everyone involved in the negotiations saying, "Heartiest congratulations and best wishes to the negotiators and signatories involved.

in the signing of India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)." "Despite structural

diversities in many aspects, our economies possess complementarities that promise to be a win-win situation for all nations," the message read. Goyal, co-chaired a meeting about the India-EFTA trade deal in New Delhi on Sunday. EFTA consists of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and, aiming to boost free trade and economic integration. India and EFTA have been negotiating about a deal called the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) since January 2008 to strengthen their economic.

Bonds: Court to hear SBI's plea seeking extension to disclose details on Monday

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court is set to hear application filed by State Bank of India (SBI) on Monday, seeking extension till June 30 to disclose details of each electoral bond encashed by political parties before the scheme was scrapped last month. In a separate plea, contempt action has been sought against SBI alleging, it "wilfully and deliberately" disobeyed the apex court's direction to submit details of the contributions made to political parties through electoral bonds to the Election

Commission by March 6. A five-judge Constitution bench, led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, will hear these two petitions. The bench, which also includes justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai, J B Pardiwala, and Manoj Misra, will convene at 10.30 am to discuss the matter. In a ruling on February 15, a five-judge constitution bench scrapped the Centre's electoral bonds scheme that allowed anonymous political funding, calling it "unconstitutional" and ordered to disclose the

donors, donated amounts, and recipients by March 13. The top court then directed SBI, as the authorized financial institution under the scheme, to submit the details of electoral bonds purchased from April 12, 2019, until the present to the Election Commission. The information was asked to be published on the Commission's official website by March 13. On March 4, SBI filed an application with the apex court seeking an extension until June 30 to disclose the details of

the electoral bonds encashed by political parties. The bank argued that retrieving information from from "each silo" and matching the data would be a time-consuming process. Due to the measures taken to protect donor anonymity, decoding the electoral bonds and matching donors to their contributions would be complex. "The data related to the issuance of the bond and the data related to the redemption of the bond was kept recorded in two different silos. No central database.

All is stationery on these four cramped streets in Chennai's George Town

Want some stationery products at attractive prices, but can't be bothered to browse online? Just head to Chennai's George Town. Dotted on either side of Pachaiyappa's College Higher Secondary School in the area are about 500 outlets offering everything from calculators to writing instruments, guidebooks and notebooks, most of them lying unpacked, at discounts that few e-commerce giants can match. Spread over Badrin Street, Bunder Street, Anderson Street and Thambu Chetty Street, the area is a consumer's delight with more than 1,000 varieties available. It's also a revenue spinner. Sales of account books and notebooks alone touch

150 crore annually, while diaries account for more than 75 crore. The USP of this stationery hub, in existence for more than a century, is the pricing—account books and notebooks cost 20%-40% less than other markets, other stationery material comes for 10%-15% cheaper—that draws wholesalers and retailers from across TN and neighbouring states. A S Jayabasker, manager of Jayalakshmi Binding Works on Badrain Street, says about 2,500 tonnes of account books manufactured here every year are sold in the four southern states and Odisha. We have different kinds for office use and educational institutions." But technology has taken a heavy toll on the seg-

ment. "At least 120 manufacturers have shut down in the past 15 years since information technology replaced the practice of making entries in account books. The annual volume of account books production has dropped by 500 tonnes over the past one decade," adds Jayabasker. Notebook manufacturing has also suffered, but for different reasons. A Abdul Rahaman, honorary president of Chennai Bunder Street Notebook, Stationeries & General Merchant Association, says the area now has only 20% of locally produced notebooks, five times the size of the figure of decades ago. "The entry of corporates and emergence of exclusive manufacturers for private school.

Adani Group looks to expand airports in Rs 30k crore push

LUCKNOW: Adani Group will invest Rs 30,000 crore on expanding seven existing airports in its portfolio over the next five years - apart from building the Rs 18,000-crore Navi Mumbai greenfield airport. In addition, the infra conglomerate will invest Rs 30,000 crore over 5-10 years on city side development at its airports, Adani Ports MD Karan Adani told TOI. This will be funded through internal accruals of the parent company Adani Enterprises. The group operates airports in Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati & Thiruvananthapuram. "The current capacity of our airports is 10-11 crore passengers



annually (CPA). This will be increased by up to three times. Lucknow has got a new terminal. Navi Mumbai will open next (by next March). Then Guwahati airport will get a new terminal. We are planning new terminals for Ahmedabad and Jaipur also. Overall, we are looking at a combined capacity of 25-30 CPA

by 2040," Karan, who is Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani's son, said. The capacity will grow in a phase-wise manner. Lucknow Airport's new terminal, for instance, has a capacity of 80 lakh passengers per annum which will increase to 1.3 crore in the next phase and then 3.8 crore annually by 2035.

Why is the group so bullish on flyer numbers? "In coming times, we foresee non-metros bypassing hubs and providing flyers direct connectivity across the world. Their connectivity within the country will also improve," he said. Direct international connectivity out of India to distant continents is primarily from the big metros. Tier II cities are connected to hubs nearby from where passengers take connecting flights to rest of the world now. This plan to develop smaller airports as international hubs is in sync with govt's plan to make Indian airports, with the network connectivity of airlines like Air India and IndiGo, the hub for transfer passengers.

Youth to Support 'Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye'

Delhi: University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman M Jagadesh Kumar called on Wednesday to encourage and motivate young, especially first-time voters, and invite people from all walks of life to disseminate the "Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye" campaign. Jagadesh stated, "UGC is organizing activities with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Election Commission of India (ECI) to motivate young, especially first-time voters, and emphasize the importance of voting for national welfare. HEIs worldwide should run the "Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke Liye" campaign from February 28 to March 6, 2024. He said universities/colleges/HEIs will hold voter awareness programs in specific locations. Colleges/Institutions will use ECJ and Ministry of Education videos, banners, selfie points, and voter commitments to drive the campaign.

Ellyse, spinners fire Bangalore to maiden Women's Premier League final



NEW DELHI: A stunning Ellyse Perry half-century was followed by a miracle death bowling performance as Royal Challengers Bangalore pipped defending champions Mumbai Indians by five runs in a thriller to enter their maiden Women's Premier League final in New Delhi on Friday. With 20 needed off the last three overs and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Amelia Kerr in the middle, Mumbai Indians looked all set to enter their second successive final but spinners Shreyanka Patil, Sophie Molineux and Asha Sobhana pulled off a special effort, stunning the

defending champions. As Mumbai failed to overhaul the target in the Eliminator, it meant RCB will now face last year's finalist Delhi Capitals in the summit clash on Sunday. Chasing an easy target of 136, MI's innings ended at 130 for 6. It was 21-year-old Shreyanka (2/16 in 4 overs), whose vital 18th over raised visions of victory as she removed the MI skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (33). As It Happened RCB keeper Richa Ghosh paid the price for her slow movements failing to stump Harmanpreet off Shreyanka but the young off-spinner did-

n't lose heart as she flighted the ball once more and the Indian skipper was caught at long-on fence. At a time when spinners are afraid of giving the ball air even in ODIs, Shreyanka's approach was a welcome departure and it did pay dividends. Needing 16 off 12 balls, the experienced Aussie Sophie Molineux (1/16 in 4 overs) bowled a brilliant penultimate over in which she gave only four runs keeping 12 runs off final over for leg-spinner Sobhana to defend. The 32-year-old spinner, who hasn't played for India, gave away only six runs as RCB team's joy knew no bound.

Former India batter hopes IPL can revive Ishan career

NEW DELHI: Former India opener Aakash Chopra reckons the upcoming IPL will be a perfect opportunity for Ishan Kishan to revive his career after BCCI excluded him from the central contract list for 2023-2024.

The 25-year-old Kishan did not turn up for Jharkhand throughout the team's campaign in Ranji Trophy despite not being on national duty since leaving from the tour of South Africa in December last, citing personal reasons. "Ishan Kishan will be hungry, as he has not got a central contract. This is the only thing he is playing. What else is he play-



ing?" Chopra said in his YouTube video. Chopra also talked about Kishan's absence from the England Test series and emphasised that if he makes good use of IPL, he will have an opportunity to progress in his career. "Either he has himself opted not to play, or he won't be selected now. So this is his chance. If you make

the IPL your own, you have chances of going forward. Then there is, of course, Wankhede's flat pitch. The ball will come nicely onto the bat and go far," Chopra added. While announcing the central contracts for 2023-24 on February 28, the BCCI once again advised all India cricketers to play domestic games.

Faiz Fazal, Vidarbha's most successful captain, hangs up his boots

NAGPUR: The face of Vidarbha cricket for over a decade. The opener who blunted rival new-ball attacks for as long as one can remember. The elegant left-hander who scripted victories and saved matches with his bat more often than not. The skipper who took his

domestic circuit twice, will walk out on to the field at a match for the last time on Monday. Faiz Fazal, Vidarbha's most successful captain, on Sunday announced his retirement from domestic cricket. Monday, Day 4 of the

Ranji Trophy match against Haryana at the VCA Civil Lines Stadium, will mark the end of an illustrious career spanning over two decades. "Faiz bhai informed us about the decision during the team huddle on Day 1 of the Haryana match.

CAPSULES

'England's failure to win their last three Test series is due to...': Michael Vaughan

NEW DELHI: Experiencing a series defeat to India in the ongoing Test series, former captain Michael Vaughan opines that the Ben Stokes-led team has encountered setbacks in their last three series primarily due to the underperformance of their batting lineup. India clinched an insurmountable 3-1 lead in the five-match series with a five-wicket victory in Ranchi, marking



England's first series loss under the leadership of Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum. Preceding their tour to India, England had previously secured a 2-2 draw against Australia at home and a 1-1 draw with New Zealand on their home turf. "It's a huge week for several of England's batsmen. When we think of this England team, we think of their wonderfully dynamic batting. But when you look at why they haven't won any of their last three series, it's down to the batting." "There never seems to be much scrutiny or noise around England's batsmen. Even last week I chuckled. They lost in Ranchi in large part because they didn't bat well enough, but there was lots of finger-pointing at Ollie Robinson, a bowler who scored an important half-century!"

Impressed with his yorker, Dhoni invites teenage pacer to CSK nets

When Kugadas Mathulan bowled a lethal in-swinging yorker that swept the batsman off his feet, he wouldn't have thought that the viral clip from the match between St. John's College and Jaffna Central College will catch the attention of Chennai Super Kings' iconic skipper MS Dhoni. Also See: How to watch IPL Cricket 2024 in USA and Canada

The 17-year-old right-arm Jaffna pacer's dream delivery not only did that but also reportedly earned him an invitation to bowl in the CSK nets in IPL 2024, which is allowing Dhoni to have a closer look at the young bowler. Interestingly, Muthulan's bowl-



ing action bears close resemblance to current Mumbai Indians' bowling coach Lasith Malinga. Like the Sri Lankan great, Muthulan too delivers with an unusual round-arm action that can put the batsmen off. Sri Lankan pacer Matheesha Pathirana is also

part of the CSK squad, but is currently nursing a hamstring injury and is a doubtful starter for the the initial part of the coming IPL season. Five-time champions CSK will kick off their IPL 2024 campaign with the tournament opener against Royal ChallengeRS.

Kerala lad Abijith smashes six sixes in an over

KOCHI: Hitting six sixes in an over isn't a rare phenomenon in modern day cricket. A week after Andhra opener Vamshii Krrishna hit six maximums in an over in the CK Nayudu Trophy, it was the turn of Kerala youngster Abijith Praveen to do an encore.

Playing for Masters CC, Thiruvananthapuram in the semifinal of Navio Youth Trophy U-22 Cricket Tournament at Athreya Cricket Academy ground in Thrissur on Saturday, Abijith clobbered leg-spinner Joe Francis



from Trident Cricket Academy, Thrissur, for six sixes in the 21st over of the match. Abijith was already past his fifty and was batting on 69 when Joe came on to bowl his second

over in the 30 overs-per-side game. Abijith smashed the first two balls from Joe over the long-off fence while the third one cleared deep mid-wicket. The fourth ball was deposited over

the cow corner while the last two deliveries were hit over long-on as he galloped to 105 by the end of the over. However, Abijith could only add one more run to his total as his attempt to hit another six of Akshay TK saw him being caught at long-on by Abhiram. His 106 came from just 52 balls and was studded with 10 sixes and two fours as Masters went on to win the match by 106 runs. A native of Pachalloor in Thiruvananthapuram, Abijith said he enjoyed reaching his hundred.

'Important for Virat Kohli to...': SA great sounds warning for RCB superstar ahead of IPL 2024

NEW DELHI: Former South African pacer Dale Steyn emphasized the importance of Virat Kohli scoring significant runs in the upcoming IPL to solidify his position in India's T20 World Cup-bound squad. Steyn noted that several other players have surpassed the star batter in recent months. Kohli has been absent from the Indian team since the T20I series against Afghanistan at home in January, opting out of the subsequent five-match Test series against England due to family reasons. "I think, look, it's very important that he scores runs because it will put him in a good frame going to the World Cup." "There're many guys who have leapfrogged him recently because he's



taken a bit of a break and there're many contenders that are possible to take to that World Cup (squad)," Steyn said in an interaction during the 'Star Sports Press Room'. However, Steyn, who is taking a hiatus this year from IPL coaching responsibilities with Sunrisers Hyderabad due to family obligations, highlighted that Kohli's wealth of experience could prove invaluable when selectors convene to finalize the Indian squad. "I look at runs the same way that you

look at someone's bank balance, so to speak. Virat has got stacks and stacks of runs that he stored up over many years. "It is going to work when India is looking to pick a team that goes to the World Cup. They're going to look for guys who have been there and done that and that's something Virat has done," said Steyn. The 40-year-old Steyn also said it will be a challenging task for Hardik Pandya to step in as Mumbai Indians captain in place of Rohit Sharma, who had led the team.

Hardik Pandya fires warning ahead of IPL 2024

NEW DELHI: Returning to Mumbai Indians, star all-rounder Hardik Pandya pledged on Friday to deliver a brand of cricket that will be unforgettable as he leads the five-time champions in this IPL season. Pandya, who was traded by MI from Gujarat Titans before the upcoming season, made his IPL debut with MI in 2015 and clinched four titles with the franchise before joining GT in 2022.

Under his leadership, GT secured a title win in the same season. "The feeling of wearing this colour is very special for me. Journey started here, coming back home and playing is always going to be special," said Pandya, who replaces Rohit



Sharma as captain, in a video posted by the franchise on social media. "We will make sure we will play a brand of cricket which all will be proud of and at the same point of time it's going to be a ride no one will forget." MI head coach Mark Boucher extended a warm welcome back to Pandya, expressing

full confidence in his abilities to excel. "He (Pandya) certainly knows the changing room better than what I do. It's sort of homecoming for couple of people. "He has fitted in really well and is excited for the season. We look forward to having him back and winning some games for Mumbai Indians again," told Boucher

in another MI video. "At the start of each season, everyone is very excited. There's a couple of new faces around, so there's a little bit of nerves as well. We would like building up to the start of the season." MI will open their IPL campaign against GT in Ahmedabad on March 24. (With inputs from PTI)

All India Football Federation makes exception for Gurmeet transfer

PANAJI: In a first for Indian football, the player status committee of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) has allowed Gurmeet Singh to unilaterally terminate his contract with Hyderabad FC on a just cause and make a move outside the transfer window. The Hyderabad goalkeeper had complained to the AIFF about unpaid dues and sought urgent relief, after the club failed to pay his salary for multiple months. During the oral hearing last week, Hyderabad representative Ranganath Budumooru and counsel for the club, Hemant Phalpher, did not dispute the termination, prompting the committee to give the green signal. Gurmeet signed a long-term 4.5-year contract with NorthEast United on Saturday. "It's truly special to be back where it all started for me," the India under-23 goalkeeper said after completing his move.

Siddharthnagar is moving from aspirational to becoming a developed district: CM

Siddharthnagar/
Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Friday that with the efforts of the double engine government in the last few years, Siddharthnagar district is fast emerging into a developed district from an aspirational one. Addressing a gathering after gifting 551 development projects worth Rs 1885 crore to the people of Siddharthnagar and laying the foundation stone of a Nursing College in Madhav Prasad Tripathi Government Medical College ahead of the Holi festival, he said that the double engine government has effectively lifted Siddharthnagar out of the shadow of underdevelopment. He stated, "Today, the nation aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'Developed India'. This vision can only be materialized with the 'Development of Uttar



Pradesh'. However, Uttar Pradesh's development hinges on Siddharthnagar's progress. To achieve this, the presence of the BJP is indispensable. "The Chief Minister gifted 551 development projects worth Rs 1885 crore and laid the foundation stone of a Nursing College in Madhav Prasad Tripathi Government Medical College as a Pre-Holi gift to the people of Siddharthnagar. The Chief Minister attributed the backwardness of the district in the past to a lack of basic amenities and job opportunities. He highlighted how the local populace had long been marginalized by mafia influences, depriving them of their rights and government benefits. Recounting personal anecdotes, he lamented the past neglect of critical issues like encephalitis-related child fatalities. He added: "However, today, under the double engine government, significant strides have been made while both mafias and mosquitos have been eliminated from the district. The underprivileged are getting housing, free health insurance up to Rs 5 lakhs, and a provision of free ration.

Income of everyone will increase manifold when India will become world's third largest economy: CM

Gorakhpur, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that in the third term of the Modi government, India will become the third-largest economy in the world. Becoming the third largest economy means the income of every person in the country will increase manifold. This will also ensure 100 percent saturation of every public welfare scheme, he added. CM Yogi was addressing the gathering after laying the foundation stone and inaugurating 76 development projects of Gorakhpur Development Authority (GDA) worth Rs 1878 crore in Manbela on Friday. He said, "India has transformed in the last ten years under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It has become safe and prosperous and is moving towards becoming the leader of the world. It has jumped from being the world's eleventh to fifth largest economy of the world." The Chief Minister laid the foundation stone of 25 projects and inaugu-



rating 51 projects including New Township Rapti Nagar Extension and Sports City. During this, he also distributed allotment certificates to the street vendors who got kiosks in Naya Savera. Prior to this, bhoomi-pujan, inspection of stalls of various departments and food distribution to small children were also conducted. In his address, the Chief Minister mentioned that today the whole country is connected with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed India, and this vision will be fulfilled through 'Developed Uttar Pradesh'. 'Developed Gorakhpur' is necessary for a developed Uttar Pradesh. "A developed nation, state, and district means

ensuring everyone benefiting from the schemes without discrimination. When everyone benefits from the facilities, happiness will be seen on everyone's faces. On this occasion, the Chief Minister also led everyone in chanting 'Our resolution is a developed India' in a loud voice. CM Yogi said that the government will soon issue a Family ID card to every family. "This card will contain details of every member of the family. If someone doesn't have a job, the government will provide them with one. Those who don't have a house, toilet, ration card, or Ayushman card will be provided with these facilities by the government", he stated. He emphasized that in the double-engine.

RCap lenders to get funds back in FY25

Mumbai: Reliance Capital's lenders will receive the proceeds from the company's sale to the Hinduja group only in the next financial year. They had earlier asked for the purchase consideration to be paid in March to enable them to book revenues during the current financial year. IndusInd Holdings, a Hinduja company and the winning bidder, has written to the administrator of Reliance Capital stating that implementing the resolution plan for a company of Reliance Capital's size and scale in less than a month and 10 days (from the date of the NCLT order) is 'not only untenable and impractical, but unimaginable'. In a letter to the administrator, IndusInd Holdings director Moses Harding said that the company remains committed to implementing the resolution plan in accordance with the NCLT order dated Feb 27, 2024 and within the timelines.

On Wednesday, the NCLT allowed an application seeking a correction regarding the 90-day period for implementing the resolution plan. We also published the following articles recently

Reliance capital lenders to get funds back in FY25

Lenders await next year's sale proceeds with a March payment request. IndusInd Holdings finds the timeline impractical but commits to the NCLT order. Correction application filed and pending administrator response. Amid security concerns, Delhi police conducts flag march across national capital after CAA implementation.

Arvind Kejriwal trying to garner votes for LS polls: BJP

New Delhi: BJP on Thursday came down heavily on AAP and chief minister Arvind Kejriwal over his statements on CAA, alleging that he was spreading rumours to garner votes for the Lok Sabha elections.

Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, a BJP senior leader, said Kejriwal's statement shows he is anti-Hindu and anti-humanity. "There have been huge atrocities against Hindus, Sikhs and minorities in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. In these countries their proper-



ty has either been taken away or destroyed," he said. "Hindu girls are not safe in these countries. Such news is continuously coming that they are kidnapped, converted or murdered. To save themselves from these atrocities and

torture, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Christian and Parsi families have come to India," Bidhuri said. "By giving shelter to such families and giving them Indian citizenship, Modi govt has fulfilled its moral promise," he said. BJP MP Manoj Tiwari

said, "By opposing CAA, Arvind Kejriwal has proved he is a big enemy of Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis. CAA is meant to give citizenship. But Kejriwal is spreading lies and hatred.... Kejriwal, you are a machine of lies, dividing the society and provoking it by telling lies."

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said Kejriwal was indulging in religious politics as he had lost all empathy. "Not a single statement came from him on Rohingya Muslims," he said.

CM Yogi visits Balrampur, offers prayers at Devi Patan temple

Balrampur, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on the second day of his two-day tour to Balrampur on Friday morning, visited the Devi Patan Temple, one of the 51 Shaktipeeths, and offered prayers. After worshipping as per the rituals, the CM proceeded to inspect the ongoing construction works on the temple premises. The Chief Minister also served cows at the cowshed located on temple premises as well as inspected Shri Ma Pateshwari Sevashram



Hospital and provided necessary directions to the concerned officials. Later, the Chief Minister visited Maa Pateshwari Public School located in Bhavaniyapur where he

spent some time with school children and gathered information about the facilities available to them. The Chief Minister also offered chocolates and toffees to the visibly

delighted children. Subsequently, CM Yogi proceeded to participate in the bhoomi-pujan and foundation stone laying ceremony of Ma Patweshwari Devi State University.

Indian workers from Telangana are facing a tough time

HYDERABAD: In constant danger of being bitten by snakes, or attacked by wild boars, Indian workers from Telangana are facing a tough time in the plantations of Malaysia. The workers who were lured with the promise of a free visa, are being made to work in rubber and palm oil plantations during the

night. "All we are given is a torch light and gum boots. During the night, we are expected to cut down at least 700 trees of the plantations. We are living in constant danger," a worker from Telangana told TOI over a phone from Malaysia. Two workers from Bangladesh reportedly died after being bitten by snakes in the night.

Scores of workers from Telangana work in Malaysia and it was only after they landed in the country that they got to know that they had to work during night-time and in dangerous conditions. "If your agent did not tell you, that is your problem," a supervisor at one of the plantations reportedly told the workers. Six workers from Telangana are said to have returned as they did not want to risk their lives. Those

who have stayed back are in a critical situation as they reportedly paid 3 lakh to a job agent who promised them work in Malaysia. A worker who felt it was too dangerous to continue working in the plantations asked to be removed from there and is managing to survive with some basic salary. The salary promised was 1,500 Ringgits (26,000) to work in the plantation fields. Now, out of the plantations, the worker is earning only 500 Ringgits. The workers want to make use of the Malaysian govt's amnesty scheme where those staying illegally can leave the country by paying a penalty. "The Indian govt should understand our plight and pay our penalties and also facilitate our return by booking our flight tickets.

UPSRTC gears up for Holi rush with special bus services from March 22

Lucknow

The Yogi government is poised to facilitate seamless travel for Uttar Pradesh residents this Holi season with a robust transportation plan. In a bid to ensure hassle-free journeys for residents, the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) is going to operate Holi special buses from March 22 to April 1. With Holi falling on March 24 and 25, followed by the consecutive holidays of Good Friday and weekend, a surge in travel is anticipated across the state. This strategic move aims to alleviate the stress of travel during the festive period, offering much-needed relief to passengers in UP. Additionally, to ensure efficient service delivery during this peak period, the Transport Corporation will provide incentive

allowances to its drivers and conductors. Furthermore, in preparation for the expected influx of passengers, the leaves of officers and employees have been canceled for a period of 10 days. All buses will be operational on the road. Transport Minister Dayashankar Singh mentioned that during the incentive period, an increased number of buses will be operated to take travelers from Delhi to the eastern direction, ensuring that they reach their destinations by the evening of the Holi festival. Similar arrangements will be made for traffic management in Lucknow and Kanpur. Eastern Region may operate additional services during this period if the Eastern Uttar Pradesh region gets more than 60 percent passenger load

from the originating point to Ghaziabad, Delhi and other locations in the Western Region. He said that during the incentive scheme period, 100 percent transport corporation buses should be made on-road and operated continuously. Additional assemblies and spare parts should be made available in each depot from the headquarters and regional level. Chief Principal Manager Technical should review the off-road vehicles of the area daily and inform about the situation. Special attention should be paid to maintenance. During this period, no leaves will be granted to officials, supervisors, drivers, conductors, or any employee. Contracted buses will also be on the road during this period under all circumstances. Buses will be

arranged as per availability. According to the directives issued by the Principal Manager (Operations) of the Transport Corporation, Manoj Kumar, Regional Managers of Ghaziabad, Lucknow, and Kanpur will oversee the transportation arrangements. They will establish coordination among regions in case of any difficulties and the need for buses. Buses will be arranged according to the availability of passengers. From March 22 to April 1, the duty of Principal Manager S.L. Sharma at the headquarters level has been assigned to Delhi and Ghaziabad on the Delhi route. During this period, round the clock arrangements should be made in all the depots for cash deposits, diesel refills, bus repair facilities, ETM.

Devotee from Odisha presents CM Yogi with a wooden portrait of him

Arun Kumar Sahu from Odisha presented Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with a Hanuman Chalisa and his portrait carved on wood. Arun had personally crafted both wooden artworks and brought them to Ayodhya. In this regard, Anil Mishra, associated with the Ram Mandir Trust, explained that Arun, a devotee of Lord Ram from Odisha, couldn't meet the Chief Minister directly. Therefore, he entrusted both wooden artworks to the Trust on Wednesday, requesting them to deliver them to the Chief Minister. The Trust cooperated with Arun.