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

Rahul alleges Rs 30 lakh crore stocks 'scam'; baseless, says Goyal



NEW DELHI: Congress and BJP were involved in a high-wattage face-off on Thursday with Rahul Gandhi demanding a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the "role" of PM Narendra Modi, home minister Amit Shah and finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman into what he claimed was a "Rs 30 lakh crore stock market scam" allegedly engineered through "fake" exit polls. BJP's Piyush Goyal hit back by alleging that the charge was a conspiracy to mislead investors. Addressing a press conference, Rahul said the PM, home minister and FM gave "investment advice" to people ahead of poll results and added that the "fake" pollsters also needed to be investigated. BJP dismissed the charges and accused Rahul of conspiring to scare domestic and foreign investors, asserting that stock market indices had begun rising as a Modi-led govt was set to return to office for a third consecutive term. "Rahul Gandhi has still not overcome the loss in the Lok Sabha polls. Now, he is conspiring to

mislead market investors," Goyal said at a press conference while rejecting the demand for a JPC probe. EAS Sarma, a former secretary in the finance ministry, has written to economic affairs secretary Ajay Seth demanding a probe by the Enforcement Directorate, CBI and CBOT into the stock market crash. He has also asked whether Sebi has taken up any investigation into the issue. Buoyed by exit poll predictions of a decisive mandate for BJP-led NDA.

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BSE sensx soaring 2,500 points to a record high

The week kicked off with the BSE sensx soaring 2,500 points to a record high of 76,469 only to register its worst crash of 4,390 points to 72,079 after the poll results on Tuesday, resulting in a Rs 31 lakh crore wealth destruction for investors. At one point, it was down 6,000 points on heavy selling of shares. It has, however, recovered since then and on Thursday, closed 692 points higher at 75,074. Rahul questioned why the BJP leadership had encouraged people to invest in stocks ahead of poll results and alleged that Modi and Shah were "directly involved" in what he described as the "biggest stock market scam". "Why did the PM and HM give specific investment advice to the 5 crore families investing in the stock markets?" he asked. "Why both the interviews were given to the same media house.

NDA allies call for review of Agnipath, JD(U) distances itself

NEW DELHI: NDA partners JD(U), led by Nitish Kumar, and Chirag Paswan's LJP on Thursday articulated concern over the Agnipath scheme which was used by the opposition to attack govt over inadequate generation of jobs, though the former backpedalled on its comments saying they were twisted out of context. JD(U) general secretary K C Tyagi was the first off the blocks, telling TV news channels that his party, which with 12 MPs may have an outsized role in the BJP-led coalition govt, will insist on a review of the Agnipath scheme under which 75% of recruits, the Agniveers, will be let go of after four years while the rest get to serve for another 15 years. LJP (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan, in response to a question, told that govt



Man chops off acquaintance's ear for trying to resolve quarrel

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: A 31-year-old man's attempt to intervene and resolve a quarrel his acquaintance engaged in cost him dear as the latter sliced off his left ear in Vattiyoorkavu in Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday. The victim, Rahul Raj, also

sustained fractures on his fingers. His ear was later rejoined at medical college hospital in the evening. Vattiyoorkavu police arrested Vivek, 37, and produced him before a court on charges under Sections 308 (attempting to commit culpable homicide).

must revisit the Agnipath scheme to ascertain whether it had delivered the desired results. "If somebody has raised it, the NDA gives us that platform to sit and discuss. Yesterday

(Wednesday), in the (NDA) meeting, my PM said on record that he is open to discussion. This platform is open and he is easily available for discussion of concerns and suggestions.

Naidu may release AP finances white paper

VIJAYAWADA/NEW DELHI: TDP president and chief minister in waiting N Chandrababu Naidu likely to release a white paper on financial situation of Andhra Pradesh soon after assuming office, highlighting the state's massive debt burden, the dire fiscal situation, poor infrastructure and the weak investment, both by govt and the private sector. The white paper by Naidu, who is scheduled to take oath on June 12 at Amaravati, comes at a time when the Telugu Desam Party is likely to seek a special package for the state, pointing to the promise made to it at the time of the bifurcation that resulted in the creation of Telangana.

Russian official threatens nuclear strike on Nato member state

NEW DELHI: A high-ranking Russian official has made alarming comments, suggesting that the Netherlands could become a target for a nuclear strike. The statement comes amidst heightened tensions between Russia and Nato, particularly in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. The official, Alexei Zhuravlyov, a member of the State Duma, Russia's lower house of parliament, expressed his views during a recent television interview. "If Nato threatens our country, then we will target the countries that provide Nato with the infrastructure," Zhuravlyov said. "The Netherlands, where the Nato facilities are located, will be among the primary targets."

As per a Newsweek report, Zhuravlyov's remarks were made in response to Nato's increased military presence and support for Ukraine. Russia has consistently criticized Nato's actions, framing them as aggressive and provocative. The threat of a nuclear strike marks a significant escalation in rhetoric and underscores the severity of the current geopolitical situation. The Netherlands, a key Nato member, hosts several military facilities and is strategically important within the alliance. The suggestion that it could be targeted in a nuclear strike has sparked concerns and condemnation. Dutch officials have yet to respond directly to Zhuravlyov's comments, but the international community is watching closely. Nato has reinforced its commitment to defending its members and supporting Ukraine. The alliance has increased its military aid to Ukraine and bolstered its presence in Eastern Europe in response to Russia's invasion. These actions are intended to deter further Russian aggression and protect the sovereignty of Nato members. "The alliance stands united in its support for Ukraine and its defense against any threats," a Nato spokesperson said.

65.8% turnout in 2024 LS polls women beat men in 19 of 36 states/UTs

LUCKNOW: In the recently concluded general election, nearly 65.8% of India's 97.6 crore electorate cast their votes. This was a slight decrease from the 67.1% turnout recorded in the 2019 elections, excluding postal ballots. In 19 of the 36 states and Union Territories, women outpaced men in



voter turnout. However, on a national level, men had a marginally higher participation rate at 65.8%, compared to 65.7% among women. 65.8% turnout in

though this was 1.6 percentage points less than the 67.1% overall turnout, excluding the postal ballots, recorded in the 2019 edition. Women beat men in terms of turnouts in 19 of the 36 states and Union Territories (UTs), but at the national level, men with a polling percentage of 65.8%.

20 of 33 BJP MPs repeated for 3rd time or more lost in UP, Irani & Teni included

NEW DELHI: Anti-incumbency impacted BJP's prospects in 2024 Lok Sabha elections in UP, resulting in defeat of 27 of its 49 sitting MPs. In total, BJP had repeated 54 candidates who contested in 2019, but 31 of them failed to secure a win this time around. Among the repeated candidates, 49 were sitting MPs, including Ambedkarnagar nominee Ritesh Pandey, who had switched

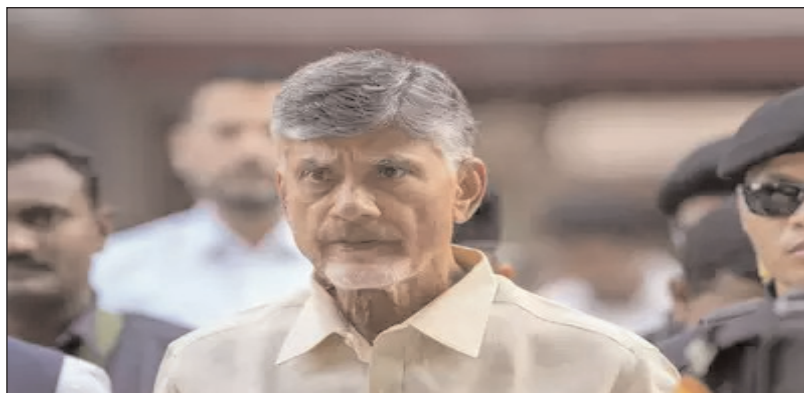


from BSP to BJP. Of these, 33 MPs were being repeated for the third time or more, but 20 of them lost their seats. The list included notable parliamentarians and Union ministers such

as Smriti Irani (Amethi), Ajay Mishra Teni (Kheri), Kaushal Kishore (Mohanlalganj), Mahendra Nath Pandey (Chandauli), Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti (Fatehpur), Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma (Jalaun), and Sanjeev Balyan (Muzaffarnagar). High-profile parliamentarians like eight-term MP Maneka Gandhi (Sultanpur) and Rajveer Singh (Etah).

Naidu starts work on Andhra cabinet, holds talks with colleagues

VIJAYAWADA: TDP chief and Andhra Pradesh chief minister-elect N Chandrababu Naidu has started working on a new state cabinet and may give a couple of cabinet berths to Jana Sena and BJP. The TD Legislature Party is scheduled to meet on June 11 and Chandrababu Naidu is to take oath on June 12. He will also attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi. Naidu held an informal meeting with party senior leaders, newly elected MPs available here and party MLAs at his Undavalli residence. He also spoke to them on the Union Cabinet and the party's stand, saying TDP would be part of the Union Cabinet this time.



TDP state president K Atchennaidu is a sure name for the state cabinet. Similarly, MLC Yana Mal Ramakrishnu is also to be included. The role of Nara Lokesh is not decided yet. Sources said Chandrababu Naidu is considering leaving Lokesh to party affairs and thus prepare him to take over the party from him in the future. Chandrababu Naidu is also considering the names of several sen-

iors for the state cabinet, giving due representation to SCs, STs, BCs, minorities and women. It is not yet known whether Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan will be part of the cabinet or if he will give others a chance. But, whether or not he joins, Jana Sena political affairs committee chairman Nandendra Manohar is a sure candidate for the cabinet. From BJP, YS Chowdary, P Vishnu Kumar Raju

and Sathyakumar Yadav are likely to be in the state cabinet. While Chowdary has won from Vijayawada West Assembly constituency, Vishnukumar Raju won from Visakhapatnam North and Sathyakumar won from Dharmavaram Assembly constituency. Meanwhile, incidents of political violence were reported from various parts of the state for a second day on Thursday.

VISAKHAPATNAM: Andhra Pradesh police on Thursday sealed the office of AP CID's special investigation team (SIT) at Tadepalli and office of AP Fibernet in Vijayawada to protect documents, hard disks and a few other objects following the instruction of top officials. Ahead of formation of new govt (TDP-BJP-JSP alliance) in Andhra, activities at SIT of AP CID were suspended. The decision comes in the wake of complaints of irregularities at the two offices during outgoing CM YS Jagan Mohan's regime. CID held TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu in Sept 2023 in alleged fraud involving Rs 371 crore in AP Skill Development Corporation during 2014-19.

Startups seek regulatory clarity from new govt

MUMBAI: With a new coalition govt at the centre set to swear in, the startup industry is seeking enhanced regulatory clarity, help to expedite the process of shifting domicile to India and an easier law and enforcement regime from authorities for the sector. "The approach of the tax departments towards startups is one area that is concerning the industry a lot...whether it is the misinterpreted angel tax issue or the GST notices that a lot of startups are getting and other law & enforcement challenges. This is one aspect we expect the new govt to address. They should ensure that startups building in this country, are not unnecessarily harassed at the hands of various authorities. Generally, startup business models are

unique and many times, tax department misinterprets issues," the CEO of a top unicorn firm on condition of anonymity. Streamlining regulations through simplified registration and set rules can make it easier for startups to get started and operate, said Sabyasachi Goswami, CEO at newly minted unicorn Perfios. The ecosystem, Goswami said, would benefit from tax breaks wherever possible and better access to debt financing for businesses. "In the upcoming term, we look forward to policies encouraging ease of doing business and reforms that support businesses," he said. Startups seek regulatory clarity from new govt. Additionally, startups that are working to shift their base to India.

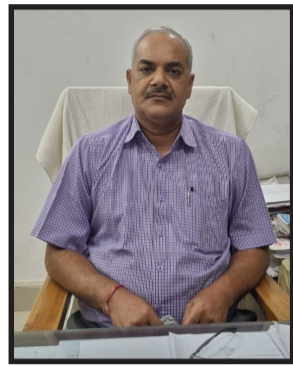
Protection of environment important to deal with climate change

Shringwarpurdham: Every person is surrounded by some cover or the other. Similarly, every living creature on earth is affected by its environment. But over time humans themselves have influenced the environment. In the phase of increasing modernity, the increasing trend of individualism has taken away moral conduct from humans. In the race for development, humans are moving towards development without morality. The side effects of which are visible in social life.

The trend of planting trees on Environment Day has increased. But are those plants able to maintain their existence for a long time? Elements affecting the environment remain a challenge to the environment and our lives. Certainly trees and plants are very important for living and we all should plant trees regu-

larly. It is also good for us and our earth. It has many benefits, such as absorption of carbon dioxide, production of oxygen, maintaining biodiversity, soil stability and regulation of water cycle. If we look at it, protection of environment is the security shield of our life. On the occasion of Environment Day on 5th June, we should not only take a pledge to plant trees but should also focus on preventing things that are harmful to the environment. World Environment Day is being celebrated on 5th June. Environment means the natural environment in which we live. All living and nonliving elements around us are part of the environment, such as air, water, soil, plants and animals. Despite being well aware that without nature, human life will end, people are harming nature and the environment.

The world is heading towards destruction due to the impact on the environment. The change in weather is an indication of this. Global warming is one of the reasons for the ex-



remely rising temperatures, which can cause great harm to human life. In such a situation, the damage to nature can be prevented by making people aware about the importance of the environment. Environment Day is also celebrated with the same purpose. On the oc-

casation of World Environment Day, you can take initiatives towards environmental protection. You can encourage people around you, close ones, friends or relatives to protect the environment by sending awareness messages of Environment Day. But challenges are also visible in spreading awareness. - Plantation and conservation of earth are necessary for sustainable development. Today people have linked plantation with the environment as well as with their future and the prosperity of the next generation. This is why it has taken the form of a campaign in the last decade. Even though people plant trees in the name of environmental protection, they definitely have a desire to save the future with the help of that tree. The number of trees and plants has gradu-

ally started increasing from city to village. Most of the people have definitely planted saplings with their own hands. Some have planted one or two trees while others have planted hundreds of trees in their life. There are very few people who have not planted even a single tree till date. Many social workers of the area are still holding the banner of environmental protection and urging people to plant trees. For many fortunate ones, the garden planted by their ancestors has opened the door to prosperity. Just as children serve their parents when they grow old. Similarly, trees and plants also provide service to people in various forms. In which, along with the main vital air and environmental balance, it also becomes a source of income.

- Cutting of trees and

exploitation of resources reduced the groundwater level. Today, the impact of climate change and increase in global temperature is not limited only to the earth and oceans. The groundwater present several meters deep in the ground is also facing the brunt of rising temperatures. Due to this, not only is the groundwater level declining, but the groundwater is also becoming hotter than ever before. Due to climate change, the temperature of groundwater is increasing rapidly. It is expected that this increase in groundwater temperature could reach an average of 2.1 to 3.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century under different emission scenarios. How much groundwater will warm will depend on how much we humans cut our emissions to deal with climate change.

On Shani Jayanti, BJP members distributed Shani Chalisa and Hanuman Chalisa

Prayagraj: BJP Metropolitan President on the occasion of Shani Jayanti by Bharatiya Janata Party Bhardwaj Mandal Rajendra Mishra distributed Shani



Chalisa and Hanuman Chalisa in Colonelganj vegetable market. On this occasion, Mandal President Anil Bhatt, Shashi Varshney, Rajesh Kesarwani, Lokesh Sharma, Ganesh Verma, Brijesh Verma, Akhleshwar Mishra, Aman Sharma, Vikas Srivastava etc.

Shastri congratulated Ujwal on his victory

Prayagraj: Congress Committee Hindi Department Chairman and former Union Minister Anil Shastri has congratulated the newly elected Congress MP Ujwal Raman Singh for the victory from Allahabad parliamentary seat. Shastri expressed hope over telephone that Ujjwal will continue to serve the people of the area as usual and will continuously establish new dimensions of development. Said that he will work to improve the basic facilities like employment, health, education, roads, electricity, water while taking forward the development priority of Congress. Shastri praised Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge in the elections. It was said that due to their hard work, the effect of India Block was visible in all parts of the country and Narendra Modi and Amit Shah's 400 mark was blown away and BJP could not even get 272 seats.



Parvez Siddiqui distributed sweets in court

Prayagraj: In celebration of the victory of Allahabad Lok Sabha alliance Congress candidate Ujjwal Raman Singh, Parvez Siddiqui, Vice President City Congress Committee Prayagraj, distributed sweets in the District Court campus. Parvez Siddiqui, Salim Uddin, Samsul



Hasan Subhash Chandra Yadav, Samsul Islam, Ashish Mishra, Harish Chandra, Tabrez Parvez, Dilip Srivastava, CP Singh, Umesh Prajapati, Pramod Singh, Gulrez Ahmed, Mahtab Khan, CL Kushwaha etc. Celebrates the victory of Ujjwal Raman Singh from Allahabad Lok Sabha seat. Vice President distributed sweets in the district court.

Cong leaders warn NDA allies via banner

Prayagraj: Two local Congress leaders put up a banner at Chowk Ghanta Ghar in Prayagraj, warning against the NDA alliance. BJP has eliminated many parties, be



smart. The poster has been put up by Congress leaders Irshad Ullah and Abdul Kalam. The poster carries the picture of several leaders who have been associated with the NDA in the past.

UP Madrasa Education Council to conduct compartment exam

Prayagraj: Principals/Principals of recognized/subsidized madrasas are informed that failed or absent in maximum two subjects in the Secondary (Munshi/Maulvi), Senior Secondary (Alim Arabic/Persian) examination conducted by UP Madrasa Education Council, Lucknow in the year 2024. Keeping in view the future of the candidates, it has been decided by the Council to conduct compartment examination this year. Following the guidelines for compartment examination, the candidate will submit the offline application form to his madrasa as per the time schedule. The last date of submission of treasury for compartment examination is 24.06.2024 and the last date of filling the application is 26.06.2024 and the completely filled application form by Madrasas should be submitted to the District Minority Welfare Department, Vikas Bhawan Prayagraj till the last date 29.06.2024 along with the application form and attachments, which will be made available in original form.

Tree plantation campaign organised

Prayagraj: Tree plantation campaign has been started by Humanity India Trust on the occasion of World Environment Day.

was done in every village and Sangam area under the supervision of Anup Bind, Rakesh Kumar Bharti, Hansraj Bind, Pradeep

Ajit Kumar, Dr. Pinky Arya and Uday Bhan. Tree plantation was done in Aligarh under the supervision of Dr. Raj Bharti, Vineet Kumar and Gaurav Kumar and in Mahoba under the supervision of Vishal Singh. Founder and President of the organization, Dr. Surya Bhan Kushwaha said that like every year, this year also the target is to plant about 1000 trees and the responsibility is taken not only for planting but also for their maintenance. To save the environment, we all have to come together and promote tree plantation. The environment is getting worse day by day. Cutting of trees is happening continuously. We should stop tree cutting and promote tree plantation.

Kumar, Laxman Bind, Vijay Bhan, Ratnakar Gupta, Brijesh Kumar and other colleagues. Tree plantation was done in Azamgarh under the supervision of Dr.



Under which tree plantation was done in Prayagraj, including urban and rural areas, Azamgarh, Mahoba and Aligarh districts. In Prayagraj, tree plantation

Organization of World Environment Day Celebration in CORE

Prayagraj: World Environment Day (05 June) is an occasion which unites all the people for awareness and action towards the environment. This year, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has envisioned celebrating World Environment Day 2024 keeping "Mission Life" at the center. In line with its commitment towards environmental protection, Central Railway Electrification Organization Prayagraj has organized a celebration on 05th June. On the occasion of World Environment Day in 2024, General Manager Shri Ashok Kumar Verma administered oath to all the officers and employees of Railway Electrification to protect the environment and expressed concern over the rising temperatures and requested for more and more tree plantation to protect the environment. On this occasion, the General Manager participated in the tree plantation program along with officers and employees of the Central Railway Electrifi-

cation Organisation. On the occasion of the said program, Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Yatendra Kumar, Principal Chief Engineer Mr. Anil Kumar Singh Shaiwal, Principal Chief Signal and Telecommunica-



tion Engineer and Principal Chief Personnel Officer Mr. R.N. Singh, Chief Electrical Engineer Shri S.S. Negi and Shri Upendra Kumar and other officers and employees of the core office were present and made the program successful.

Applications invited under Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana

Prayagraj: Under Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana, applications are invited for carpenter, barber, tailor, potter, blacksmith, mason, confectioner, goldsmith, basket weaver, washerman and cobbler trade. Website www.dupmsme.upsdc.gov.in under Handicraft/Artisan Scheme related to trades. You can apply under Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana for the year 2024-25. Applications for carpenter, barber, tailor, potter, blacksmith, mason, confectioner, goldsmith, basket weaver, washerman and cobbler trade are invited. Under the scheme, 10 days skill development training is to be given, after the training, free toolkit is to be distributed to the trainees who pass RPL. Handicraftsmen/artisans related to the

above trades can apply under the scheme on the website www.dupmsme.upsdc.gov.in. At the time of application, attach Aadhar card, passport size photograph, signature, residence certificate, educational qualification certificate, caste certificate (experience certificate issued by ward councillor or village head if other than the concerned caste) and photocopy of bank passbook. mandatory. The process of selection of trainees as per target will be done through score card after inspection of documents on first come first receipt basis. For detailed information, you can contact the office of Deputy Commissioner of Industries, District Industry Promotion and Entrepreneurship Development Centre, 05 New Katra, Prayagraj on any working day.

Commr orders verification of wheat purchase center

Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant held a review meeting regarding the progress of wheat procurement under the Rabi marketing year 2024-25 in the Gandhi Auditorium located at the Commissioner's office. Dur-

ing the review, when the condition of delivery in the Food Corporation of India depot regarding the wheat purchased was not satisfactory, he called for physical verification of the wheat purchase center of U.P.PCU of Koraon Tehsil of Prayagraj

district and immediate 100 percent stocking of the quantity of wheat remaining at the centers. Instructions were given to get the consecration done. After the review, the Divisional Commissioner awarded citation and memento to Mr. Sanjay Kumar

Pandey, the center in-charge of Prayagraj who purchases the maximum wheat on a weekly basis. Mr. Dinesh Pratap Singh and Mr. Virendra Kumar of the marketing inspector and NAFED organization of Fatehpur district. .

Airtel rolls out plans for World's Biggest T20 Cricket Tournament

Lucknow: Bharti Airtel ("Airtel"), India's leading telecommunications services provider, today, unveiled special packs for customers with World's Biggest T20 Cricket Tournament in mind. To ensure an uninterrupted and seamless viewing experience, Airtel is offering a three-month subscription to Disney+ Hotstar, the official streaming partner of the World's Biggest T20

Cricket Tournament in India, across its prepaid, postpaid, International roaming, home broadband and Airtel Digital TV users. To Disney+ Hotstar. The plan also unlocks 20+ OTTs on Airtel Xstream Play for free. There is also an 84-day plan for Rs 839 on offer that provides similar benefits with 2GB of data per day. An annual plan of Rs 3359 has a bundled one-year subscription to

Disney+ Hotstar, along with access to OTT platforms on the Xstream app and 2.5 GB of data per day.

Postpaid plans also comes bundled with a one-year Disney+ Hotstar subscription along with access to over 20 OTT platforms on Xstream App, with Unlimited 5G data

Prepaid plans for the T20 Cricket Tournament start at Rs 499 and come loaded with daily access to

high-speed 3GB data for 28 days, along with a three-month subscription and family add-on benefits.

Home customers looking for high-speed internet, entertainment, professional and infinity plans at Rs 999, Rs 1498 and Rs 3999 are provided with a wide range of speed options. In addition to this, the plans also include unlimited Disney+ Hotstar subscriptions and other benefits.

Shriram Super 7711 and 4400 paddy seeds providing better productivity

Varanasi: Farmers of Uttar Pradesh said that Shriram Super 7711 and Shriram Super 4400 paddy seeds introduced by Shriram Farm Solutions, a unit of DCM Shriram Limited, have increased their productivity even in the changing environment. The paddy, Shriram Super 7711 and 4400, developed by modern research, is becoming very popular among the farmers of Uttar Pradesh.



Due to their strong stem, long ears, abundant grains, tolerance to diseases and high yield in less time and less water, these two seeds have become popular among the farmers of Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand. One such aware farmer, Vednath Kushwaha of Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, says that Shriram Super 7711 has long ears, 14-16 tillers, shiny grains and disease resistance. He also

advises other farmers to get full benefit by planting Shriram Super 7711. At the same time, farmers are very happy with the variety Shri Ram Super 4400 offered by Shriram in the market and are getting excellent results. Uttam Yadav, a farmer from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, planted Shriram Super 4400 paddy and he is very happy with his decision, it has more tillers, shiny ears, abundant grains, medium height, yields 20-22 quintals per acre, so he advises all the farmer brothers to plant Shriram Super 4400 paddy.

Along with Shriram Super 7711 and 4400 paddy seeds, other products of Shriram Farmsolutions like Shriram Super 4466, 505 and 4433 have also become very popular among farmers due to their excellent results in the last few years. Shriram Farmsolutions is a part of the 134-year-old DCM Shriram Limited. A leading business group with a turnover of Rs 11431 crore. Shriram Farmsolutions is active in the business of agri-inputs such as seeds, special nutrition and crop protection chain.

Ticket checking campaign launched at Prayagraj Junction

Prayagraj: Under the direction of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Himanshu Shukla of Prayagraj Division, Assistant Commercial Manager, Sanjay Gautam and Divisional Ticket Inspector/Red, Divakar Shukla of the Commerce Department. Along with the team of Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police, intensive investigation was done at Prayagraj Junction and 15 trains passing through it. In this operation, 39 Commerce Department employees along with 13 security force personnel worked together. In this campaign, Rs 4,62,540 was recovered by charging a total of 717 passengers. Out of these, 268 passengers were charged Rs 2,42,530/- for traveling without ticket, 443 passengers were charged Rs 2,19,410/- for irregular travel, 01 passenger for littering was charged Rs 500/- and 01 passenger for smoking was charged Rs. Rs 100/- were recovered. Railway administration requests all its passengers not to litter the train and railway premises, throw garbage in the dustbin only and travel with valid tickets. Railways respects all its passengers and wishes them a pleasant journey.

GMNCR sent mobile video van for safety awareness on the occasion of International Railway Level Crossing Awareness Day

PRAYAGRAJ: On the occasion of International Railway Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD), General Manager North Central Railway Shri Ravindra Goyal along with Principal Chief Safety Officer and other Heads of Departments flagged off a mobile video van to spread safety awareness about level crossings in North Central Railway. Dispatched from headquarters. On this occasion, General Manager Shri Goyal said that through mobile video vans, road users will be made aware about the importance of level crossings and safety precautions. He said that everyone should be careful while crossing closed railway gates as a small mistake can sometimes lead to a major accident. In this sequence, he also stressed on abolition of railway level crossings, interlocking of gates, and construction of ROB/RUB. During the next 45 days, this mobile van will cover various important locations in



all three divisions of North Central Railway to educate road users about level crossing safety precautions. This mobile van with TV and audio visual system will cover schools, level crossings, villages, panchayats, tehsils, nearby markets etc. Several short films have been made for awareness generation in vans including 'How to pass level crossings carefully', 'Do not carry cattle on

tracks', 'Do not travel on roof and foot boards of trains', 'During journey Topics like 'never accepting food or drink from strangers', 'not carrying inflammable material in the train' etc. have been included.

Safety counselors of North Central Railway will accompany the van throughout its journey and will distribute pamphlets, posters and stickers among

the road users to disseminate better understanding of the topic. Apart from this, North Central Railway officials and security personnel are also visiting schools/colleges/gram panchayats. Awareness campaigns are also being conducted through social media like WhatsApp, Twitter, SMS, radio, television etc. Apart from this, safety seminars are also being or-

ganized at stations and training centers across the zone to inculcate safety habits among the railway personnel. It is noteworthy that 'International Railway Level Crossing Awareness Day' is an initiative to create awareness about safety at level crossings. This campaign was launched by the International Union of Railways (IUC) in 2009. IUC is an international railway or-

ganization supported by rail organizations around the world. Every year, approximately 50 countries participate in the event, featuring a variety of level crossing safety efforts and arrangements aimed at reducing accidents at level crossings around the world. It is shared from. On this occasion, all the major department heads, other senior officers and staff were present.

Writing 'Trespassers will be shot' on armed forces' premises not proper: All India HC

Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court has observed that writing "Trespassers will be shot" on premises belonging to the armed forces for the purpose of security is not proper. Justice Shekhar Kumar Yadav made the above observation while granting bail to Etwir Limbu, a Nepali national apprehended for illegally entering into an Air Force Station here in an intoxicated condition in February. "These type of words have a bad impact on the children, so the Central Government may take caution in writing these types of words. Light words should be used in place of 'Trespassers will be shot' and 'dekhte hi goli maar di jayegi'," the court said in its order dated May 31, 2024.

It was submitted on behalf of applicant Limbu that he has been falsely implicated in the case. He "unintentionally" reached Manauri Air Force Station, and since the applicant was in an intoxicated condition and had no knowledge of Hindi, he could not explain properly to the posted soldier and his identity card was lost.

Earlier, the court had asked for guidelines about such writings on premises. "As per aforesaid guidelines of the above affidavit of compliance, it is true that trespassers are not allowed to enter into premises of armed forces for the purpose of security, but the language mentioned as 'dekhte hi goli maar di jayegi', in my opinion, is not proper, particularly, where the installation of armed forces is situated in a public place where the general public and children pass. "These type of words have a bad impact on the children so the Central Government may take caution in writing these types of words," the court stated.

Farewell organized by SHUATS photography club

Prayagraj: The SHUATS Photography Club (SPC) organized a heartfelt farewell at the SPC Office, SHUATS. Dr. C. John Wesley, Joint Registrar (Administration) and Staff Advisor of SPC, was warmly welcomed by Mr. Praveen Kumar, President of SPC, with a bouquet. The event honored the graduating SPC Executives and Mem-



bers, wishing them success in their future endeavors.

Dr. Wesley also approved the newly formed Committee for the 2024-25 session, extending his best wishes to the incoming members. Er. Gaurav Suman, Social Media Analyst and Coordinator of SPC, encouraged the students to continuously enhance their photography skills and utilize them for societal betterment. The event was a blend of gratitude and motivation, setting a positive tone for both outgoing and incoming SPC members.

By grace of Lord Jagannathji, victory chariot of Modi govt got pace: BJP

Prayagraj: Bharatiya Janata Party Muttiganj Mandal workers by the workers of Lord Jagannath Dham Prayageswar Temple Kashiraj in Lord Jagannath ji's Dham in Odisha of Lord Jagannath In view of the party's landslide victory in the Lok Sabha and Assembly, BJP members worshiped and performed aarti of Lord Jagannath. On this occasion, BJP district spokesperson Rajesh Kesarwani said that by the grace of Lord Jagannath, Bharatiya Janata Party is the first party in Orissa state with full majority. Now the government is going to be formed and in the Lok Sabha elections, out of 21 seats, Orissa got 20 seats by the grace of Lord



Jagannath and with the blessings of the people of Orissa, due to which Vijayarath of Modi government got momentum for building a developed India. On this occasion, BJP District Vice President Vivek Aggarwal and BJP leader Vijay Vaishya said that we have full confidence that the newly elected Odisha government of Bharatiya Janata Party and the Modi government formed for the third time at the Center will make Odisha prosperous and the resolve of building a developed India will be fulfilled. On this occasion, BJP workers fed sweets and congratulated each other on the victory of Odisha and the Modi government being formed at the Center for the third time. Among those who congratulated were District Vice President Vivek Aggarwal, BJP leader former councilor Vijay Vaish, Kishan Chandra Jaiswal, Ajay Agrahari, Shatrughan Jaiswal, Neeraj Kesarwani, Rajesh Sharma, Madhur Mathur, Mukesh Jaiswal, Padmakar Srivastava, and other workers were present.

Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah row Allahabad HC reserves verdict on maintainability of suits

Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court on Thursday reserved its verdict on a petition challenging maintainability of suits filed in connection with the Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah mosque dispute in Mathura. Several suits have been filed seeking the "removal" of the Shahi Idgah mosque which stands adjacent to the Krishna Janmabhoomi temple, with litigants claiming that the Aurangzeb-era mosque was built after the demolition of the temple. The mosque management committee, in its petition, has challenged these suits. The Muslim side -- mosque management committee and UP Sunni Central Waqf Board -- has argued that the suits are barred under Places of Worship Act, 1991.

According to the Muslim side, the suits itself admit the fact that the mosque in question was built in 1669-70. The suits filed by the Hindu side contain a common prayer seeking the "removal" of the Shahi Idgah mosque from the 13.37-acre complex it shares with the Katra Keshav Dev temple in Mathura. The additional prayers include seeking possession of the Shahi Idgah premises. On May 31, the high court had reserved its judgment after hearing both the Hindu side (plaintiff) and Muslim side (defendant) at length. However, the court reopened the hearing after the request of Shahi Idgah counsel Mehmood Pracha.

On Thursday, appearing for the mosque, Pracha said that the arguments on the application under Order 7 Rule 11 of Civil Procedure Code (CPC), advanced on behalf of the defendant -- Muslim side -- have been concluded by Taslima Aziz Ahmadi and therefore hearing on the application stands concluded. Pracha's second submission was that his right to an audience be protected and videography of the further court proceedings be also conducted.

His third submission was that since the subject matter of the suit is between the plaintiffs and the defendants, therefore, there is no provision that the court can appoint any person or lawyer as amicus curiae. The court accepted the first request of Pracha and reserved its judgment on the issue of maintainability of suits. However, regarding the other two requests, the court said that these two issues shall be taken up after the order on the maintainability of suit is pronounced. The high court has appointed senior advocate Manish Goyal as amicus curiae in the matter. The Hindu plaintiffs had also argued that no property in the name of Shahi Idgah is in the government records and the same has been occupied illegally.

No respite from heat in sight, monsoon still a fortnight away

Prayagraj: Heat wave will continue especially in Agra, Bundelkhand and Prayagraj divisions and there will be no respite for the next five days. "There is a possibility of rain and thunder showers in isolated areas of west UP due to western disturbances," said Lucknow met incharge Mohd Danish. Highest maximum temperature of 46.2°C was reported in Fatehpur (UP). Heat wave conditions prevailed in some southern parts of the state. Maximum temperatures are in the range of 43-46°C over southern Uttar Pradesh. These are above

normal by 2-4°C over the areas, according to an IMD tweet.

The forecast for UP is



rain/thundershowers very likely at isolated places and strong surface winds (Speed 20-30 kmph) very

likely over the state. IMD has issued a warning of the heat wave (loo) very likely to continue at isolated

likely at isolated places over the state.

While Fatehpur was hottest at 46.2, day temperature in Agra rose to 46, Jhansi to 45.9, Kanpur (IAF) to 45.6, Prayagraj to 45.4, Hamirpur to 45.2 and in Orai 45 degrees Celsius.

Forecast for Lucknow is mainly clear sky. Strong surface wind (20-30 Kmph) are very likely over the area. Maximum and minimum temperature will be around 42 and 29 degree Celsius respectively. On Wednesday, day and night temperature in Lucknow were 42.1 and 29 degrees Celsius respectively.

ABVP's 'Nagrik Satkar Samaroh' celebrates Indian culture and values

Prayagraj: The diamond city of Surat witnessed a grand event as the 'Nagrik Satkar Samaroh' was organized by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) ahead of its National Executive Council meeting scheduled from 07-09 June 2024. The event, held in anticipation of the forthcoming meeting, saw the esteemed presence of notable figures, including renowned actor Manoj Joshi, ABVP National President Dr. Rajsharan Shahi, National General Secretary Shri Yagywalkya Shukla, Chairman of the Welcome Committee Shri Lavjibhai Dalia, Secretary of the Welcome Committee Shri Dineshbhai Rajpurohit, State President of ABVP Gujarat Shri Laxmanbhai Bhutdia, and ABVP Gujarat State Secretary Shri Samarth Bhatt. Additionally, the program was graced by the attendance of numerous dignitaries and esteemed businessmen from Surat.

In a celebration of culture and tradition, the event showcased the vibrant folk culture of Gujarat through a capti-



ating cultural program. During the 'Nagrik Satkar Samaroh', distinguished actor Mr. Manoj Joshi shared profound insights, emphasizing the essence of Indianness deeply ingrained within him. Reflecting on the 350th year of Shivaji Maharaj's coronation, Mr. Joshi highlighted the significance of this historic occasion, drawing parallels with the indomitable spirit and vision of Shivaji Maharaj in shaping the nation. He underscored the pivotal role of organizations like Vidyarthi Parishad in fostering Indian ethos and nurturing qualities of knowledge, humility, and unity among citizens. Addressing the audience, ABVP National General Secretary Shri Yagywalkya Shukla

lauded the transformative impact of the new National Education Policy, emphasizing the need for aligning educational endeavors with contemporary requirements. He commended the remarkable journey of ABVP, now in its 75th year, for inspiring countless youth and catalyzing positive societal change through dedicated efforts.

Women take holy dip in Sangam on 'Vat Savitri Puja'

Prayagraj: Several devotees took holy dip at the Sangam in the Prayagraj district of Uttar Pradesh on the occasion of Vat Savitri Puja on Thursday. Shobha Mishra, one of the devotees present at the ghat, said, "Today it's an auspicious occasion of Vat Savitri and on this day, we women fast for our husband's longevity. I came here to take a holy dip and now heading towards the house to prepare meals. I'll come again at exactly 12 pm to complete the worship rituals."

One of the priests at Sangam, named Gopal explained the reason behind this festival celebration and

said, "You must have heard about Savitri and Satyavan. Savitri was immensely dedicated to his husband. When his husband died, she worshipped Yamraj all day and night. On the basis of her fidelity towards her husband and her constant efforts, Yamraj sent his husband back to earth. To mark this day and seek blessings for husband's longevity, financial stability and serenity at home, married women of India celebrate Vat Savitri Puja."

He further stated, "The women who believe in Sanatan Dharma, on this day, take a holy dip in Ganga and circumambulate

towards banyan trees 108 times to mark the longevity of their husband and family



and seek blessings for peace and stability at home."

Another devotee, Rita Singh conveyed the reason and process of worship,

she stated, "Savitri had sought blessings of Yamraj for his husband and this is

why we celebrate this festival by taking a holy dip at Sangam and worshipping her. On this day, we worship Vat (banyan tree) and offer fruits, flowers, hand fan (handmade bamboo fan) and various things, which are further donated to the needy."

Meanwhile, Uttarakhnd Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama extended his heartiest and warm wishes to all the married women on the auspicious occasion of Vat Savitri Puja. He further prayed for their happy and prosperous married life.

In a post to X, Uttarakhnd CM Dhama

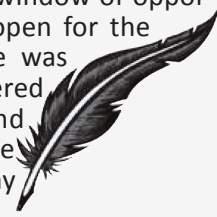
wrote, "Heartiest wishes to all the married mothers and sisters on the occasion of Vat Savitri puja, a symbol of unbroken good fortune. On this auspicious occasion, I pray to God for your happy and prosperous married life."

As per the Hindu Vedic Calendar, Vat Savitri Puja is celebrated every year on Jyeshtha Amavasya. This fast is observed by married Hindu women for the well-being and long life of their husbands. On this day, married women worship the banyan tree, which is a symbol of Lord Vishnu and pray for the long life of their husbands.

Editorial

Putin did a surprise reshuffle

The President has chosen deputy prime minister and long-time economic advisor Andrei Belousov to replace Shoigu, who in turn has replaced Patrushev. The latter's new appointment remains unknown. The move is being seen as an effort to reduce the unsustainable and soaring costs of the war in Ukraine. It also challenges the narrative that the Russian economy is unaffected by the sanctions in the long-standing war. For 2024 alone, Putin has allocated \$117 billion for the special military operation against Ukraine. His war economy runs feverishly in an overheated mode. Most international estimates state that 7.5 per cent of Russia's GDP is directed to the military-industrial complex although Kremlin's official estimates claim it is 6.7 percent. It is a rare submission of a rising-cost problem from Putin, who had preferred to continue with his hunting-holidaying excursions pal Shoigu despite repeated allegations of systemic corruption and inefficiency against him for years. These allegations became the order of the day when mercenary group Wagner, led by Yevgeny Prigozhin, was brought to deliver victory in the infamous battle for Bakhmut in 2023. Putin's slighting of Prigozhin's outright allegations against Shoigu and Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov led to the incredible Wagner mutiny against the two generals, which ended up with Prigozhin's death in uncanny circumstances. It, however, unleashed an investigation into rampant corruption inside Russia's military leadership, of which Prigozhin had become the most notorious victim. Russia-watchers had an inkling of Shoigu's exit after Prigozhin and his aides were made to bid adieu into the flannel skies, and many corrupt links started to get exposed in the Ministry of Defence. The inkling became stronger as Shoigu's deputies, including Timur Ivanov, got arrested on corruption charges last month. Soon, two other deputy defence ministers allegedly backdated their resignations before 9 May, or the Soviet Victory Day. The Russian army was supposed to make an impressive win in Chasiv Yar on the eastern front but had to make do with American tanks captured at a small village called Berdychi when Ukrainians retreated, running out of ammunition to fire. All has certainly not been going as planned. The latest reshuffling in key defence and security offices has been Putin's biggest shake-up in the past 15 years. There are two reasons for this. One is ensuring economic efficiency at a time when the stakes are very high for Russia and Putin. And two, Shoigu's leadership has not been able to yield the anticipated results in the Ukraine war. His current appointment is a step-down with little direct authority. Getting an economist like Belousov in the key position of a defence minister also shows that Putin is preparing for the longer haul. It is a solemn reiteration that the Ukraine war has indeed been reduced to a grinding war of attrition, with both sides lacking the capabilities to end it anytime soon. Europe's combined strategies to support Kyiv militarily won't come to fruition until mid-2025. American aid and the conditionalities attached are likely to help Ukraine stay afloat, but not gain a decisive edge. That said, Russia, too, has been astonishingly lacklustre in exploiting the window of opportunity that had remained open for the last six months as Ukraine was outgunned and outnumbered with a lack of troops and ammunition. Despite the high intensity, war-economy mode with the reported 7.5 per cent of GDP directed to war effort.



His reputation definitely changed, the reason for which is his clean image and saintly

In 2014, when Modi wave was running in the whole country, no one would have thought that a BJP leader would come in this way and by creating his own identity away from the allegations of corruption that are usually leveled on leaders, he would become famous among the people like Prime Minister Narendra Modi and became so famous that people started seeing him as the next Prime Minister. But when the five-time MP from Gorakhpur parliamentary seat, Mahant of Gorakhnath Bhaam Math and former MP, became the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, which has the highest number of Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha seats in the country, in 2017 at the age of 45, his reputation definitely changed, the reason for which is his clean image and saintly nature. It is usually said that no other face can become big in front of a big face, but Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has earned his stature through his work, law and order and his impeccable image that when it comes to the public, no one else can be compared to him in the party in the state. Actually, Chief Minister Adityanath is not only famous for his impeccable image, he is also famous for taking action



against the wrongdoers and working in the interest of the common people.

He is the first Chief Minister of the country, who, apart from being famous as a saint after becoming the Chief Minister, has also become famous as Kulchner Baba. He has also received the title of the most popular Chief Minister of the country. Chief Minister Adityanath has not only benefited the people of Uttar Pradesh, but has done excellent work under many development schemes on behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government. And not only is his support base the strongest in Uttar Pradesh, but he is the main face of all the MLAs and ministers in his government, due to which he is able to take decisions in his government unopposed. He not only gave free hand to the police to deal with the criminals to

development and improvement.

But after becoming the Chief Minister, Yogi Adityanath first got the Pracharagran renovated and the Prayagraj is worth seeing. Similarly, he has also developed many other places. Eastern Uttar Pradesh was once suffering in terms of development, now international level roads have been built there. Apart from this, his government has made efforts to provide water to every village. Now in Uttar Pradesh, whether it is the election of the Prime Minister, Assembly or Lok Sabha, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has a big and strong influence in the elections, on the basis of which BJP gets a good number of seats in every election. Actually, I am getting all this because many people are not aware of the stature of Chief Minister Aditya and his clean political record or it can be said that they are taking Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath lightly.

Yesterday, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, after coming out of jail, held a press conference and said that as soon as Modi becomes the PM, he will finish Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Arvind Kejriwal said that PM Modi does not want to fight this election for the country or the party,

he wants to fight only for one person Amit Shah. He said that he will remove Yogi Adityanath from power next time. Sources say that after Arvind Kejriwal's statement of removing Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the game of checkmate and checkmate started in the coin division, and it also revealed who all are in the race for the post of Prime Minister in BJP. According to the number of supporters and impeccable record, Yogi Adityanath is the youngest leader in India who has the capability to become the Prime Minister after Modi.

But due to past experience and the decision of the Central Government to ignore the decisions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in the formation of the cabinet, rumours spread that the Gujarat lobby does not like Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. But now the supporters of Uttar Pradesh are angry with the Chief Minister of Delhi saying this and due to this the Gujarat lobby has started doing something and Chief Minister Yogi has intensified his strategy by drawing his Laxman Rekha.

And there are such political experts that if Gujarat Chief Minister does not help, then BJP will be able to get only 30-40 seats in Uttar Pradesh.

Why Delhi-Tehran deal on Chabahar Port is good news for India's Shia Muslims

After extensive negotiations, India and Iran have finally sealed a historic 10-year bilateral agreement for the operation of the strategically located Chabahar Port on the Gulf country's eastern coast. While India initially engaged in short-term agreements with Iran starting in 2016, the newly inked deal marks a significant milestone. With its presence in Chabahar, India aims to circumvent reliance on Pakistan's ports in Karachi and Gwadar, facilitating smoother access to landlocked Afghanistan and other Central Asian nations via Iran.

This deal has a lot of economic significance for India. Despite the nation's preoccupation with the ongoing Lok Sabha election, the

Narendra Modi government's decisive action, including the special permission reportedly obtained from the Election Commission of India (ECI) to dispatch a central minister to Iran, underscores the paramount importance of this deal for the nation's strategic interests and economic future. In geopolitical dynamics, this deal is a major achievement for India and a testament to Modi's personal diplomacy. It marks our first step into managing overseas ports and serves as a strategic move against the emerging

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Its timing, amid the chaos in West Asia disrupting important trade routes, makes it even more significant.

Furthermore, beyond these tangible benefits, India's diplomatic success shines through the forging of successful ties with conflicted powers. Its diplomatic success is evident in its ability to foster friendly relations with Israel while extending support to Palestine. Simultaneously, New Delhi adeptly navigates deepening ties with the United States and successfully negotiates with Iran, showcasing its diplomatic prowess. Meanwhile, our long-standing partnerships with countries such as Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Japan continue to flourish. India's leadership roles in the G20 forum and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) highlight that its diplomacy is actually working.

A sign of serious concern

These figures have been in the public domain for the last five years, still, it is amazing that in this country, we have some eminent journalists and political commentators misinterpreting the 2019 election as mostly decided on the basis of Pulwama and Balakot. Coming to the 2024 elections, Lokniti-CSDS released a pre-poll survey in April where the data pointed out that the satisfaction level towards the Modi government has seen a dip of around 8.1 per cent — a sign of serious concern for the BJP. Increasing unemployment (12.2 per cent), price rise (7.6 per cent) and falling income (4.1 per cent) are some of the crucial issues in the survey that matter to voters. The pre-poll survey also points out that there is an increase of around 5 per cent in support for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi — 26.5 per cent — as the next prime minister compared to the 2019 pre-poll survey. Interestingly, there is also a 2 per cent increase in support for Narendra Modi — 47.5 per cent — as the next prime minister. This is despite 10 years of anti-incumbency. Many journalists and political commentators are seen discussing that Ram Mandir in Ayodhya isn't a poll issue. First of all, this isn't an issue for a particular election — Ram Mandir is a sentiment for the Hindus. That said, it's still an issue in this election. According

to the pre-poll survey, for 7.5 per cent of voters, Ram Mandir is an important issue when they vote, with an additional 2.3 per cent of voters separately pointing to Hindutva as an important issue when they vote. Clearly, the BJP's Hindutva agenda remains a significant factor for 9.8 per cent of voters in this election, though a small fraction of them may be anti-Hindutva voters. Unemployment remains the most important issue for voters — 27.3 per cent — when they vote. However, it is wrong to conclude that all voters citing unemployment as an important issue are necessarily anti-BJP voters. If they vote for the Modi-led BJP, liberals and Leftists label them as being "blind" towards basic issues like unemployment and price rise. Interestingly, according to the pre-poll survey, 9.1 per cent of voters cited employment as the most liked work of the Modi government — the second most liked factor after Ram Mandir. This means that there is a section that believes that although unemployment is a burning issue, the Modi government has been working to address it. After unemployment, price rise has been cited by 23.4 per cent of voters as an important factor. However, it's worth noting that despite price rise being an important issue during the 2009 elections, the

Congress-led UPA came to power with an increased number of seats. This is not to deny the disillusionment of voters towards the Modi government on price rise. However, welfare schemes, cited by 18.1 per cent of voters as the biggest change since Modi became prime minister, and infrastructure-related works are likely to aid the government, lessening the impact of this disillusionment and preventing it from converting into votes against the BJP-led NDA. Liberals and Leftists aren't happy with Narendra Modi's election speeches targeting Congress-led Opposition for Muslim appeasement. They argue that this is not a significant issue. While the Congress manifesto does not discuss wealth redistribution, the CSDS-Lokniti pre-poll survey suggests that concerns about policies targeting Muslim communities resonate with some voters. The survey found that 47.3 per cent of voters agreed that Muslims are unnecessarily pampered, compared to 32.2 per cent who disagreed, while 20.4 per cent chose not to respond. Modi's speeches on Muslim appeasement, targeting the Opposition, particularly Congress, aim to address the concerns of these voters, close to 50 per cent of those surveyed, while also appealing to undecided voters.

Nitish was foisted as the chair of the alliance

Though some point out that Kharage and not Nitish was foisted as the chair of the alliance, given his track record, the Bihar chief minister's opposition to the BJP was always suspect. The second move by the Congress has been to channelise the strength of the alliance partners to keep itself afloat. To this end, the Congress is contesting only 328 seats this time, significantly fewer than the 421 it contested in the 2019 polls. This number would have been 330, but one candidate's nomination papers were rejected in Surat, and another withdrew in Indore. This means that the Congress

in INDIA has created an alliance base that is much wider than that of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). This also means that the party has shrunk from the position of a dominant partner to a senior partner with some other members of the bloc like the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Punjab not even entertaining an alliance. Those in charge of forging alliances for the Congress claim that this time the grouping is much more pragmatic than in 2019. Uttar Pradesh is a case in point. In 2019, the Congress went into the polls alone, with no major allies. Facing both

the BJP and the SP-BSP alliance, it contested 67 of the state's 80 seats but could win only one: Sonia Gandhi in Raebareilly. This time, in alliance with the Samajwadi Party, it is contesting just 17 seats, down by 50. People close to poll planning point out that it has been done to conserve the party resources for more realistic contests. Similarly, in West Bengal, from contesting 40 seats in 2019, the Congress is taking on just 14 seats this time, giving the remaining Ones to its alliance partner, the Left. The Congress has extended its alliances with Left parties in Andhra Pradesh, giving the Araku seat to the

CPI(M) and Guntur to the CPI. It has also partnered with local parties in other states, such as ceding the Dibrugarh seat in Assam to the Assam Jatiya Parishad and allocating three seats to regional parties in Rajasthan. To avoid repeating past mistakes, the Congress allocated one seat to the Samajwadi Party in Madhya Pradesh. Ironically, the SP candidate's nomination papers were rejected, leading the Congress and SP to back a candidate running on the All India Forward Bloc symbol. Similar arrangements have been made in Tripura, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. How would this affect.

BJP's CAA card has confused Matua voters in Bongaon



BONGAON: A palpable quiet looms over the sleepy villages and bustling market places in Bongaon, with just a week to go for polling (May 20) in this Lok Sabha constituency, tucked away on the India-Bangladesh border. "We will vote on May 20, but no one has come here yet to ask for votes," said Kalpana Sardar (40), a housewife from Petropol village adjoining the border gate, even as the outer wall of her pucca house has Trinamool Congress graffiti on it. There are no party flags anywhere

across the paddy fields or the large ponds around house, except for some wall writing by TMC and BJP to be spotted infrequently. VideosIt's a direct fight between sitting BJP MP Santanu Thakur and Trinamool Congress (TMC) nominee Biswajit Das. Both belong to the dominant Matua community in this seat. CPM's Pradip Biswas is hardly talked about even as the seat was a Left bastion before TMC took it over. Inevitably, the first job for whoever wins this round will have to be addressing the

utter confusion that prevails among Matuas, who constitute about 70 per cent of about 19 lakh voters of Bongaon making them the deciding factor in the constituency. In fact, there is hardly any election activity to be noticed along the two-and-half hour drive from Kolkata right up to the Petropol border with Bangladesh, where van-carts are still ferrying citizens from both sides on official permits locally known as "multi visa" as they visit relatives or buy and sell goods from either side.

No writ petition can be filed against Air India, rules SC

NEW DELHI: Supreme Court on Thursday said no writ petition can be filed against Air India as it has ceased to be a public body after Tata group owned Talace India purchased 100% equity in the airline in Jan 2022. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta gave this ruling while answering a question whether writ petitions by erstwhile employees of Air India, which were maintainable being filed years before its privatisation, could still be continued against the airlines even after its privatisation. Upholding a Bombay HC

decision, the bench said, "There is no dispute that (after) govt of India having transferred its 100% share to Talace India Pvt Ltd, (it) ceased to have any administrative control or deep pervasive control over the private entity (Air India) and hence, the company after its disinvestment could not have been treated to be a State anymore after having taken over by the private company." "Thus, unquestionably, Air India after its disinvestment ceased to be a State or its instrumentality within the meaning of Article 12 of the Constitution. Once

Air India ceased to be covered by the definition of State within the meaning of Article 12, it could not have been subjected to writ jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution," the bench said. It further said on the matter, "Air India, erstwhile govt-run airline having been taken over by private company Talace India, unquestionably, is not performing any public duty inasmuch as it has taken over govt company Air India Limited for ... commercial operations, plain and simple, and thus no writ petition is maintainable against Air India."

Vantara lauded for timely rescue of ailing elephant, calf in Tripura

NEW DELHI: In a timely rescue operation, Anant Ambani's Vantara mobilised from Gujarat a large convoy of vehicles, including ambulances, feed vehicles, and a team of personnel, to rehabilitate an ailing elephant and her calf in Tripura's Unakoti

district. An online video showing the rescue and rehabilitation effort has gone viral. In the video, a woman -- later identified as 'Go Green and Help Stray Animals' organisation general secretary Kuntala Sinha -- can be heard thanking Anant Ambani and

Vantara's team of doctors for their prompt action and saving the elephants. She said the Vantara team reached Unakoti within a day of her approaching them for help in treating the elephant. The convoy made the remarkable 3,500-km journey.

CAPSULES

Lightning kills Kerala tourist on Goa beach

PANAJI: A 35-year-old tourist from Kerala died in a lightning strike at Goa's Miramar beach on Tuesday, police said on Thursday. While Akhil Vijayan, his wife, friends, and children were scurrying back to their car from Miramar beach to escape the rain, lightning struck, leaving Vijayan, his wife, and a male friend unconscious. Vijayan's wife and his friend regained consciousness soon, police said. They suspected Vijayan had a heart attack and admitted him to GMC hospital. The postmortem attributed the Ernakulam resident's death to "electrocution and blast injuries consistent with lightning strike", police said.

Wildlife struggles in scorching summer as temperatures sore in India

During the summer months, animals often face the challenges of heatstroke and viral infections. The situation is worsened by the scarcity of water, hindering their ability to stay hydrated and regulate their body temperatures effectively. **Climate-driven heatwaves impact wildlife** Heatwaves can lead to dehydration, reduced body salt levels, decreased appetite, and lowered production in animals. Human-induced climate change has caused significant harm to wild animals in India, particularly due to the prevalence of extreme heatwaves. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecasted that northwest India will experience heatwave conditions for the next five days, particularly affecting Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Delhi.

AESL Sirsa students create history in NEET 2024, Jatin Dev scores 701 out of 720 and AIR 1589

Sirsa : Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL), the national leader in test preparation services, is proud to announce the remarkable achievement of its 13 students in Sirsa who have scored 650 and above marks in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 2024. Along with this, they have achieved impressive All India Rank. Among the students who scored impressive marks, Jatin Dev scored

701 marks and AIR 1589, Tejaswini Sharma scored 700 marks and AIR 1855, Khushi scored 695 marks and AIR 3105, Satvik Verma scored 695 marks AIR 3291 and Srujan scored 691 marks. At the same time, a total of 13 students from Sirsa scored 650 and above. The National Testing Agency (NTA) has recently declared the results of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 2024. The achievement of the students is a big contribu-

tion of their families, teachers, and Aakash Educational Services Limited. The united support of their peers, family and supporters has brought them to this important milestone. The students have made their parents and the entire staff of Aakash Institute proud by achieving impressive scores. Parmeshwar Jha, Regional Director, Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) said, "Congratulations to all the students on their

outstanding achievement." "We are proud of the achievement of our students. Their impressive scores are shining examples of the potential of our students and the effectiveness of our teaching methods. At Aakash, we are committed to providing the best resources and training to help our students achieve their dreams. The success of these students will undoubtedly inspire many more students to strive for excellence."

Thakur Guni Prakash expressed happiness over Naveen Jindal's victory and distributed laddus

Kaithal: BKU (Mann Group) Haryana State President Thakur Guni Prakash expressed happiness over the victory of BJP candidate Naveen Jindal from Kurukshetra Lok Sabha constituency and said that farmers voted in large numbers in favour of MP Naveen Jindal and in village Faral also people of every class including farmers, he went to every village of the Lok Sabha constituency and appealed to the farmers to vote in favour of Naveen Jindal and farmers openly voted in favour of Jindal. He said that MP Naveen Jindal



Sabha elections brought him to victory. Along with people of every class including farmers, he went to every village of the Lok Sabha constituency and appealed to the farmers to vote in favour of Naveen Jindal and farmers openly voted in favour of Jindal. He said that MP Naveen Jindal

will play an important role in solving the problems of farmers under the able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with solving the problems of farmers on priority basis and also raising voice loudly in the Parliament. Bhakiyu State President Guni Prakash said that the

way MP Naveen Jindal has won with a huge number of votes, now proper development work will be done in Kurukshetra Lok Sabha, because he has the experience of being an MP for the last two times and he knows where development work is needed in Kurukshetra Lok Sabha at this time. His becoming an MP will strengthen the BJP government in Haryana and good work will be done in the 9 assembly constituencies of Kurukshetra Lok Sabha.

What Priyanka Gandhi said on Swati Maliwal assault case

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi on Thursday came out in support of AAP MP Swati Maliwal, who was allegedly assaulted by Arvind Kejriwal's ex-aide, but avoided any direct comment on the case calling it AAP's internal issue. "If any atrocity happens to any woman anywhere, we stand with the woman. I always stand with women - irrespective of which party they belong to. Secondly, AAP will discuss amid themselves and make a decision. It is up to them," Priyanka said when asked about the alleged assault which has put not just the AAP but also other parties of opposition's INDIA bloc on the back-foot. The opposition leaders have avoided a direct remark on the alleged assault case even as the BJP has stepped up the ante demanding action

against Bibhav Kumar, who was PA to Arvind Kejriwal. Swati Maliwal, who has fought against injustice and violence against women for years, has chosen to remain silent on the issue, adding to the intrigue. The AAP has accepted that Bibhav misbehaved with Maliwal at Kejriwal's residence and has maintained that action will be taken against the former PA. Earlier today, Kejriwal did not respond to queries on the case during his joint press conference with Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav in Lucknow. When asked a pointed question during the press conference, Kejriwal was shielded by Akhilesh who said "there are other issues that are more important than this." The BJP has slammed Kejriwal for

his silence on the issue and sought his resignation. "She is certainly the leader of the opposition party but BJP is fighting to ensure that she gets justice. In the police general diary it was mentioned that a call had been received by police and it was made through Swati Maliwal's mobile the caller mentioned that 'I am speaking from CM's residence and he made me thrashed from his PA Bibhav Kumar'. It's not important which party she belongs to she should get justice," said BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia. "Arvind Kejriwal should answer and if you are a coward CM and cannot speak even a single word then you should resign because the women of the country are angry and feeling insulted and only Arvind Kejriwal is responsible for this," he added.

AESL Kurukshetra students create history in NEET 2024

Kurukshetra: Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL), the national leader in test preparation services, is proud to announce the remarkable achievement of 30 of its students in Kurukshetra who have scored 650 marks and above in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 2024 and secured impressive All India Ranks. Among the students who scored impressive marks are Anand Garg with 710 marks and AIR 387, Sanyam Jain with 710 marks and AIR 413, Shruti with 710 marks and AIR 684, Aditya Kumar with 705 marks and AIR 1314 and Sachi with 702 marks and AIR 1443. A total of 30 students from Kurukshetra have scored 650 marks and above. The National Testing Agency (NTA) has



recently declared the results of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 2024. The achievement of the students is a big contribution of their families, teachers, and Aakash Educational Services Limited. The united support of their peers, family and supporters has brought them to this important mile-

stone. The students have made their parents and the entire staff of Aakash Institute proud by achieving impressive scores. Parmeshwar Jha, Regional Director, Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) said, "Congratulations to all the students on their outstanding achievement. "We are

proud of the achievement of our students. Their impressive scores are shining examples of the potential of our students and the effectiveness of our teaching methods. At Aakash, we are committed to providing the best resources and training to help our students achieve their dreams.

Corporates debate setbacks in creating gender inclusive workspaces

BENGALURU: Corporates acknowledge that there is a need for streamlining the system to increase female workforce participation in the organized sector. Poor pay parity is one of the key aspects contributing to high attrition, stakeholders agreed. Karthik SK, head of talent acquisition, human resources at Biocon Biologics, mentioned that women construction workers were tasked with heavy lifting while men did plastering, stone laying, and were paid Rs 200 more. After a dialogue with the contractor, he ensured the rectification of this discrepancy to provide equal pay for all. During an in-depth study, Karthik discovered that the lack of clean and dedicated washrooms contributed to women leaving the workspace within six months of joining. "When young girls join, I observe their families waiting outside until evening for them. They are unsure.

S&P changes India's outlook from 'stable' to 'positive'

NEW DELHI: Global ratings agency S&P on Wednesday revised India's outlook to 'positive' from 'stable' citing robust growth and improvement in the quality of govt spending, but kept the sovereign rating at the lowest investment grade of BBB (minus). "We expect sound economic fundamentals to underpin the growth momentum over the next two to three years. Regardless of the election outcome we expect broad continuity in economic reforms and fiscal policies," said S&P while explaining the rationale for the revision.

Companies can raise funds at competitive cost

Global ratings agency S&P said, "Our positive outlook on India is predicated on its robust economic growth, pronounced improvement in the quality of govt spending, and political commitment to fiscal consolidation. We believe these factors are coalescing to benefit cred-



it metrics." Moody's Investors Service (Baa3) and Fitch (BBB-) have a stable outlook for India and sovereign ratings at investment grade status. S&P had upgrade the outlook to stable from negative in 2010. Govt, which has made repeated arguments for a rating upgrade, appeared pleased with the change in outlook with FM Nirmala Sitharaman describing it as a welcome development. "This reflects India's solid growth performance and a promising economic outlook for the coming years. It has been possible due to the series of macroeconomic reforms undertaken since 2014, along with substantial outlay for capex, fiscal discipline, and decisive & vision-

ary leadership. As envisioned by Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodi, India is well on track to become the third-largest economy in the third term of govt and become a #ViksitBharat by 2047," she tweeted. The revision in the outlook comes as a shot in the arm for the BJP led govt which is widely expected to be re-elected in the ongoing national election - results for which will be announced on June 4. It will also help boost sentiment for an economy which has remained robust against the backdrop of geopolitical tensions and help companies to raise funds at competitive costs overseas. S&P's +ve outlook to help cos raise funds.

Irdai sets 3-hour limit to settle health claims

MUMBAI: Insurance regulator Irdai has brought in several reforms in health covers aimed at improving service standards for policyholders. The new norms will require insurers to approve cashless claims within an hour and provide final authorisation for discharge from a hospital within three hours. Insurers will also need to provide a one-month grace period for annual renewal of health policies and protect benefits under policies renewed within that period. Irdai has issued a master circular on health insurance products that comes into effect immediately (with certain exceptions). The new cir-

cular, which repeals 55 previous circulars, consolidates entitlements in a health insurance policy. Under the new norms, insurers have to ensure that hospitals release mortal remains immediately in the event of a death during treatment. Companies cannot repudiate a claim without the approval of a Claims Review Committee. For settlement of claims, insurers must insurers and TPAs (third party administrators) must collect documents from hospitals and not call for them from the insured. Policyholders with multiple health insurance policies can select the policy under which they

claim the admissible amount. The primary insurer will coordinate the settlement of the balance amount from other insurers. The new rules allow insurers to reward policyholders with no claims during the policy period by offering either an increased sum insured or discounted premium amounts. Policyholders, who want to cancel their policies, can receive a refund of the premium for the unexpired policy period. All individual health insurance policies are renewable and cannot be denied on the basis of previous claims, except in cases of fraud, non-disclosure, or misrepresentation.

Court sentences 2 men to 20-year RI for 2020 acid attack on 17-year-old

A court in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich awarded 20 years of rigorous imprisonment to two men on Wednesday for throwing acid on a 17-year-old girl after she rejected the advances of one of the convicts in 2020.

The court also imposed Rs 1 lakh fine each on Ehtesham, alias Saddam, and Suhail, alias PK Baba, who attacked the Class 12 girl returning from her coaching classes in Bahraich's Kotwali area on Dec 21, 2020.

"Ehtesham had been harassing the girl to marry him. He kept troubling her with text messages on her mobile," said police. Statements of a woman witness, and the text messages corroborated the victim's testimony.

How results of Lok Sabha polls will impact sensex, Nifty

According to a Bloomberg News survey of market participants, Indian stocks require Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party to secure more than 303 seats in the general election to continue their unprecedented rally. The survey, which included 32 asset managers, strategists, and dealers, suggests that a reduced majority for the ruling BJP could result in a 2% decline in the NSE Nifty 50 Index, along with potential losses in the rupee and sovereign bonds. Indian stocks need Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party to win more than 303 seats in the general election to extend their record rally, according to a Bloomberg News survey of



market participants.

A smaller majority for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party may lead to a drop of about 2% in the NSE Nifty 50 Index, with the rupee and sovereign bonds also expected to fall, according to a mean of forecast by 32 asset managers,

strategists and dealers. However, a victory exceeding 303 seats — the party's count in the 2019 polls — may result in gains of about 3% in the benchmark stock gauge, the survey showed. Winning by a landslide would give Modi the mandate need-

ed to push through politically difficult reforms in land acquisition and labor that are seen as crucial for accelerating India's economic growth. While investors still back Modi to win a third term, low voter turnout and reports of close contests in some areas have tempered their enthusiasm about his expected victory margin since elections began on April 19. "If he were not to win, that would create some uncertainty and put some pressure on valuation," Henry Mallari-D'Auria, chief investment officer for global and emerging markets at Ariel Investments LLC, said in an interview. "At this time, there is little uncertainty about the outcome of this election."

Skoda Auto Volkswagen India manufactures 15 lakh units

PUNE: Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Pvt Ltd has manufactured 15 lakh vehicles at its Chakan plant since it rolled out the first car, Skoda Fabia in 2009. The popular models of launched by the company include VW Vento and Polo, Skoda Fabia and Rapid, Taigun and Virtus, Skoda Kushaq and Slavia. Over the past years, the engine shop at the Chakan facility has produced more than 3 lakh engines for the Volkswagen Group. The company has also



manufactured 3 lakh unit for its 2.0 car range, which includes VW Taigun and Virtus, Skoda Kushaq and Slavia.

The company exports over 30% of its car production and has exports to over 40 countries and is among

the top four exporter of India-made cars. "Our decade-long investment in the engine shop and the remarkable output of 15 lakh vehicles at the Chakan plant, showcases India's pivotal role in our global strategy. These achievements not only signify our capabilities but also highlight the immense potential of the Indian market in driving our growth trajectory forward," Andreas Dick, Skoda Auto a.s. board member for production and logistics, said.

Monsoon set to arrive early and simultaneously over Kerala

NEW DELHI: In an uncommon phenomenon, monsoon is expected to arrive both over Kerala and some parts of northeastern states simultaneously with IMD on Wednesday predicting favourable conditions for an early onset/progress during the next 24 hours. Monsoon normally sets in over Kerala on June 1 while it arrives a couple of days later in the North-East and covers most part of it by June 5. Last time, a similar simultaneous onset/progress over Kerala and North-East had happened was on May 30, 2017 triggered by Cyclone Mora that formed over east-central Bay of Bengal. This time, the possibility of simultaneous onset is attributed to Cyclone Remal that formed over Bay of Bengal last week. The cyclonic circulation has pulled the monsoon flow in the region.



"The conditions continue to become favourable for monsoon onset over Kerala during next 24 hours and advance of monsoon over some parts of northeastern states during the same period," said Met department while predicting early onset of showers. Last year, the onset happened over Kerala on June 8 after a delay of seven days. Met department also predicted that the prevailing heat-wave to severe heat-wave conditions over northwest, including Delhi-NCR, and central India are likely to reduce gradually from Thursday. Drop in temperature can be attributed to western distur-

bances. MD had earlier this month predicted the possibility of monsoon onset over Kerala on May 31 with a model error of ± 4 days. Its operational forecasts of the date of monsoon onset over Kerala during the past 19 years (2005-2023) were proved to be correct except in 2015. Advance of the southwest (summer) monsoon over Indian mainland is marked by monsoon onset over Kerala and is an important indicator characterizing the transition from hot and dry season to a rainy season. Southwest monsoon normally sets in over Kerala on 1st Jun with a standard deviation of about seven days.

IL&FS, arms told to recover Rs 150 crore from ex-directors

NEW DELHI: In a rare move, govt has asked the board of IL&FS and two of its arms to recover excess money of Rs 150 crore, including managerial remuneration and commissions, from ex-directors after the entities restated their accounts to show losses of Rs 9,600 crore for financial years 2013 to 2018, instead of a profit of Rs 1,869 crore estimated by the management and board, which had to be superseded following massive irregularities. Directors of IL&FS Financial Services (I-FIN) and IL&FS Transport Network, where accounts were not found to be in order, are facing similar action, official sources told TOI. A large part of the amount is to be recovered from four key directors - Ravi Parthasarthy, Arun Saha, Hari Sankaran and Ramesh Bawa - with the sum adding up

to over Rs 100 crore. Milind Patel, Rajesh Kotian, and Vibhav Kapoor are some of the other directors, who face similar action. The independent directors, some of whom are big names in the corporate sector, have to refund a part of the commission paid during their tenure when the fraud was perpetuated. The list includes prominent names, such as, Maruti Suzuki chairman R C Bhargava, VBHC founder and director Jerry Rao, former HDFC boss K M Mistry, former LIC chairman S B Mathur, retired civil servant Michael Pinto and Rina Kamath. After first reported about the revised accounts on May 6, a former independent director had said that board members like them should not be held responsible as they were not responsible for day-to-day functioning of the entities and went along with

the accounts that were presented and discussed at the board meetings. The boards of IL&FS, I-FIN and ITNL had recast the financial statements for five financial years as mandated by NCLAT and submitted their findings to the ministry of corporate affairs (MCA). The company has also filed these accounts with NCLT so that they can be taken on record. When contacted, an IL&FS spokesperson said: "All three companies, IL&FS, IFIN and ITNL, have written letters to their erstwhile directors informing them of the excess managerial remuneration paid to them between FY2013-18. They have been asked to refund the excess managerial remuneration to the company under applicable laws. These amounts have been computed based on the recasted statements for FY2013-18."

Giant crocodile tries to climb over railing in UP, video goes viral

NEW DELHI: A video of a giant crocodile attempting to jump back into a canal is going viral on social media. In the video, the locals are seen in a panic as the large reptile, which crawled out of the canal, is seen attempting to climb over a railing but ultimately failing. Videos shared by netizens claimed that the incident took place in Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr. Sharing the video, one of the locals said, "UP: This crocodile came out of Ganga canal in Narora of Bulandshahr district. The forest department team reached there and rescued it and released it back in the canal. Crocodile brother, it is hot here, stay in the water..."

Several people recorded this incident and shared on social media claiming that the size of the croc was at least 10 feet. As per the video, officials who came to capture the reptile covered its head with a cloth and sought to immobilize its limbs to prevent any potential attacks on the rescue team. Subsequently, ropes were employed to secure its legs, with four forest officials gripping the ropes attached to the crocodile's head and front legs, while another official looped a piece of rope around its hind legs. Additional personnel lifted the crocodile's tail while others secured a rope around its mouth, as depicted in the videos of the operation.

Government should start new rules to combat fraudulent e-commerce reviews



Delhi: Consumer affairs secretary Nidhi Khare said the Union government will use an Indian Standards code to combat fake customer reviews and inflated ratings on e-commerce platforms, a global issue, as online shoppers complain more on the national consumer helpline. Online shoppers are heavily influenced by customer reviews and ratings. E-commerce sellers manipulate ratings and add paid reviews to encourage sales. "The presence of fake reviews online jeopardizes the trust-

worthiness and credibility of shopping platforms and can cause consumers to make wrong purchase decisions," said Khare, who led a stakeholders' meeting with Amazon and Flipkart executives. Mordor Intelligence estimates that India's e-commerce market would expand from \$112.93 billion in 2024 to \$299.01 billion in 2029, a 21.5% CAGR. The new standard (IS 19000:2022) assigns reviewers and administrators particular duties. New regulations compel organizations to identify

review authors in certain ways. E-commerce grievances on the national consumer helpline increased from 95,270 in 2018 (22% of all grievances) to 4,44,034 in 2023 (43% of total grievances). E-commerce platforms in India must create a documented code of practice and share it with management and workers. Khare said they must show how they will follow this constitution and the guiding principles. Amazon and other platforms have acknowledged the issue globally.

Sebi proposes tighter SME listing requirements over misuse worries

Delhi: Sebi and stock exchanges aim to tighten standards for SMEs seeking public listings, according to Reuters. Concerns over exploitation of a 2012 platform to help small firms access financing markets prompted this change. According to sources in the report, the planned modifications might boost the minimum amount of public offerings to Rs 30 crore to Rs 50 crore (\$3.59 million to \$5.99 million).

In response to stakeholder engagements, these new regulations are due later this year. There's no minimum issue size, but corporations listing on this



market must have Rs 25 crore in post-issue capital. One source told Reuters that a minimum offer size will ensure that genuine enterprises can access financial markets, protecting investor interests. During the fiscal year ending March 2024, more SMEs went public due to India's

strong equities markets. On PRIME Database, 205 companies raised Rs 60 billion through public offerings, up from 125 firms raising Rs 2200 crore the year before. Companies with yearly turnovers between Rs 5 crore and Rs 250 crore are Indian SMEs.

Air India, Vistara try to resolve staff issues before merger

Delhi: As the Vistara merger process begins, Air India hopes to resolve employee fitment difficulties. The Vistara-Air India integration committee has identified certain occupations that will be duplicated following the merger. Vistara has 6,500

employees and Air India 17,000. At a recent town hall meeting, employees were notified that the merger may eliminate some positions. The Tata Group will upskill some employees and place others in other group entities to avoid job losses. Prior to the

merger, Air India employed consultants to design the new structure. Some Air India staff would be kept, while others may join Air India Express. Some employees worry about their career advancement and seniority in the new framework.

CAPSULES

Joe Biden dramatically raises US tariffs on Chinese EVs and chips

Delhi: US President Joe Biden lambasted Beijing for "cheating" as he raised tariffs on Chinese products such as electric vehicles and semiconductors. Beijing strongly opposed the sanctions as Biden sought to appear tough on trade ahead of a rematch with Republican Donald Trump in November's US presidential election.



"We're not going to let China flood our market, making it impossible for American automakers to compete fairly," Biden declared in the White House Rose Garden. He said, "We're never going to allow China to unfairly control the market for these cars," before ordering duties. Trump's tariffs have been frequently criticized by Biden. He's been using similar tactics to win over blue-collar voters in swing Rust Belt states. The White House stated EV tariffs will treble to 100% this year and semiconductor duties will rise from 25% to 50% by next year. The sanctions targeted \$18 billion in Chinese imports, including batteries, vital minerals, and medical supplies. Biden said China has substantially supported critical sectors, forcing corporations to produce more than the world can consume and flooding the market with unfairly priced commodities. The president's announcement followed a review of tariffs imposed by then-president Trump on \$300 billion in Chinese imports. The Biden administration maintained tariffs.

Order mandating SpiceJet to pay Sun Group's Kalanithi Maran 270 crore overturned by Court

Delhi: Judge ordered Spicejet to refund over 1270 crore to Sun Group promoter Kalanithi Maran, but a Division Bench of the Delhi High Court overturned it. SpiceJet and CMD Ajay Singh appealed the single-judge's ruling to a Division Bench of Justices Yashwant Varma and Ravinder Dudeja. Appeals are allowed. The July 31, 2023 order is vacated "By the Court. The Division Bench denied SpiceJet's request to postpone the single-judge ruling upholding an arbitral tribunal award ordering the airline to reimburse over 270 cases. The issue between Maran and SpiceJet began in



January 2015 when Ajay Singh bought SpiceJet from him. Maran reportedly gave Singh his 58.46% airline ownership. According to the contract,

Maran would receive redeemable warrants for his airline promotion investments. Maran was entitled to 18 crore warrants and 26% SpiceJet shares. No con-

vertible warrants or preference shares were issued to Maran, and he received no money. Maran sought roughly 1,323 crore in damages. Arbitration was ordered by the Delhi High Court. The arbitral tribunal ordered SpiceJet to return Maran 1270 crore in July 2018. The tribunal also ordered the airline to pay 12% interest on warrant payments and 18% on Maran awards if they are late. The tribunal also found no breach of Maran, SpiceJet, and Ajay Singh's share sale and purchase agreement. Thus, Maran's shareholding return and damages claims were denied.

Government e-commerce platform accepting unicorns



Delhi: Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), a UPI-like alternative to e-commerce heavyweights, is onboarding unicorns like Makemytrip, Policybazaar, Cars24, and Zerodha to build traction. While ONDC was created to support small businesses like kirana stores and democratize online shopping, the government believes large players will give consumers more choice and boost demand in smaller towns and cities. The goal is to assist consumers and

businesses without platform fees."It gained popularity in the last two years. Five lakh sellers—70% small and medium—have joined. ONDC processed 72 million transactions in April "Rajesh Kumar Singh, industry and internal trade secretary, told reporters. Singh

expects all types of players to join, when asked if big startups would overwhelm smaller ones. "The intent is noble, let us see how it works and to what extent we can actually crack some of the issues you raised in terms of market concentration," said.

Microsoft, I4C remove 1,000 cybercriminal Skype accounts



Delhi: The Indian Cyber Coordination Centre (I4C) and Microsoft have blocked over 1,000 Skype accounts linked to intimidation, blackmail, extortion, and 'digital arrests' of citizens by cyber criminals posing as police, CBI, narcotics, RBI, or ED personnel. A MHA statement stated I4C helps prevent SIM cards, mobile devices, and mule accounts used by criminals. Many complaints are being reported on the National Cyber Crime

Reporting Portal (NCRP) about how these fraudsters call potential victims and claim they have sent or are the intended recipient of a parcel containing illegal goods, drugs, fake passports, or other contraband. They may also claim that a loved one is in their custody for a crime or accident. Money is demanded to compromise the "case". Some victims face 'digital arrest' until their demands are granted. Many victims have

lost a lot of money to such thieves. The home ministry stated cross-border crime syndicates run this online economic crime. MHA said it is collaborating with other ministries, agencies, RBI, and other organizations to combat these frauds. I4C assists police in all states and Union Territories in identifying and investigating cases. Citizens should be aware of these frauds and disseminate knowledge. image

Airtel partners with Google Cloud to provide Indian businesses cloud and gen-AI solutions

Delhi: Bharti Airtel and Google Cloud are partnering to offer Indian businesses cloud and generative-AI solutions. The telecom company will use Google Cloud products to accelerate cloud adoption and modernization through the agreement. Airtel will offer cloud-managed services to its corporate customers, including over 2,000 large organizations and a million developing businesses. This partnership targets India's big and rising public cloud services industry, which IDC predicts will be worth \$17.8 billion by 2027.

Bharti Airtel managing director and CEO Gopal Vittal said, "Cloud and AI solutions will drive India's digital transformation. We're excited to collaborate with Google



Cloud to provide safe and scalable cloud solutions for government, companies, and startups. Our collaboration will speed the implementation of generative AI in the country and uncover its potential to solve challenges. Airtel will also use Google Cloud's generative AI to improve its mobile, broadband, and digital TV consumer experiences and internal processes. Airtel will also offer similar services to its Indian and global B2B customers.

According to Google Cloud CEO Thomas Kurian, "Our strategic partnership with Airtel is a major step for accelerating cloud and AI adoption in India. We want to develop disruptive solutions to improve Airtel's customer experience through our relationship." Airtel will train artificial-intelligence and machine-learning solutions on its enormous dataset using the two businesses' strengths—connectivity and AI technology.

IFC provides \$500 million to HDFC Bank so that it can offer microloans to female clients



Delhi: HDFC Bank said that it has received \$500 million from the IFC to support low-income women borrowers on lending. According to an official release, the largest private sector lender in the nation would provide financing for income production, promoting financial inclusion and socio-economic growth. The microloans will be extended to women registered in the lender's

Sustainable Livelihoods Initiative (SLI) as well as self-help and joint liability groups. Arup

Rakshit, group head of Treasury at HDFC firm, stated that the firm has opted for a longer-term loan facility that will support the bank's endeavors to empower women. According to the statement, banks' wide distribution and cheaper funding costs can be used to provide microloans to women, despite the fact that non-banks now service two thirds of the microfinance market. "Having access to financial services is essential for enhancing the economy and empowering women.

The RBI advised banks to conduct periodic reviews



NEW DELHI: The Reserve Bank of India's Annual Report, released on Thursday, revealed that unclaimed deposits in banks have surged by 26% year-on-year, reaching Rs 78,213 crore by the end of March 2024 from Rs 62,225 crore reported a year ago.

Banks, including cooperative banks, are required to transfer unclaimed deposits of account holders that have remained dormant for 10 years or more to the RBI's Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund.

The central bank, earlier this year, issued extensive instructions in an effort to assist account holders and streamline the exist-

ing guidelines on inoperative accounts. These guidelines cover various aspects of classifying accounts and deposits as inoperative or unclaimed, as well as measures to be implemented by banks.

The RBI advised banks to conduct periodic reviews of such accounts, implement measures to prevent fraud, establish grievance redress mechanisms for swift complaint resolution, and take steps to trace customers of inoperative accounts or unclaimed deposits, including their nominees or legal heirs, for account reactivation, claim settlement, or closure.

These instructions were expected to

complement the current initiatives taken by banks and the Reserve Bank to decrease the amount of unclaimed deposits within the banking system and return such deposits to their rightful owners/claimants.

The updated instructions, which came into effect on April 1, 2024, are applicable to all commercial banks (including Regional Rural Banks) and all cooperative banks.

To make it easier for depositors to search for unclaimed deposits across multiple banks in one centralized location, the Reserve Bank developed a web portal called UDGAM - Unclaimed Deposits Gateway to Access Information.

Oyo posting net profits of nearly Rs 100 crore

MUMBAI: Oyo Hotels & Homes has recorded its first profitable year in FY24, posting net profits of nearly Rs 100 crore, founder Ritesh Agarwal said on Thursday. "This (January-March quarter) was our eighth consecutive quarter of a positive EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) and we also have a cash balance of about Rs 1,000 crore," Agarwal said in a post on social media platform X, adding that the numbers are provisional. EBITDA is a metric of operational profitability.

Oyo is among a batch of late-stage startups which have been working towards reduc-

ing cash burn, building in operational efficiencies and achieving profitability. A global tech downturn and reset in startup valuations nudged companies to set their financials in order and chase prudent growth. Investors have been maintaining a cautious stance and only cutting cheques for companies which have been at least able to demonstrate a path to profitability. SoftBank-backed Oyo recently withdrew its draft initial public offering (IPO) papers with market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for the second time and is negotiating with investors for a fundraise

at lower valuation. The fresh funding could be at a 70% drop from its peak valuation of \$10 billion, had reported last week. Company insiders claim that the Gurgaon-based startup plans to refile IPO papers after refinancing its \$450 million loan.

Agarwal said that various emerging travel trends bodes well for the hospitality sector. "I see growth ahead not just in India with emerging travel trends such as premiumisation, spiritual travel, business travel and conferences, destination weddings but also in our other key markets of Nordics, South East Asia, US and UK," Agarwal said.

Rename namesake disease hitting Ranikhet's fame: HC

DEHRADUN: Uttarakhand high court has directed the state to propose a new name for a disease that has Ranikhet, a picturesque tourist spot, in its name. After a PIL highlighted that the hill

station's reputation suffers due to its association with an avian disease known as 'Ranikhet disease', the administration has now been told to file an affidavit suggesting an alternative name by

June 27. During the hearing, Chief Justice Ritu Bahri and Justice Rakesh Thapliyal discussed the negative impact of the disease's name on Ranikhet's tourism. Ranikhet

Poor pay parity is one of the key aspects contributing to high attrition, stakeholders

BENGALURU: Corporates acknowledge that there is a need for streamlining the system to increase female workforce participation in the organized sector. Poor pay parity is one of the key aspects contributing to high attrition, stakeholders agreed.

Karthik SK, head of talent acquisition, human resources at Biocon Biologics, mentioned that women construction workers were tasked with heavy lifting while men did plastering, stone laying, and were paid Rs 200 more. After a dialogue with the contractor, he ensured the rectification of this discrepancy to provide equal pay for all. During an in-depth study, Karthik discovered that the lack of clean and



dedicated washrooms contributed to women leaving the workspace within six months of joining. "When young girls join, I observe their families waiting outside until evening for them. They are unsure if their daughter is in the right job or a safe space. That assur-

ance must be provided," he said. Over the years, with reforms at the ground level, he noted that attrition was reduced from 11 percent to six percent. Sayantan Nandy, chief of staff at Delhivery, mentioned the need to sensitize people in the warehouse

about their language. "The warehouse is a loud space, and the language used may not be appropriate. We sensitized them. Whenever we encountered resistance, we inquired why it was difficult." Nandy added that with the integration of technology in the workspace, where battery-operated pallet trucks and telescopic conveyor belts were introduced, the physical hazards of the job were mitigated. This made it easier for women to join. "Initially, we did not have separate female washroom facilities or female security guards. But that changed. A larger diversity presence was seen with more female employees, even in admin and HR," he said.

55% of consumers associate unhygienic milk with unbranded milk

HYDERABAD: Dairy Creamline Products Ltd, an arm of agribusiness player Godrej Agrovet Ltd, on Thursday announced its foray into the premium milk category with the rollout of Godrej My Farm Milk in the Hyderabad market. The company said the milk is sourced directly from the 1,400 cows at its own farm at Nashik using a completely automated process from milking to pasteurization and packaging. The milk is processed and packaged at its unit in

Hyderabad. The farm has a 9,000 litres per day capacity and the company is currently selling around 400 litres of the premium milk exclusively in the Hyderabad market through the quick commerce route, Godrej CEO Bhupendra Suri said. The company also launched its milk report that highlighted that 55% of consumers associate unhygienic milk with unbranded milk options and that 90% of consumers are willing to pay more or a premium for high-

quality and safe milk, reiterating the growing demand for pure and safe dairy products among consumers. The company also launched its milk report that highlighted that 55% of consumers associate unhygienic milk with unbranded milk options and that 90% of consumers are willing to pay more or a premium for high-quality and safe milk, reiterating the growing demand for pure and safe dairy products among consumers.

TDP chief launches Praja Galam yatra, vows to end YSRCP's autocratic rule in the state

TIRUPATI: Former Chief Minister and Telugu Desam chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu launched the "Praja Galam" poll campaign amidst much fanfare at Palamaner in his home district of Chittoor on Wednesday and vowed to end the autocratic rule of the YSRCP in the state in the 2024

polls. Addressing an impressive rally at Palamaner, Naidu denounced the manner in which the YSRCP government neglected the irrigation projects in the water-parched and perennially drought-prone Rayalaseema region of the state. Telugu Desam founder and former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao had a vision to bring Krishna waters to address the drinking and irrigation water needs of the Rayalaseema region. "It was during the Telugu Desam Party regime in the state that various irrigation projects such as the Telugu Ganga, Handri Neeva, Galeru Nagari, etc., were taken up. While 90% of the works of the irrigation projects were completed by the TDP, the YSRCP government couldn't complete the pending 10% of the works in the last five

years," Naidu lamented. "During the TDP regime between 2014-2019, about 62 irrigation projects were initiated, and 24 were completed. While the TDP spent Rs. 68,000 crore on irrigation projects across the state, Rs. 12,000 crore was allocated for the completion of irrigation projects in the Rayalaseema region alone. The Jagan Reddy government allocated only Rs. 2,125 crore for irrigation projects in the Rayalaseema region in the last five years, reflecting the government's lack of resolve for the completion of irrigation projects in the state," the TDP chief observed. Highlighting the six guarantees of the TDP, Naidu promised the people

that the state would be brought back on the path of development.

Birla Estates sets a new benchmark in Uber luxury real estate with the launch of Silas at Birla Niyaara clocking over INR 2500 Cr Sales

Birla Estates Pvt. Ltd. a 100% wholly owned subsidiary of Century Textiles and Industries Limited and the real estate venture of the Aditya Birla Group, announces record sales of its signature tower Silas at Birla Niyaara clocking an extraordinary INR 2500 Cr at launch. This has propelled Birla Niyaara's cumulative sales thus far to over INR 5400 Cr. Silas at Birla Niyaara features 148 4BHK-5BHK palatial residences, continuing the legacy of luxury set by the first tower. Birla Niyaara epitomizes convenience as it seamlessly connects Mumbai's premier commercial hubs, Fort and Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC). Its strategic location, in close proximity to the imminent Worli-Sewri connector and the new

trans-harbor link, guarantees swift and effortless access to these distinguished Central Business Districts (CBDs). The project also stands as a testament to Birla Estates' commitment to sustainability and boasts of 3 exclusive clubhouses for every age and interest, Hive - The Social Club, Playpen - The Children Clubhouse and BeFit - The Sports Club. Commenting on this development, Mr. K. T. Jithendran, MD & CEO at Birla Estates said, "Silas at Birla Niyaara will set new standards for luxury living in Mumbai. With its exquisite design and premium amenities, it promises residents an unparalleled lifestyle experience. Additionally, being India's first LEED Platinum

Project underscores our commitment to sustainability in real estate development." He further added, "Today's luxury homebuyers seek privacy, exclusivity, and unique experiences. At Birla Estates, our commitment extends beyond luxury to embrace a vision of residences that not only epitomize opulence but also champion a greener.

more sustainable tomorrow." Birla Niyaara is a canvas where luxury meets purpose, creating a living experience that is both refined and meaningful. Silas' design ensures that every residence captures the beauty of the surroundings, offering a majestic view that enhances the overall living experience.

Pharma exports grew 10% to \$28 billion in FY24, poised to hit \$31 billion

HYDERABAD: India's pharmaceutical exports clocked a nearly 10% growth in FY24 to hit \$27.8 billion, propelled by the double digit growth in the US and UK generics market, and is poised to reach \$31 billion in the current fiscal year, a top official of Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil) said on Thursday.

India's pharma industry, which is currently pegged at around \$65 billion, is poised to grow to around \$130 billion by 2030, Pharmexcil director General Ravi Uday Bhaskar said at the inaugural of the 10th edition of PharmaLytics here. Pointing out that 50% of the Indian pharma sectors exports go to highly regulated mar-

kets, Bhaskar said exports to US grew over 15.6% to over \$ 8.7 billion in FY24 due to shortages in drug manufacturing capacities and the increasing demand for drugs pertaining to lifestyle diseases such as hypertension, depression, diabetes in the US.

He said exports to the UK saw a 21.6% growth partly due to the increased cost of drugs, which were earlier sourced from Europe, post-Brexit. Apart from this, Africa showed a positive turnaround during FY24, from a degrowth of 5% to a growth of 8% as NGOs, who had diverted their funds meant for Africa towards Covid-19 vaccines and medicines, restarting procurement of drugs, he said.