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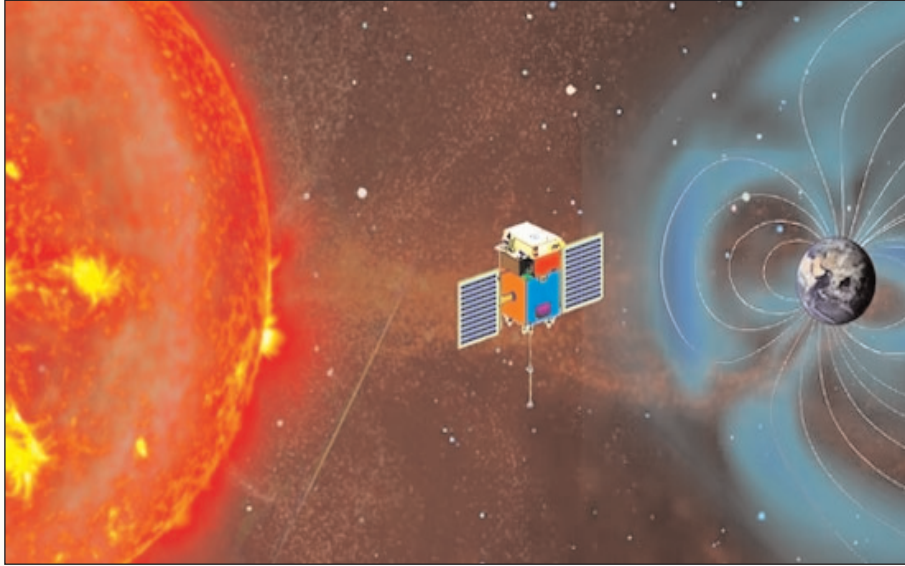
MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

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

Aditya-L1: 127-day journey paves way for crucial data on space weather

From L1, the spacecraft will be able to see how particles and radiation from heightened solar activity



New Delhi Jan 07, 20

The Aditya-L1 spacecraft on Saturday completed a 127-day journey to reach its final parking spot, readying itself for five years of crucial observations about various aspects of the Sun. After the successful insertion of Aditya-L1 into a Halo Orbit around Lagrange Point 1, a region about 1.5 million km from the Earth, Isro chief S Somanath said that the satellite will have a mission life of at least five years and findings collated in this period will be significant not just for Indian scientific community but for the world. "Understanding

the Sun is not important for India alone, everyone around the world is looking forward to the findings," Somanath said in his address to media after the space agency's scientists performed the final set of manoeuvres to place the craft in a halo orbit around L1. From L1, the spacecraft will be able to see how particles and radiation from heightened solar activity has an effect, while also studying the outer sur-

face of the star in close detail — something that is normally not possible from the Earth, or even its orbit. Giving details about the 1.5 million km journey of the craft, Annapurna Subramaniam, director of Indian Institute of Astrophysics, said it was completed in three phases — the earth-bound orbit, the cruise phase and finally the insertion of the craft into the halo orbit. Now the orbit phase of the mission

will start where the experiments will be turned on. "This is a big milestone for us. Now that the craft has been inserted into a halo orbit around L1, we will start the process of operating all the science instruments on-board. The next phase will be a performance evaluation phase and we will start receiving data," Subramaniam said. IIA designed the primary payload, the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC).

PM Modi reviews conventional, new challenges with security brass

New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday addressed the country's top police and intelligence brass on the second day of the closed-door annual security conference in the pink city.



While details of PM's interaction with the officers were not immediately known, people familiar with the deliberations said the three-day conference is focused on diverse range of national security topics such as tackling new-age crimes such as cyber,

identity-related offences, misuse of technology by powers inimical for India's growth, besides conventional challenges such as cross border terrorism and smuggling, terrorism and radicalization activities in the hinterland, left-wing extremism, etc.

Sessions also revolve around providing citizen-friendly policing services, nuclear, chemical and biological threats as well as demographic changes in border areas, the officials said.

Speaking at the inauguration on Friday, Shah had asked the

director generals of police (DGPs) of all states and union territories (UTs) to train the officers in all ranks and upgrade technology in police stations for effective implementation of recently passed criminal laws - Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Bill (BSB), which replace the colonial-era Indian Penal Code (IPC), Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act.

Karnataka govt seeks to amend property tax payment rules

Bengaluru

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Saturday said that the government would amend laws to allow more time for payment of property tax and penalties. Speaking after the 'Government at Your Doorstep' griev-

ance redressal programme at RBANMS High School grounds, he said, "There are many appeals during the grievance redressal meetings requesting more time for payment of property tax and penalties. There are also many plants seeking to

ease property tax payment processes. The government would amend the rules after discussing it with the officials."

"Many people have built commercial properties in residential plots and that has attracted penalties. Many people

have expressed the opinion that the penalties are too high and the deadlines are too short. Against this backdrop, the government will look at extending the deadlines for payment of penalties and also simplifying the process," DK Shivakumar said.

SC to deliver verdict on Bilkis plea on remission to convicts tomorrow

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday will deliver judgment on petitions challenging the Gujarat government's decision to prematurely release 11 convicts serving life in prison for the gang rape of Bilkis Bano and various other heinous crimes committed during the 2002 riots. A bench of justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan will pronounce its decision after it had reserved orders on petitions filed by Bano and others on October 12. The court had directed the Centre and state government to submit the original files containing the decision-making process that freed the convicts in August 2022.

Bano was 21 and five months pregnant when she was gang raped as she tried to flee with her family to safety during the 2002 Gujarat riots. The 11 convicts also killed seven members of her family, including her three-year old daughter. The trial of the case was shifted from Gujarat to Mumbai and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigated the case. In 2008, a special court in Mumbai sentenced the 11 to life imprisonment. This decision was upheld by a division bench of the Bombay high court in 2017. The top court had in March last year issued notice on a public interest litigation filed by former Communist Party of India MP Subhashini Ali and others, and later other petitioners, including Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, challenged the remission. The Gujarat government objected to the right to bring an action to court of the petitioners to question the remission. This was rendered moot when Bano approached the top court in November 2022 against the remission. The petitions raised a legal challenge to the grant of remission by alleging that the Gujarat government wrongly considered the premature release of the 11 convicts under a 1992 remission policy.

'Uttarakhand govt to build state guest house near Ram Temple in Ayodhya'

Doon

Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami announced that the state government will build a state guest house near the grand temple of Lord Ram being built in Ayodhya. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced that the state government will build a state guest house near the grand temple of Lord Ram being built in Ayodhya.



According to an official release from the Chief Minister's Office, "Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said that the state government will build a state

guest house near the grand temple of Lord Ram being built in Ayodhya." It is noteworthy that, as a result of the special efforts of the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, the Uttar

Pradesh government has allotted land for the state guest house in Ayodhya, said the CMO. "A total of 4700.23 square metres of land has been allotted by the Uttar Pradesh Housing and Development Council in Ayodhya for the state guest house of Uttarakhand, where the guest house will be constructed by the Uttarakhand government," it added.

Attack on ED officials: Lookout notice issued against TMC's Shahjahan Sheikh

North 24 Parganas

A team of officials from the Enforcement Directorate was attacked by a mob for the second time in a row within a span of a few hours in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas after they arrested a Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader late on Friday night for his alleged involvement in the multi-crore ration distribution scam in West Bengal. A team of the federal agency arrest-



ed TMC leader Shankar Adhya, a former chairman of the Bongaon municipality in North 24 Parganas and a close associate of arrested state food minister Jyoti Priya Mallick, from his residence. "Adhya was

questioned and his house was searched for around 17 hours before he was arrested.

A special court sent him to 14 days' judicial custody on Saturday," said an ED official.

Absence of law can't give blanket immunity to adulterer, says HC

New Delhi:

A woman had alleged that her husband married another woman in 2015 and a daughter was born out of said marriage. Absence of a law that makes adultery an offence cannot provide individuals with a blanket immunity of marrying another person secretly during the subsistence of their first marriage,



the Delhi high court said, adding that it was crucial to legally protect those partners who have committed to the sanctity

and values of marriage.

The court was of the view that insisting the victim spouse to provide evidence regarding performance of the ceremonies of a second marriage for the offence of bigamy was dangerous for the society and the partner.

"The gravity of the offence of

bigamy, which mandates the solemnization of a previous valid marriage and the conduct of a spouse to get married to another person during the lifetime and existence of the first valid marriage is both dangerous for society and for the victim spouse," a bench of justice Swarana Kanta Sharma said.

DGCA asks airlines to conduct inspection after Alaska aircraft's door blows out

New Delhi: Civil aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Saturday asked airlines to conduct a one-time inspection of all the Boeing 737-8 aircraft in their fleet after an Alaska Airline flight made an emergency landing after one of its doors blew open mid-air on Friday. The aircraft, a

Boeing 737-9 Max, was flying from Portland, Oregon, to Ontario, California. The airline had grounded all its B737 Max 9 for checks. m While India doesn't have B737-9 Max aircraft in its fleet, currently there are 43 B737 MAX planes in the fleet of various airlines in India. These include 22 of them with Akasa Air, 13

with SpiceJet B737 and eight with Air India Express. DGCA's statement issued on Saturday clarified that Boeing had not shared inputs so far. The statement said, "Pursuant to the Alaska Airlines incident involving Boeing 737-9 Max aircraft, there have been no inputs /guidance from Boeing so far.

Delhi's minimum temperature at 8.9°C on third day of dense fog

New Delhi

The Capital spent yet another day in grey, foggy conditions with daytime peak temperature on Saturday reaching just 15.2°C and low in the early hours settling at 8.9°C, but weather scientists said relief might at last be round the corner. While these numbers — recorded at the base station Safdarjung — did not meet the criteria of a "cold day" classification for the city, other parts were colder, such as Lodhi Road, where a maximum of 15°C was five notches below normal for this time of the year, qualifying it to be called a cold day. In what may be of some relief, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted temperatures to rise over the next two days, with an approach-

How a strategically deployed INS Chennai thwarted hijack



New Delhi

On Friday, in a daring operation, Indian marine commandos intercepted, then boarded the hijacked ship, and rescued the crew.

INS Chennai, the people cited in the first instance said, was among the warships deployed off the African seaboard, south of the Red Sea, and in the Arabian Sea, by naval planners under direction from the Narendra Modi government, since October 2023. New Delhi has always been clear that

it is committed to keeping sea lanes safe from Somali pirates, an objective that has expanded in recent weeks to deal with the challenge posed by Houthi militia against commercial shipping in north Arabian sea. Thanks to the proactive action taken by the Naval Headquarters, front-line guided missile destroyers INS Kochi and INS Kolkata are now deployed off the Gulf of Aden. Besides, destroyers Murgogao, Chennai, and frigates Talwar and Tarkash.

Ajay Maken, Jairam Ramesh in Congress publicity panel for LS polls

● Congress on Saturday also constituted a 'central war room' for general elections with Vaibhav Walia



NEW DELHI: Stepping on the gas on its preparations for the Lok Sabha polls, Congress on Saturday set up a publicity committee with AICC treasurer Ajay Maken as its convener and party general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal among its members. It also constituted the state election committees of Kerala, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh

, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura. MP, on the other hand, will have a pradesh election committee as well as a political affairs committee, one headed by the party's newly minted state president Jitu Patwari and the lat-

ter by AICC general secretary in charge Jitendra Singh. While the 24-member Rajasthan election committee will be led by state chief Govind Singh Dotasra and will have former chief minister Ashok Gehlot, Sachin Pilot and Jitendra Singh, among others, the Kerala election committee will be led by PCC K Sudhakaran along with 32 leaders including V D Satheshan, A K Antony, K C Venugopal and Ramesh Chennithala. The 25-

member Telangana pradesh election panel is headed by newly appointed chief minister A Revanth Reddy, while the Himachal Pradesh election committee will be chaired by Lok Sabha MP Pratibha Singh and will have chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu as member along with 14 others. While Congress appointed a 34-member pradesh election committee in MP led by Jitu Patwari, the political affairs committee for MP will be chaired

by AICC general secretary in charge Jitendra Singh. While Patwari will be its convener, it will have former CMs Kamal Nath and Divijaya Singh and CLP leader Umang Singhar, among others, as members. Congress on Saturday also constituted a 'central war room' for general elections with Vaibhav Walia heading the communications war room and Sasikanth Senthil S chairing the organisational war room.

Government school of Damkora remained first in the district in beautification, received prize money of one lakh rupees

Loharu

Rama Vidyalaya of village Damkora of the sub-division has got first place in the block level Chief Minister School Beautification Incentive Award Scheme. There is an atmosphere of happiness in the school on this success of the school. Let us tell you that Naresh Kumar, Headmaster of Rama Vidyalaya, Damkora, took charge as the Headmaster of Government Secondary School, Damkora on 1 September 2022. In a short period of just 1 year and 3 months, through his efficient leadership, he formed Team Damkora and achieved many goals in the interest of students, school and society.

For the all-round development of the school, a blueprint was prepared with the participation of all the staff members, SMC members, Gram Panchayat and villagers present and



moved forward in that direction. The result of these meaningful efforts was that it secured first position in the first block level Chief Minister's School Beautification Incentive Award Scheme and received a prize money of Rs 50 thousand from the Education Department, Haryana Government. Taking

these efforts forward, he has now got the first position in the district level Chief Minister's School Beautification Incentive Award Scheme and has again received an amount of Rs 1 lakh from the Education Department, Haryana Government. On this achievement of the school, DEEO Santosh Nagar, BEO

Vijay Prabha, CRC Ravindra Sharma, Sarpanch representative Azad Sangwan, SMC head Satyaveer Singh, Vikas Mandaviya, Hon. Bharat Singh, former Sarpanch Inder Singh, Sandeep Aladia etc. expressed gratitude to the school head Naresh Kumar and all the staff members.

Maharashtra deputy CM Ajit Pawar skips sharing stage with uncle

MUMBAI: Maharashtra deputy CM Ajit Pawar skipped the inauguration of a drama event that uncle and NCP founder Sharad Pawar attended with chief minister Eknath Shinde in Pune on Saturday. This prompted speculation that Ajit missed the 100th Natya Sammelan to avoid sharing the stage with Pawar. On Saturday, Ajit stayed away despite being present in Pimpri Chinchwad, where the Sammelan was held. "I had some activities lined up in the morning. I had to skip them because of personal issues," Ajit said.

Asked why he stayed away from Sammelan despite being Pune's guardian minister, Ajit pointed out that "CM Shinde was present" and that he had cleared funds for the event earlier. "I have met my responsibility."

After 40 years, rhinos return to sanctuaries in Assam

GUWAHATI: After 40 years, rhinos have returned to stay at Laokhowa and Burachapori wildlife sanctuaries of greater Kaziranga, Assam, following a massive eviction through which 1,282 hectares of forest and government land were cleared of illegal settlements last year. Until 1983, Laokhowa-Burachapori in Nagaon district had 45-50 rhinos. While poachers killed a few, the surviving rhinos left for Orang National Park on the north bank of the Brahmaputra following encroachment and human settlements over the last several decades. Laokhowa-Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) and the first addition to Burachapori WLS - total 309.20sqkm - has witnessed the return of two rhinos to the landscape after almost a gap of 40 years and they have made the landscape their home since November last year, officials said. While many rhinos were killed, the degradation of grassland habitat amid anthropogenic pressure wiped out the animals from here. "Happy to share that after 40 years our iconic Rhinos have returned to Laokhowa and Burachapori.

Lost hope, better to die in jail: Teary Goyal to court

MUMBAI

After a trembling 74-year-old Jet Airways (India) Ltd (JIL) founder Naresh Goyal, arrested in a money laundering case, cried before the special PMLA court on Saturday about how he had lost every hope of life and it would be better that he should die in jail rather than being kept alive in such a situation, the judge



assured him that he will not be left helpless and all possible care for his mental and physical health will be taken with proper treatment.

With folded hands and bowing before the court, Goyal submitted that his health is very bad and precarious and he was missing his bedridden wife. Special Judge M G Deshpande said, "The court also directed his lawyers to take appropriate steps from the point of his illness. The court assured him that everything regarding his health

will be taken care of." Goyal has been in judicial custody since September 14. Last month, taking cognisance of the chargesheet against Naresh Goyal, wife Anita Goyal and four companies, the judge held it was found that public money worth Rs 5,716.3 crore obtained from a consortium of banks led by SBI and PNB.

Will decide 'very soon' whether or not to join temple ceremony, says Mallikarjun

NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Saturday he will take a decision "very soon" about whether or not to attend the Ram Temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya on January 22.

Asserting that this was a matter of personal faith, not politics, Kharge also said anyone invited to attend, was free to decide. "It is about 'personal



astha'... If there is an invite, you can go, anyone else can go...I have got the invitation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's for-

mer principal secretary had come along with the secretary of the (temple) trust, they have invited me. I will decide on it very soon," Kharge said. Apart from Kharge, former party chief Sonia Gandhi and Congress leader in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, have been invited to attend the event. helps for retired CJs and judges, the bench said.

NIA attaches four properties of Lawrence Bishnoi gang

NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday attached five properties, including four related to the terrorist-gangster-drug smuggler nexus case and a fifth in another case related to the 2022 Chanapora arms seizure of Kashmir, on grounds

of being "proceeds of terrorism."

The four properties, including an SUV, attached in the terrorist-gangster case are owned by members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. In a coordinated swoop by NIA teams in Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, these properties were

attached for having been used to hatch terror conspiracies and execute serious crimes. A flat in Lucknow belonging to Vikas Singh, harbinger of the terror gang and two other properties in Fazilka, Punjab owned by accused Dalip Kumar were attached, while an SUV registered in

the name of Joginder Singh was seized in Haryana. While Vikas Singh, as per NIA probe, is an associate of Bishnoi and had harboured terrorists including those accused in the RPG attack on Punjab Police headquarters, Joginder Singh is the father of gangster Kala Rana.

Whisky bottles stand tall in CJ's courtroom as liquor war enters SC

NEW DELHI

Law and liquor seldom mix in courtrooms, but Friday was an exception as whisky bottles with golden-hued contents stood tall on the lawyer's table in the Chief Justice of India's courtroom in Supreme Court with Pernod Ricard, manufacturer of 'Blenders Pride' and 'Imperial Blue' brands of whisky, accusing a Madhya Pradesh company of selling the deceptively named 'London Pride' whisky and hurting its ₹4,400 crore annual turnover.

Pernod Ricard, which acquired these brands from Seagram, accused Dhar-



based Karanveer Singh Chhabra's JK Trading of copying the "get-up and dressing" of the bottles, and embossing 'London Pride' bottles with the Seagram logo. "They must be either manufacturing the bottles or getting them from scrap dealers," senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi told a bench of Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and Justices J

B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. When the bench wanted to have visual evidence of the alleged similarity between the two brands, Rohatgi pulled out the packaged bottles and placed them on the arguing table, raising the curiosity of many lawyers who stood up from their seats to take a glance. Rohatgi even unpacked the bottles and tried to hand it over to the judges to take a closer look. A smiling CJ told Rohatgi to keep the bottles with him and said he had dealt with a case relating to a vodka brand as a judge of Bombay high court.

'One Indian deported a day from US for illegal entry, stay in 2023'

AHMEDABAD: In late December, a flight bound for Nicaragua with 303 Indian passengers was grounded at a French airport, reigniting concerns about illegal immigration from India. Turns out, in 2023, the US deported at least one Indian a day either for not having the proper papers or entering/residing in the country un lawfully, according to data from the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The American authorities sent back 370 Indians in the past year, revealed figures from ICE. Between 2018 and 2023, a total of 5,477 Indians were deported from the US to India for illegal entry and stay. Highest number of Indians deported in 2020: ICE data ICE was established in 2003 by merging the former US Customs Service and the Immigration.

FROM VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO VIBRANT COMMUNITIES: GODREJ & BOYCE'S CSR IMPACT FELT BY LACS IN INDIA

Gurugram: Godrej & Boyce (G&B), the flagship company of the Godrej Group, announced its CSR achievements in 2023. Anchored in its steadfast commitment and significant milestones in nation-building, its initiatives are built on ensuring employability and community development. In line with its strategic emphasis on promising regions and trades, the company has INR 18 crore in its skilling initiative over the past decade. This investment has yielded social returns six times the initial amount. DISHA, the skill development initiative of G&B is committed to advancing vocational training aligned with the company's business needs, encompassing areas from sales through technical aspects. Partnering with 88 Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) and 24 Govt. VTIs across 22 states in India, the key features of DISHA include specialized training sessions which delve into sales, service, interiors, building construc-

tion, manufacturing, technical training, and digital skills. By March 2023, the DISHA program had trained 1.79 lac youth in target states. The Digital Skills program encompasses a wide spectrum of courses, ranging from Robotics and Automation, Business Analytics and Dashboarding, to Digital Marketing and E-Commerce. While the technical courses cater to engineering students, the latter ones are accessible to all fresh graduates. An essential feature of this program is its on-site training, enabling trainees to practically apply their theoretical knowledge, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their chosen field. Ashwini Deodeshmukh, Head, CSR, Godrej & Boyce, spoke about the CSR approach of Godrej & Boyce, "At Godrej & Boyce, we deeply believe in the philosophy of 'shared value', seamlessly intertwining business success with societal advancement.

Gifts from Janakpur for Lord Shri Ram arrive in Ayodhya

● The VHP-organized yatra received a warm welcome from Champat Rai



Ayodhya

As the eagerly awaited consecration ceremony of Ram Lala at the grand Janmabhoomi temple on January 22 draws near, a surge of enthusiasm and excitement among Ram devotees worldwide is reaching unprecedented levels. Notably, Janakpur, renowned as the maternal home of Mother Sita and the 'in-laws' of Lord Shri Ram, is also making significant contributions. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) orchestrated a Bhar (Sanesh) Yatra from Janakpur city in Nepal to Ayodhya. These devotees carried a consignment of over 3000 special gifts for Shri Ram and Mata Janaki, comprising vari-

ous offerings such as money, clothes, fruits, sweets, and precious metals like gold and silver. The VHP-organized yatra received a warm welcome from Champat Rai, the General Secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, at Karsevakpuram in Ayodhya. The yatra, originating from the Janakpur Dham Ramjanaki Temple in Nepal, arrived at Karsevakpuram on Saturday with a convoy of approximately three dozen vehicles. Among the participants were over 500 devotees of

Ramlala's 'in-laws', who brought along more than 3000 gifts, encompassing fruits, sweets, gold, silver, and other items. These devotees, expressing gratitude, remarked that it is their good fortune to witness the construction of the birthplace of their son-in-law, the king, and eagerly anticipate his enthronement on January 22. The General Secretary of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra in Karsevakpuram extended a warm welcome to the devotees and graciously accepted the gifts brought for Shri

Ram-Janaki. During this, he emphasized the profound spiritual connection between Nepal and India, describing it as a relationship rooted in the soul, transcending time. He noted that this enduring bond dates back to the Tretayuga, underscoring its significance from both an ancient and historical perspective. Expressing gratitude, he conveyed that receiving such gifts was indeed a fortunate and meaningful occurrence. On this occasion, Mayor Mahant Girish Pati Tripathi welcomed all the people coming from Janakpur Dham and said, "We Ayodhya residents always hold great respect for the people of Janakpur as they are relatives of Mata Janaki. In such a situation, when Lord Shri Ram is sitting in history grand temple after 500 years of struggle, any gift arriving from the in-laws' side becomes truly priceless."

Previous govts supported anarchy, we take strict action to curb such elements: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath

Gorakhpur Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath criticized the previous governments for their approach to development and security on Saturday, asserting that these aspects hinge on mindset. Addressing the program organized as a part of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at Surajkund in Gorakhpur, Yogi said, "Unlike past governments that allowed encroachments, our government liberates occupied areas. While earlier governments supported anarchy and hooliganism, our government takes decisive measures to curb such elements and restore order in the state." During this, he inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of development projects worth Rs 16.15 crore and also interacted with the beneficiaries of various schemes. The development projects include among others, the foundation stone laying of Kalyan



Mandapam for the needy people, the bhoomi puja of which was also performed by the Chief Minister. Addressing the gathering present on this occasion, Chief Minister Yogi expressed the commitment of the double-engine government to prioritize public welfare alongside development. He stated, "The government is focused on ensuring that the benefits of schemes reach everyone without discrimination, while fostering an improved environment for development and security. Strong identity and a positive perception of

the state and country are only achieved through development, and this demands collective effort." CM Yogi said that when there is a single-party government at the Center and the state, then the benefits of development and employment generation schemes reach every needy without any discrimination.

CM Yogi highlighted the transformative changes brought about by the double-engine government over the past six years. He noted that what was once a dream for the underprivileged—free housing, toilets, electricity,

and gas connections—has become a reality under the present government. The increase in daily flights from Gorakhpur, rising from one to 14, showcases the progress in transportation facilities. "The fertilizer factory, which had been closed for decades, has started functioning again." CM Yogi also pointed out the remarkable turnaround of BRD Medical College, evolving from a struggling institution to a center of excellence in medicine. The introduction of AIIMS has further enhanced healthcare services.

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

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

Excerpts:

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

PM Modi has changed the picture & destiny of India: Yogi Adityanath

Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has changed both the picture and the destiny of India and that under his leadership, India's global respect has gone up significantly while the borders have become secure. Addressing a program held as part of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp

Yatra in Sanjhai, Gorakhpur, CM Yogi said that under PM Modi's leadership the country is witnessing the construction of world-class infrastructure, including highways, railways, and airports, in addition to world-class health institutes and fertilizer factories.

Yogi added that to enhance public convenience, extensive efforts are being made to connect every vil-

lage with roads and providing villagers access to clean drinking water.

The Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone and inaugurated development projects worth Rs 6.47 crore and interacted with the beneficiaries of various schemes on the occasion. He further highlighted that prior to the BJP forming governments at the centre and in the

state, people faced challenges accessing basic necessities like toilets, housing, rations, healthcare, roads, and electricity. However, with the formation of the government under Narendra Modi's leadership in 2014, a familial approach was adopted towards the 140 crore citizens and the government started working for their welfare diligently, he pointed out.

India is touching new heights in space exploration globally: CM Yogi

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has congratulated the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on the historic achievement of its only solar mission Aditya-L1 spacecraft reaching Sun-Earth Lagrange Point 1 (L1). In a post on his official X handle, CM Yogi wrote: "Congratulations to Team ISRO on this important achievement of #AdityaL1, India's first solar

observatory, reaching its destination. Their dedication and expertise will undoubtedly uncover important solar insights." He added: "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment towards scientific progress has inspired India's space exploration efforts and our country is touching new heights on the global stage." It is noteworthy that ISRO's Aditya-L1 spacecraft will fly 15 lakh kilome-

ters in 126 days. After covering a distance of 1 km, Sun-Earth reached Lagrange Point 1 (L1) on Saturday. L1 is a place in space where the gravitational forces of Earth and Sun are balanced. Aditya will reach L1 on September 2 at 11.50 am. The XL version of PSLV-C57 was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota via rocket.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

later stage.

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

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

Arrests a builder who took Dawood gang help for his projects

MUMBAI:

Enforcement Directorate (ED) on arrested builder Vijay Machindar of Ornate Spaces in a money laundering case based on a police complaint lodged by an investor accusing the company of selling off seven of the 14 flats booked in Grove Tower in Oshiwara to others. Machindar proposed the Grove Tower on a plot as free sale in the market for developing buildings for UTI employees. He received a commencement certificate from MHADA authority. He took Rs 450 Crores from Punjab National Bank and other bankers for the project. Machindar had also raised around Rs 70 crores by offering allotment letters and selling around 70,000 sq. feet area to 34 purchasers in the sale component. He was in a financial crisis and allegedly took help of Dawood gang. to get back allotment

Yogi govt to strengthen Prosecution Department, to set up its own office in nine districts of UP

Lucknow,

The Yogi government has decided to set up the Prosecution department's own offices in nine districts of Uttar Pradesh. The move aims to strengthen the Prosecution Department, which plays an important role in sending criminals behind bars through effective advocacy in the court. Until now, the department's offices were operating from rented premises or within the collectorate premises. Having its own office will enable the department to discharge its role with greater freedom and facilities. It is worth mentioning here that under the Yogi government's zero tolerance policy, while the UP police is cracking down on criminals on the one hand, the Prosecution department in the court is playing a significant role in ensuring punishment to criminals by proving the charges against them. This has

led to a decrease in criminal activities in the state. The Prosecution department has achieved success in awarding of punishment for the crimes in over 30,000 cases within the last three years in various courts across the state. Department faced problem in a c o m m o d a t i n g witnesses. Notably, prosecution offices are being run in all the districts of the state under the Directorate of Prosecution. However, these offices are mostly operating in rented buildings or on the collectorate premises. This sometimes causes difficulties for the department in accommodating witnesses for cases. The problem worsens when it is necessary to provide security along with accommodating a witness in serious cases. department to prioritize marking districts for setting up its own office.

Editorial

Despite stable India-Russia ties, West remains a challenge for New Delhi

India's External Affairs Minister (EAM), S Jaishankar paid a somewhat long five-day visit to Russia from December 25 to 29, 2023. The duration of the visit itself is an indication of the range and depth of the bilateral partnership in the midst of an increasingly fractious global scenario. His last visit to Russia was in November 2022. That was for only two days when he met his counterpart Russian Foreign Minister (FM) Sergey Lavrov and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade and Industry Denis Manturov, who also co-chair, along with Jaishankar, the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, and Scientific Cooperation. The highlight of the current visit was EAM's meeting with President Putin, which is an opportunity and privilege that is granted to a very select number of foreign ministers. EAM did not get to meet Putin during his last visit in November 2022. India and the Soviet Union shared a special relationship of trust and confidence during the Cold War years. The first decade after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 witnessed some turbulence in bilateral ties between India and the successor state, Russia. However, since 2000, when the two countries signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement during the first visit of President Vladimir Putin to India in October 2000, bilateral relations have been on an upward trajectory.

The relationship was subsequently upgraded to a Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership during Putin's visit to India in 2010. It was also agreed during the visit in 2000 to hold annual summits between the two countries, alternately in India and Russia. Twenty-one annual summits were held from 2000 until 2021. The only year when the summit did not take place was 2020, ostensibly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Summits did not take place in 2022 and 2023 either, apparently due to Russia's pre-occupation with the conflict in Ukraine in 2022 and because India was tied up with the responsibility of the G20 Presidency in 2023. However, in the warm and effusive interaction between President Putin and EAM Jaishankar on December 27, 2023, the former invited his "dear friend, Prime Minister Modi" to visit Russia in 2024. This invitation was accepted on behalf of PM Modi by Jaishankar, who said that PM Modi looks forward to visiting Russia in 2024. The fact that regular summits have been held for most of the period since this highest-level institutional mechanism was put in place is testimony to the high importance that the two countries and their leaders attach to the partnership. In view of the growing acrimony and polarisation in global affairs in recent years between the East (Russia and China) and the West (USA, Europe, Japan, Australia), as well as the North (Developed) and South (Developing/Global South), strong and steady relations between India and Russia are a factor of peace and stability in international relations. While leaders in India have changed over the last 23 years since the Strategic Partnership was signed in 2000, leadership in Russia has stayed in the hands of President Putin. He can be termed one of the prime architects of modern-day partnerships between the two countries. On the Indian side, PM Modi has played a critical role in keeping the relationship stable and consistent over the last nine years, when the world has witnessed cataclysmic changes in relations between different major power centres. In these unpredictable times, PM Modi has guided bilateral ties with sure and firm hands.

As with the Soviet Union, strong relations with

Provoked and attacked, will Iran take the bait?

People gather at the site of an explosion in the city of Kerman, about 820 kilometres southeast of the capital Tehran, Iran. Two bombs exploded Wednesday at a commemoration for a prominent Iranian general slain by the US in a 2020 drone strike. AP One of the deadliest conflicts in the West Asian region broke out when Hamas launched a surprise terror attack across Gaza into Israel in the early hours of 7 October 2023. As would have been expected, Israel regrouped and launched a ferocious counter-attack vowing to eliminate Hamas from the face of the Earth. Three months down the line, there is no signs of fighting coming to a close or a ceasefire despite best efforts of the international community including the UN. Estimates suggest that already more than 22,000 civilians have been killed in Gaza including 9,000 children. Two issues have been of primary concern ever since the war broke out. Firstly, how soon will the war come to an end and with that hopefully, end of the crippling humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The second concern was if the conflict would spread across the region and more countries would join in. On the first, Israel has dismissed all calls for an early



end to the war stating that it is ready to fight a prolonged war in order to achieve its military objective of eliminating the Hamas threat forever. Although Israel had expected that with its military superiority and technical prowess, it would be able to hunt down and eliminate Hamas soon, it is, however, nowhere close to it. On 29 December 2023, The Israeli Chief of Staff of the Army was quoted stating that Israel does not have a magic solution to eliminate Hamas. Thus, despite enjoying limited military success and incurring significant losses, Israel is expected to continue its military operations for some time, at least. The second concern is even trickier and dangerous. Till now, the conflict has been largely confined to the Gaza Strip. There have been exchanges of rocket attacks and even

drone strikes in Syria and Lebanon where Hezbollah is active.

There has also been an increase in violence in the West Bank too, mostly instigated by attacks perpetrated by Israeli settlers on Palestinians. The latest entrant into the conflict was the Houthis who have blocked the passage of Israel flagged ships or ships carrying cargo bound from/to Israeli ports. Despite the best efforts of the US, including deploying an Aircraft carrier led fleet, the Houthis are determined to attack Israel through attacks on its ships. In fact, on 26 December, while briefing Knesset lawmakers, the Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said, "We are in a multi-front war. We are being attacked from seven fronts; Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Judea and Samaria (the

West Bank), Iraq, Yemen and Iran. We have already responded and acted on six of those fronts."

As the war prolongs, it is Israel which is enduring increasing casualties and economic costs. The rest of the Muslim countries around it wait and watch, without getting directly involved in the military conflict while the three 'H' of Iran i.e. Hamas, Hezbollah and Houthis are taking the fight to the Israeli defence forces. It is perhaps because of this realisation that Israel and its primary benefactor, the US have decided to increase the costs on the region, especially Iran, as it is considered the shadow and influence behind repeated attacks on Israel and the US in the region.

Provocations and attacks on Iran

As a result, in the past week or so, there has been a spate of attacks on Iran and its assets in the region. A terror attack on 03rd January involving twin explosions at an event near the tomb of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) General Qassem Soleimani in the Iranian city of Kerman, killed almost 100 people, marking it as the worst terror attack since Iran's Revolution in 1979. It may be recalled that

Qassem Soleimani was killed through a US drone strike in Iraq on 3 January 2020. On 2nd January, Hamas's deputy leader abroad Saleh al-Arouri was killed in an Israeli strike in the Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh, he was considered the de facto leader of Hamas's military wing in the West Bank. The assassination of Arouri came barely a week after the killing of Iran's most influential military commander in Levant, Seyed Radhi Mousavi, in a suspected Israeli airstrike in Syria's capital Damascus on 25th December. Mousavi, a Quds Force general, is the most senior IRGC commander killed since Soleimani.

On 4 January, another blow was dealt when a suspected US drone attack killed Mushtaq Talib Al-Saidi, deputy commander of operations in the Iraqi capital for Harakat Al-Nujaba, a pro-Iran Militia group. Earlier, on 18th December 2023, around 70 percent of Iran's petrol stations had their services disrupted after a massive cyber-attack by the hacker group Gonjeshke Darande, which translates to "Predatory Sparrow", linked to Israel's Mossad. The terror strike on 3rd January is the latest attempt to provoke Iran to join the war directly. Iran has already dispatched its warship.

What the first crypto crash of 2024 is telling you

Cryptocurrencies tanked on Wednesday. It was the first 'crypto crash' of 2024. Hundreds of millions of dollars in market value were wiped out in just a few hours. Before this, most cryptocurrencies were on the rise. Most of them made gains throughout 2023. That streak seemed to have ended. Apparently, crypto volatility is back. There is an old saying: 'The greater the risk, the greater the reward.' These days, nothing quite epitomises this like crypto. Cryptocurrencies are the new casino games, where people try and make their fortunes. The oldest and arguably best known cryptocurrency is Bitcoin, which was launched about 15 years ago. But on Wednesday, Bitcoin and all its younger clones reminded the world that they are still active and

volatile. The year has barely begun and crypto-values across the board tanked. About 600 million dollars in crypto went up in smoke in just a few hours. This was due to a report about Bitcoin Spot Exchange Traded Funds, or ETFs, which is something like a Bitcoin mutual fund. For months, there were rumours that these would be made legal in the US. The final decision is expected next week, but on Wednesday, a report said that these Bitcoin funds could get delayed by a few months, and that caused the market to crash. This highlights the volatility of cryptocurrencies. Before this, cryptocurrency values had been rising steadily. On January 1, Bitcoin was at a 21-month peak. Its value had crossed 45,000 dollars. Now, it is

trading slightly lower. But nowhere near its bottom value seen in the last few months. Next week could see cryptocurrencies across the board rise again. It depends on how the US chooses to deal with them. So it raises the question: Should one invest in something as volatile as crypto? That is of course best answered by a financial professional, someone who understands your individual situation, because there's no one size fits all answer. Crypto has made some people enormously wealthy, but many have lost their life-savings as well. One thing for sure is that crypto is volatile. Investing in it is akin to gambling. And you should never gamble with more than you're willing to lose. Of course, this is if you're allowed to gamble at all.

The countdown for elections to the 18th Lok Sabha has started, and all estimates suggest Narendra Modi will return to 7, Lok Kalyan Marg with an absolute majority. While the Opposition parties are trying to put up a united front to stop Modi, the attempts to unite are limited to parties meeting at various locations in the country and dispersing without arriving at any concrete agenda. Opposition disunity apart, there are several factors that make Narendra Modi's reelection as Prime Minister imminent.

Charisma intact
In the post-Independence electoral history of India, there has been no mass leader whose popularity has soared consistently like that of Narendra Modi. Today, no other leader can match up to Modi's 'image' and 'leadership'. 'Brand Modi' evokes a trust among people that the country has not seen in the past, or the present. The absence of any other credible face is a major reason why BJP's return to power is assured.

What constitutes the BJP's biggest strength is the opposition's biggest weakness. There is no face in the parties trying to take on the BJP that garners the kind of confidence Modi instils in the people. The fact alone sets the BJP ahead in the race against the rest. Because of Modi's leadership and his charisma, a large section of the country joined the

Why Modi's return to PM's chair in 2024 is imminent



BJP after 2014. This was the reason that in the 2019 general elections, the BJP achieved its best vote percentage. The result was a big stamp of approval of the people on Prime Minister Modi because the party had contested the election in his name, taking to voters the development work initiated under him.

While other governments have suffered anti-incumbency, Modi's return to office in 2019 was one of the biggest pro-incumbency mandates in the country's history. While the Congress has returned to power in the past, it has either been in the initial years of Independence when no opposition to Congress existed, or due to a sympathy wave as in the case of the 1984 victory in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's assassination. The increase in the BJP's votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha election was an unprecedented phenomenon in India's political history. It is Modi alone who has been voted back to power with an even bigger mandate than achieved in the first term solely based on his popularity fuelled by his

governance model. The BJP built on this popularity by expanding the organisation, which has rapidly expanded over the last 10 years. Not only have the numbers swelled, first under Amit Shah and then Jagatprakash Nadda, the organisational structure has been made more cohesive and dynamic.

Today, the BJP has a disciplined and structured organisation which has seamless communication up to the booth level. This is a model unique to the BJP. Powered by the structural cohesion, the BJP campaigns 365 days, while the opposition does not see a schedule which is followed even from dawn to dusk.

Popular among new voters

In his first term itself, Prime Minister Modi carved a new beneficiary voter class. In his second term, the number of beneficiary voters has increased further. In his tenure so far, Modi has strengthened his credibility among the poor sections of the country through timely delivery of benefits under schemes like Jan Dhan, Ujjwala, Saubhagya.

Understanding India's Armenia outreach amid global power-play in South Caucasus

After the Chinese incursions in Doklam and Galwan worsened the India-China relationship and the involvement of extra-regional actors like Turkey in the Kashmir conflict, India's foreign policy vision, approach, and strategic calculus are expanding beyond South Asia. India's outreach to Armenia, a faraway country in the South Caucasus, is part of this new change. The October 2021 visit of S Jaishankar, India's External Affairs Minister, to Yerevan is historic because it was the first such visit of the Indian foreign minister to Armenia in the last 30

years. Before this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Armenian PM Nikol Pashinyan on the sidelines of the 74th UNGA in New York, seeking Yerevan's support in finalising a trade arrangement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU).

In the last three years, India has emerged as a major weapons supplier to Armenia. These big-ticket defense deals include the sale of Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers, a USD 40 million contract of SWATI weapon-locating radars, ammunition anti-tank missiles, and 155 mm artillery

guns. The author's interlocutors in India's Ministry of External Affairs informed that Armenia is interested in more defense deals, including drones and counter-drone systems, loitering munitions, and mid-range surface-to-air missiles. In October 2022, Armenia's defense minister, Suren Papikyan, visited the defense expo in New Delhi and met his counterpart Rajnath Singh. In Sept 2022, both countries signed MoUs in culture, digital infrastructure, and renewable energy to promote business ties at the India-Armenia Conference 2022 in Bengaluru.

The delegates explored the trade and investment potential in pharma, agriculture, information technology, film-city, and tourism.

Additionally, one can witness a major uptick in think tank-level cooperation between India and Armenia. Most recently, the author represented Usanas Foundation, India's premier foreign policy think tank, at the Yerevan Dialogue Series organised by the Prime Minister's Office of Armenia, in collaboration with Armenia's top-level think tank, Applied Policy Research Institute (APRI).

Nigar Shaji: Smiling woman who led Aditya-L1 mission

● "very supportive throughout my childhood. Because of their continued support"

NEW DELHI: Leading the complex scientific mission of putting India's first solar observatory Aditya-L1 at Langrang point from where the spacecraft will do the 'celestial surya namaskar' of the Sun is Isro's project director Nigar Shaji, a gentle and smiling soul, who had worked tirelessly on the mission with her team for eight years to make it a success. Shaji, who joined the elite space agency in 1987, rose through the ranks to become the project director of India's first solar mission. The 59-year-old, who was earlier the associate project director of Resourcesat-2A, which is still operational, is also the programme director for all



lower orbit and planetary missions. She started her stint in Isro by working at the Sriharikota spaceport off the Andhra coast and was later moved to the U R Rao Satellite Centre in Bengaluru, which is the key centre of developing satellites. Born to a Muslim family in Sengottai in Tamil Nadu's Tenkasi district, Shaji did her schooling in Sengottai before getting admitted to the Government College of Engineering, Tirunelveli, under Madurai Kamaraj University, where she

earned an engineering degree in electronics and communications. Later, she did her master's in electronics from Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra. Shaji's father Sheikh Meeran, a mathematics graduate who turned to farming by choice, always inspired her to do something big in life. "Both my parents were very supportive throughout my childhood. Because of their continued support, I rose to such heights," she said in a media interview.

Clearing any misconception about gender discrimination in the space agency, Shaji said she never faced any gender bias in Isro. It was due to the continued support of her seniors, she has been able to reach this position today. "Being the team leader, many people now work under me. So, I groom the same way my seniors groomed me," Shaji said recently. She lives in Bangalore with her mother and daughter, a qualified doctor. Her husband and son work abroad.

Lost in translation: Shadowy lives of literary heroes

This article discusses the efforts of Lucknow-based literary translators, who are often unsung heroes in the field. They play a crucial role in globalizing literary thoughts and bridging the gap between different cultures. Translators face challenges and biases in their work, but they persevere in enriching the literature of both languages. However, they often lack recognition and struggle to find publishers interested in translations, especially in Hindi. Despite the challenges, translators are finding hope in the post-pandemic world through social media promotion and increased visibility in seminars and festivals. Lost in translation: Shadowy lives of literary heroes



Man is something that shall be overcome. Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman — a rope over an abyss." These are the lines from a popular rendition of a classical scholar, philosopher, and critic of culture, Friedrich Nietzsche. Originally written in German, these philosophical moorings could break the shackles of linguistic barriers and influence generations of writers and artists across the world only through the subtle and shadow art of literary translation. While the legacy of Nietzsche and his literary genius endures, the efforts of the literary translators to help great ideas travel across seas and influence is shrouded in obscurity. A similar fate is shared by an array of Lucknow-

based literary translators who ventured into the field with the burning passion to enrich the literary field with their contribution. These unsung heroes are the torchbearers of this odd art that aims at globalisation of literary thoughts. Amid the apparent nonchalance towards their art and its struggles in a world where the habit of reading is plummeting, these literary translators still persevere. "Translation serves and enriches both the languages — the original one in which a literary text was written by the

author and the other in which it is translated. It establishes a link between two cultures and thinking patterns and thereby promotes the concept of 'vasudhaiva kutumbkam'. Sadly, those who get into this field face challenges and biases. And yet they persevere," says an ex-professor of Lucknow University and a Russian language expert Sabra Habib. Habib is known to have translated works of authors such as Fyodor Dostoevsky, Leo Tolstoy, and Aleksandr Pushkin, among others. Artists without a stage: The art of translation has been best described by American author and movie director Paul Auster. "Translators are the shadow heroes of literature," he says. Translators not only have to juggle with the intricacies of the languages but also get inside the skin of the author to feel their thought process so as not to distort the author's intent.

IMD issues cold day warning in five states for next 2 days

NEW DELHI: Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday said that, "cold day" to "severe cold day" conditions are likely to continue over some parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Rajasthan for next two more days and significantly decrease thereafter. According to the latest forecast from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), dense to very dense fog is expected to persist over Northwest India for the next two days, gradually diminishing afterward. In their daily bulletin, the IMD reported minimum temperatures ranging from 6 to 10 degrees Celsius across significant regions. These areas include most parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, West Rajasthan, and select portions of East Rajasthan and West Uttar Pradesh. This information provides valuable insights into the prevailing weather conditions, aiding residents and authorities in making informed decisions based on the forecasted temperatures. "These are above normal by 3-5°C over many parts of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and some parts of Haryana, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Odisha. These are below normal by 2-4 degree Celsius in some parts of West Rajasthan. Today, the lowest minimum temperature of 2.8 degree Celsius reported at Bikaner (West Rajasthan)," said the IMD. The IMD also forecasts the persistence of dense to very dense fog conditions during the night and morning in certain areas and isolated pockets across Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, and East Rajasthan until January 7. Additionally, dense fog is expected in isolated pockets for the following 24 hours after that period. "Dense to very dense fog conditions are very likely to prevail for a few hours in morning in isolated pockets over West Uttar Pradesh and West Rajasthan on Saturday and dense fog in isolated pockets till January 8," said IMD. According to IMD, dense fog conditions are very likely to prevail for a few hours in morning in isolated pockets over East Uttar Pradesh till January 9, over West Madhya Pradesh,

NIA attaches 5 properties in two cases for being "proceeds of terrorism"

NEW DELHI: The National Investigation Agency on Saturday attached a total of five properties, including four in the terrorist-gangster-drug smuggler nexus case and a fifth in another case relating to the 2022 Chanapora arms seizure of Kashmir, on grounds of being "proceeds of terrorism". The four properties

attached by NIA in the terrorist-gangster-drug smuggler network case include three immovable and one movable one, all owned by members of the Lawrence Bishnoi organised terror-crime syndicate. In a coordinated swoop by NIA teams in Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, these properties were

attached by NIA for having been used to hatch terror conspiracies and execute serious crimes. A property attached in Lucknow is a flat belonging to Vikas Singh, harbourer of the terror gang, while two other properties in Fazilka, Punjab belong to case accused Dalip Kumar. A Fortuner vehicle registered in the

name of Joginder Singh was also seized in Haryana. While Vikas Singh, as per NIA probe, is an associate of Lawrence Bishnoi and had harboured terrorists including those accused in the RPG attack on Punjab police headquarters, Joginder Singh is the father of gangster Kala Rana, also a close associate of Lawrence.

Transport secretary 'misses' speed signs, fined thrice

NEW DELHI: The road transport secretary got three challans for speed violation on a particular stretch in the capital. Guess why? He missed the speed limit sign which was placed "almost" behind a tree. Poor placement of signs - often behind trees and poles - on Delhi roads result in vehicle owners getting "challan surprises". It was no different for Union road transport secretary Anurag Jain. "The system does not

recognise who the owner is and I've paid challan thrice for speeding. But my problem was different. I took up with police the point that the speed signs should be visible to me. I thought the speed limit was 60 kmph on that stretch and my vehicle was at 61 kmph. Usually, this should not have been the reason for getting a challan," he said. Sharing his experience on Friday, Jain said "technology treats all com-

muters equally", and also flagged how it is essential to place road signs "at the right spot" so that no driver misses them. Massive protest erupts across India against Central government new hit-and-run law Jain said he sent a person to check the speed limit so that he could take a call whether to challenge the challans. "The person told me that 50 kmph was the speed limit sign mentioned on the board.

Foreign-made weapons, Rs 5 crore cash recovered by ED during raids in Haryana

CHANDIGARH:

Foreign-made weapons, about 300 cartridges, Rs 5 crore cash and more than 100 liquor bottles have been recovered during searches conducted by the Enforcement Directorate against former INLD MLA Dilbag Singh and his associates, official sources said on



Friday. The central agency had launched raids against the former legislator and

Congress MLA from Sonipat Surrender Panwar on Thursday as part of a money

laundering case linked to alleged illegal mining in Haryana's Yamunanagar district. About Rs 5 crore cash, alleged "illegal" foreign-made weapons, around 300 cartridges, more than 100 liquor bottles, 4-5 kg of gold and documents pertaining to assets in India.

Dawood Ibrahim's property with base price of Rs 15,440 sold for Rs 2cr at an auction

NEW DELHI: Dawood Ibrahim's childhood house and three other properties owned by his family in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri went under the hammer on Friday. The properties were registered under the name of Dawood Ibrahim's mother, Amina Bi. The auction was organised under the Safema act, officials said. The auction took place at the Aayakar Bhavan in south Mumbai. Only two of the four listed properties, which received four and three bidders,

respectively, attracted successful bids, with a single person emerging as the successful bidder for both. There were no bids for the other two properties. An agricultural land with the reserve price of Rs 15,440 was auctioned for Rs 2.01 crore, the highest bid at the auction. A total of four bidders came for this property. Another agricultural land fetched the highest bid of Rs 3.28 lakh against the reserve price of Rs 1,56,270, officials said. The name of the successful bidder was not disclosed.

According to a participant the winning bidder was a Delhi-based lawyer. Earlier in 2017 and in 2020, over 17 properties belonging to the underworld don were auctioned off by Safema. Dawood, a key accused in 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, lived in the Mumbake village before moving to Mumbai in 1983. Dawood is also designated as a 'global terrorist' by the United Nations Security Resolution 1267, and listed under the Fourth Schedule of the UAPA Act, 1967.

Delhi-Jaipur & Bengaluru-Mysuru to soon get GPS toll

NEW DELHI: Delhi-Jaipur highway (NH-48) and Bengaluru-Mysuru expressway will be the first two stretches where GPS-based tolling system will be introduced ensuring commuters pay user fee for just the number of kilometres travelled.

TOI has learnt that preparatory work has started and better geofencing of the Delhi-Jaipur stretch has begun for exact calculation of the stretch travelled and toll payable for the journey. Sources said currently more than 18 lakh commercial vehicles are fitted with GPS-based vehicle location tracking system and to begin with, these vehicles can start paying the user fee.

Sources said this new GPS-based tolling system will be tried on different stretches and will be expanded gradually.

Hit by speeding car on Uttarakhand road, 6-year-old tiger dies

RUDRAPUR: A six-year-old tiger died after it was hit by a speeding car, which was heading towards Rudrapur. The accident occurred on Saturday around 8 pm on Haldwani road.

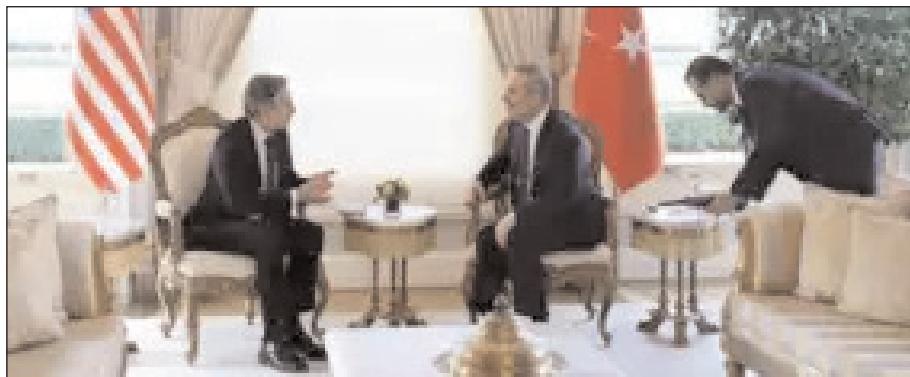
The driver of the vehicle, a resident of Haldwani, sustained injuries during the collision, and was reportedly in a state of shock upon encountering the unexpected presence of the big cat on the road. The impact also inflicted damage on the car. As news of the incident spread, a queue of vehicles formed at the site, with curious onlookers making reels at the spot. Meanwhile, forest department personnel took possession of the tiger's body and were preparing to send it for post-mortem when this report was filed. In a separate incident, a 5-year old male leopard was killed in a collision with an unidentified vehicle on national highway-74. The incident occurred near Dharampur village in Jaspur area of Udham Singh Nagar on Saturday. Devendu Rajwar, ranger of the area, said that a case will soon be registered against the errant vehicle driver.

Woman can't file DV complaint against bahu's kin: HC

MUMBAI: The Bombay high court, while holding that a mother-in-law's domestic violence complaint against her daughter-in-law is maintainable under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, it is, however, not maintainable against the daughter-in-law's father and brother. "While the object and purpose of the DV Act is to protect a woman from domestic violence, it does not confer a right on a mother-in-law to prosecute the father and brother of her daughter-in-law under the DV Act," said Justice Neela Gokhale in a ruling. The daughter-in-law, Zareena (name changed), her father and brother moved the HC to quash the complaint and November 2018 summons by a Satara magistrate. Zareena married in May 2016. Since her husband and family ill-treated and subjected her to tremendous cruelty. She had filed a complaint in December 2017, under the DV Act against her husband and his family. Her mother-in-law also filed a DV complaint. Zareena's advocate Sushil said there was never any shared household among the parties and his clients do not fit in the categories against whom a DV complaint can be filed.

Blinken talks with Turkey's leaders as he seeks to prevent the Israel-Hamas war from expanding

CHANIA: US secretary of state Antony Blinken met with Turkey's leaders Saturday during the first stop of his latest Mideast diplomatic mission as fears grow that Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza may expand into a broader conflict. Blinken's fourth visit in three months comes as developments in Lebanon, northern Israel, the Red Sea and Iraq have put intense strains on what had been a modestly successful US push to prevent a regional conflagration since Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, and as international criticism of Israel's military operation mounts. Blinken held talks with Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and foreign minister, Hakan



Fidan, in Istanbul about what Turkey and others can do to exert influence, particularly on Iran and its proxies, to ease tensions, speed humanitarian aid deliveries to Gaza and begin planning for reconstruction and governance of postwar Gaza. Much of the territory has been reduced to rubble by Israeli bombardments. Hours before Blinken's meetings, Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah

militia fired dozens of rockets at northern Israel and said the barrage was an initial response to the targeted killing, presumably by Israel, of a top leader from the allied Hamas group in Lebanon's capital this past week. Stepped-up attacks on commercial shipping in the Red Sea by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels have disrupted international trade and led to

increased efforts by the US and its allies to patrol the vital commercial waterway and respond to threats. The coalition of countries issued what amounted to a final warning to the Houthis on Wednesday to cease their attacks on vessels or face potential targeted military action. Since December 19, the militants have carried out at least two dozen attacks in response to the Israel-

Hamas war. From the Turkish officials, Blinken sought at least consideration of potential monetary or in-kind contributions to reconstruction efforts in Gaza and participation in security arrangements, according to US officials. Erdogan has been harshly critical of Israel and prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the prosecution of the war and the impact it has had on Palestinian civilians. Blinken "emphasized the need to prevent the conflict from spreading ... and work toward broader, lasting peace that ensures Israel's security and advances the establishment of a Palestinian state," the US State Department said in a statement summarizing Blinken's meeting with Erdogan.

By 2030, Russia to produce over 32,000 drones each year

Moscow Russia plans to produce more than 32,000 drones each year by 2030 and for domestic producers to account for 70% of the market, the TASS news agency cited first deputy prime minister Andrei Belousov as saying on Saturday. Drones have been widely used by Moscow and Kyiv since Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine and both sides are sharply increasing military production as the war drags on. "The annual production volume of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) -

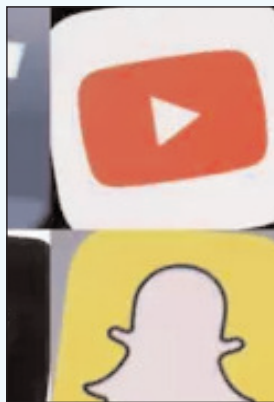


excluding educational UAVs - is planned at 32,500 units," Belousov told TASS. "This is almost three times higher than current produc-

tion volumes. "At the same time, it is planned that the share of Russian UAVs will make up 70% of the market in this type of UAV."

Tech companies sue Ohio over law on parental consent

COLUMBUS: A trade group representing TikTok, Snapchat, Meta and other major tech companies sued Ohio on Friday over a pending law that requires children to get parental consent to use social media apps. The law was part of an \$86.1 billion state budget bill that Republican Gov Mike



DeWine signed into law in July. It's set to

take effect January 15. The administration pushed the measure as a way to protect children's mental health. The NetChoice trade group filed its lawsuit against GOP attorney general Dave Yost in US district court for the southern district of Ohio. It seeks to block the law from taking effect.

Seven terrorists arrested in Pakistan's Punjab province

LAHORE: Pakistan's law enforcement agencies on Saturday claimed to have foiled a major terror plot by arresting seven terrorists, mostly linked with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), in Punjab province. The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab police said in a statement that it conducted 59 intelligence-based operations in different districts of Punjab province during this week in which seven alleged terrorists were arrested with weapons, explosives

and other prohibited materials. Most of the arrested terrorists belong to the TTP and others to the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, it said and added they have been arrested from Lahore, Sargodha, Kasur and Sheikhpura. The CTD recovered 2,195 grams of explosive material, one IED bomb, four detonators, two safety fuse wires, one pistol and banned literature from the possession of the terrorists. The CTD further said the terrorists wanted to target important installations in the province.

Joe Biden launches campaign, equates ex-President to Nazis

New York US President Joe Biden launched his harshest attack yet on Donald Trump, accusing the Republican of echoing Nazi Germany and posing a threat to democracy. Biden branded his likely challenger a 'loser' and 'sick' in a speech on the eve of the third anniversary of the deadly January 6 Capitol attack. He accused Trump of instigating the Capitol attack and warned that if Trump won a second term, democracy itself was at risk. US president Joe Biden launched his harshest attack yet on Donald Trump as he kick-started his 2024 re-election campaign Friday, accusing the Republican



of echoing Nazi Germany and posing a threat to democracy. The 81-year-old Democrat branded his likely challenger a "loser" and "sick" in a speech on the eve of the third anniversary of the deadly January 6 Capitol

attack by pro-Trump supporters. "He's willing to sacrifice our democracy, put himself in power," Biden told supporters, alternating between whispers and furious shouts as he laid into the man he beat in 2020.

US top court agrees to hear Trump Colorado ballot appeal

Colorado The US Supreme Court agreed to consider whether Colorado can bar Donald Trump from the presidential ballot, taking up a landmark constitutional and political clash stemming from his attempt to overturn the 2020 election. The justices will hear the case on an expedited basis, with arguments on February 8. They will review a Colorado Supreme Court decision that said Trump engaged in insurrection - and forfeited his right to run for president again - by trying to nullify Joe Biden's election victory and inciting the deadly January 6, 2021, Capitol assault. The US Supreme Court agreed to consider whether Colorado can bar Donald Trump from the presidential ballot, taking up a landmark constitutional and political clash stemming from his attempt



to overturn the 2020 election. The justices will hear the case on an expedited basis, with arguments on Feb 8. They will review a Colorado Supreme Court decision that said Trump engaged in insurrection - and forfeited his right to run for president again - by trying to nullify Joe Biden's election victory and inciting the deadly Jan 6, 2021, Capitol assault. The clash over the Constitution's insurrection clause promises to

be a pivot point in Trump's bid to reclaim the White House. A broad Supreme Court decision in the ex-president's favour would end efforts around the country to remove him from the ballot. A ruling against Trump would raise new questions about the viability of his candidacy. The party nominating contests are getting underway -- Iowa caucus for Republicans is on Jan 15; New Hampshire primary on January 23.

Merchant vessel approached by six craft near Yemen, says UK



CAIRO: Six small craft approached a merchant vessel about 50 nautical miles from the Yemeni city of Mocha on Saturday before leaving the area, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) organization said. "The vessel and crew were reported safe," UKMTO added in an advisory note on the incident. Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi militants have stepped up attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea in protest against Israel's war in Gaza. Various shipping lines have suspended operations, instead taking the longer journey around Africa. A drone launched from Yemen was shot down

in self-defence by a US ship in the southern Red Sea on Saturday in the vicinity of several commercial vessels, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement. The Houthis have vowed to continue attacks until Israel halts the conflict in Gaza, and warned that it would attack US warships if the militia group itself was targeted. Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi militants have stepped up attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea in protest against Israel's war in Gaza. Various shipping lines have suspended operations, instead taking the longer journey around Africa. A drone launched from Yemen was shot down in self-defence by a US ship.

Pakistan:

Peshawar Court bars KP government from disqualifying PTI members from February 8 polls

ISLAMABAD: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Friday barred the inclusion of the names of the former National Assembly speaker and other members of the Pakistan Assembly of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the fourth schedule aimed at keeping the petitioners out of the February 8 polls, Pakistan-based Pakistan Today reported. The Peshawar High Court asked the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government not to take any action against the petitioners and sought a response from them by January 23. The caretaker government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's decision to include the names of former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ministers.

Bangladesh train arson: Opposition BNP leader among eight arrested

DHAKA: Dhaka police on Saturday arrested eight people, including a prominent leader of the opposition BNP, for planning and financing Friday's arson attack on a train in the heart of Dhaka that left at least four people dead, ahead of elections in Bangladesh boycotted by the opposition. Four carriages of the Benapole Express that runs from Benapole, bordering West Bengal, were set on fire at around 9 pm on Friday at the Gopibagha area.



Pakistan government to write to UK publication over article attributed to imprisoned Imran Khan: Information Minister

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan government has said it will approach a British media outlet over the publication of a scathing write-up attributed to jailed former premier Imran Khan, as it questioned its editorial judgement and the credibility of the content. The write-up was published in The Economist on Thursday with the title 'Imran Khan warns that Pakistan elections could be a farce'. Raising serious doubts over whether the scheduled February 8 polls in Pakistan will be held as announced, Khan in the write-up reiterated his "engineered" removal from power in 2022 by the establishment "under pressure from America" and the lack of "level playing field" in the elections. The write-up has already been denied both by the Pakistan government and the US Department of State. The 71-year-old founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party is incarcerated at the high-security Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, convicted in the Toshakhana corruption case and being tried under multiple other cases. Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi on Friday said the government will be writing to the editor of the British publication The Economist in connection with an essay attributed to incarcerated Khan, the Dawn newspaper reported. "We are writing to the editor of The Economist about an article purportedly written by Imran Khan," Solangi said. It is puzzling and disconcerting that such an esteemed media outlet published an article in the name of an individual who is in jail and has been convicted, he said. "We believe it is critically essential to uphold ethical standards and promote responsible journalism," the paper quoted Solangi, a former journalist, as saying. "We would like to know how the editorial decision was made, and what considerations were taken into account regarding the legitimacy and credibility of the content by The Economist," he said. "We would also be interested to know if The Economist has ever published such ghost articles by jailed politicians ever from any other part of the world. If jailed convicts were free to write to the media, they would always use the opportunity to air their one-sided grievances," the minister said. Khan in his piece also reiterated his allegations about how a regime change brought about after US government pressure led to a vote of no-confidence against him and described the May 9 riots as a "false-flag operation" which was "pre-planned". The Dawn newspaper also reported that while sources within Khan's party were hesitant to comment on how the writing may have been relayed to the publication from inside prison, they had insisted that the words were indeed those of Khan.

Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli's selection conundrum continues ahead of Afghanistan T20Is

NEW DELHI: With the focus set on the high-profile T20 World Cup in the Americas scheduled for June, the national selectors are facing a tough decision in picking just one among Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli for the upcoming T20I series against Afghanistan.

Currently there's a possibility that both stars may be included in the squad with a potential stipulation that performance during the IPL will weigh heavily in determining their selection for the T20 World Cup.

Further deliberations might occur, with the final decision potentially resting with the top brass of the BCCI. Chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar had flown into South Africa during the second Test to talk to the two veterans, and both have made themselves available. But there are too many external factors, and eventually, the BCCI's all-powerful secretary Jay Shah might be required to take a



decision. There are only five days to go for the first T20I against the visiting Afghanistan and the BCCI is yet to announce the squad for the three-match series starting January 11. Agarkar has left for India and possibly the squad will be announced once he is back, in next 24 to 48 hours. It is understood that the team's balance could be an issue if both Rohit and Kohli are included in the playing XI. "If you have Rohit, Shubman Gill, Virat, Suryakumar Yadav and Hardik constituting your

top five then where is your left-hander? Now, let's assume you drop Kohli and play Gill at No.3 with Yashasvi Jaiswal opening with Rohit. Can Ajit take that bold call," a former national selector told PTI on the condition of anonymity.

If the selectors include both Rohit and Kohli, the two people who would miss out are Rituraj Gaikwad and Ishan Kishan, the latter being a left-handed keeper-batter and a top-order batting option. Having both Rohit and Kohli

also means that the think tank plays Jitesh Sharma as the keeper besides including Rinku Singh. In that case, one can only fit in five bowlers with Hardik Pandya (after he is back from his injury layoff) needing to bowl four overs in each game. "The flexibility will always be an issue but there would always be external factors that need to be countered.

Did you see ICC promoting the tourney with Kohli's giant billboard video in New York. MI handle put that aerial advert of Rohit and Shaheen Shah Afridi. So there will be external pressure," a former BCCI office bearer said. "It will be on Jay how much he can empower Agarkar's committee. As of now you need to accommodate both or drop both. The sensible thing would be to include both for Afghanistan and not make any promise for World T20 till the IPL performance is monitored," the veteran administrator said.

'Yeh zaroorat Cook ke jaane ke baad padhi': Sehwaag

NEW DELHI: Virender Sehwaag is known for his witty posts on social media and former India opener again showcased his comic brilliance after reports emerged that England will travel to India with their personal chef.

England is scheduled to embark on a tour of India for a five-match Test series this month, setting the stage for an exciting clash between two cricketing powerhouses.

England decided to travel with the famous football club Manchester United's chef, in order to ensure nutritious food for players who love the spicy stuff.

Responding to a post by England's Barmy Army on X (formerly Twitter), Sehwaag hilariously trolled England saying that they need their own chef after the retirement of former skipper Alastair Cook.

He added that England players won't require a personal chef in the



IPL 2024.

'Yeh zaroorat Cook ke jaane ke baad padhi. IPL mein nahi padegi,' Sehwaag wrote on X.

Chef Omar Meziane in the past travelled with the team to Pakistan in December 2022 when Ben Stokes' side whitewashed the home team.

"England will take their own chef on tour to India later this month to try and avoid players falling ill during the seven-week trip. The chef will join the squad in

Hyderabad before the first Test on January 25 in an attempt to keep on top of the players' nutrition," The Telegraph said in a report.

Wisden picks 2023 men's ODI team of the year, includes 7 Indians in the XI

England will start their series in Hyderabad, followed by matches in Vishakhapatnam, Rajkot, Ranchi and Dharamsala.

England last won a Test series in India in 2012.

'If India produce turning tracks, it will...': Jonny on upcoming Test series

NEW DELHI: England wicketkeeper batter Jonny Bairstow believes that if India chooses turning pitches for the upcoming five-Test series later this month, it could diminish some of their effectiveness in the seam attack. England faced a 1-3 defeat in the Test series against India in 2021 on spin-friendly tracks during their previous tour of the country. "India can produce different pitches: it doesn't have to turn. We've seen how potent their seam attack has been recently," Bairstow told Sky Sports.



"Look, I'm sure the pitches will turn: it's whether or not they'll turn from day one, which potentially negates a bit of their strength in their seam attack. We know how strong they are," he added. The 34-year-old

emphasized that he prefers not to dwell too much on the challenge of confronting spin bowling in India. "Obviously, the last time Axar and Ashwin played well. You forget that in that first Test match, the guys played

really well, Rooty (Joe Root) got a double in the first Test match in Chennai and then conditions changed quite drastically." "We know that it's the quality spinners, especially in India, we know that they are going to come at us. Whether Axar plays, whether he doesn't play. Whether Jadeja plays or Kuldeep plays, who knows? "We'll have to wait and see. But there's no point in overthinking things before their squad's announced before we see the pitch and the conditions that (are) in front of us."

Shakib yawns on stage, takes uninterested selfies during election

NEW DELHI: One of the biggest cricketers in Bangladesh, all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan recently found himself in an awkward situation when he was seen yawning on stage and taking uninterested selfies with fans during an election campaign.

Shakib recently entered politics in the country as he became a part of the Awami League, the ruling party in Bangladesh. In what looked like an election campaign ahead of the upcoming 204 elections in Bangladesh, Shakib was seen on stage during the event and when young fans came to take selfies, gave them an unin-

terested look. Soon after the incident, the hilarious Shakib video immediately went viral on social media.

Shakib, 36, has been actively campaigning for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ruling party and the outcome of the elections is almost certain.

Shakib recently said he was not facing any serious hurdle to his election but admitted it made him a bit anxious. "The competition and challenges are always there, be it a small team or big team," he said in his hometown Magura, where he is contesting a seat for Hasina's Awami League.



Players in dhoti-kurta, commentary in Sanskrit in unique Bhopal cricket tournament

NEW DELHI: Vedic pandits, adorned in traditional dhoti-kurta attire and displaying religious marks on their foreheads, are competing on a cricket pitch in Bhopal as part of an annual tournament aimed at promoting Sanskrit.

The victors of this competition, organized to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who introduced transcendental meditation to the West, will be rewarded with a visit to Ayodhya.

Ayodhya is significant as the consecration of the Ram temple is scheduled to take place on January 22, according to one of the organizers.

The four-day tournament commenced at Ankur ground in the Madhya Pradesh capital on Friday, with players and umpires engaging in fluent Sanskrit conversations.

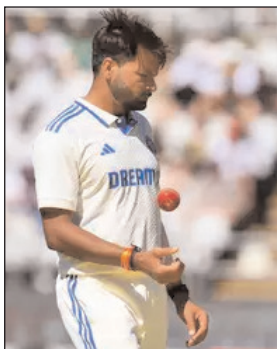
Even the commentators narrated the on-field events, such as hits, misses, and catches, in the ancient language.

Recovering Rashid Khan included in Afghanistan team for India T20Is

NEW DELHI: Premier leg-spinner Rashid Khan was on Saturday selected in a 19-member Afghanistan squad, captained by young Ibrahim Zadran, for the upcoming three T20 Internationals against India, scheduled to commence on January 11 in Mohali. While Rashid, the regular T20I captain, has been included in the squad, there is uncertainty about his participation in any game as he is currently recovering from a recent back surgery. Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who was absent from the recent three-match T20I series against UAE, makes a return to the squad to face India, as per a press release issued by the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB). Ikram Alikhil, previously among the reserves against the UAE, has been elevated to the main squad to serve as the backup wicketkeeper-batsman.

Rohit always tells us about areas to bowl in the nets, says Mukesh Kumar

NEW DELHI: In a splendid turnaround during the second Test against South Africa at Newlands, Mukesh Kumar, initially sidelined in the series opener, emerged as a pivotal force, contributing significantly to India's series-levelling triumph.



The seasoned duo of Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah dominated the wicket column, but Mukesh's disciplined bowling secured four crucial dismissals, aiding India's comeback. Mukesh, known for his astute approach to the game, shared insights with reporters, expressing contentment with his performance in the critical encounter. Recognizing the unique challenges posed by South African conditions, Mukesh adjusted his lengths judiciously, avoiding the risk of bowling too full. "In India, when you try to bowl a fuller length, the ball moves

in the air, but here, if you try to bowl too full, you get smashed. So we decided that we will bowl between 6 to 8-meter length (back of length). And since there is a lot of bounce on offer, you can get wickets," Mukesh explained, shedding light on his strategic adaptation.

Following India's setback in Centurion, Mukesh engaged in a rigorous net session, honing his skills while bowling to skipper Rohit Sharma.

This experience proved invaluable as he incorporated specific lengths and channels into his game plan for the subsequent Test.

R Ashwin bursts into laughter after Ntini sings 'kabhi kabhi mere dil mein' for CSK fans

NEW DELHI: After India's historic victory over South Africa in the second and final Test at Newlands, a video is doing the rounds on social media in which Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin and former Proteas pacer Makhaya Ntini were seen exchanging l i g h t - h e a r t e d moments.

Ashwin requested Ntini to share a few words for CSK fans and the former South African pacer delighted everyone by entertainingly singing the popular



Bollywood song 'Kabhi Kabhi Mere Dil Mein.' Ntini's rendition of a song had Ashwin bursting into laughter that showed the excellent camaraderie between

the two players. Earlier, India clinched their first ever Test victory in Cape Town to draw level the two-match series 1-1 after suffering an innings defeat in

Fans buying tickets to see Sunil Chhetri: CEO

PANAJI: Sunil Chhetri is among the oldest players at the AFC Asian Cup 2023 and at 39 years could possibly feature in a major continental competition for the last time. When the Indian team arrived at the Doha international airport last week, Indian fans applauded all the players with the loudest cheer reserved for the captain. Fans were singing his name till

the end. The phenomenal support will continue when India play their games at the continental showpiece, according to Asian Cup 2023 local organising committee CEO Jassim Abdulaziz Al Jassim. "Sunil is one of the best players in this tournament and we have seen that a lot of spectators are buying tickets to attend India matches for that

reason," Al Jassim told TOI in an exclusive interaction. "When India arrived, a lot of fans were waiting for Sunil outside the airport. It was nice and gives the team a good vibe ahead of the tournament."

With 145 caps, Chhetri will be among the top-three capped players at the Asian Cup, starting next week. Only Qatar forward Hassan Al-Haydos (175)

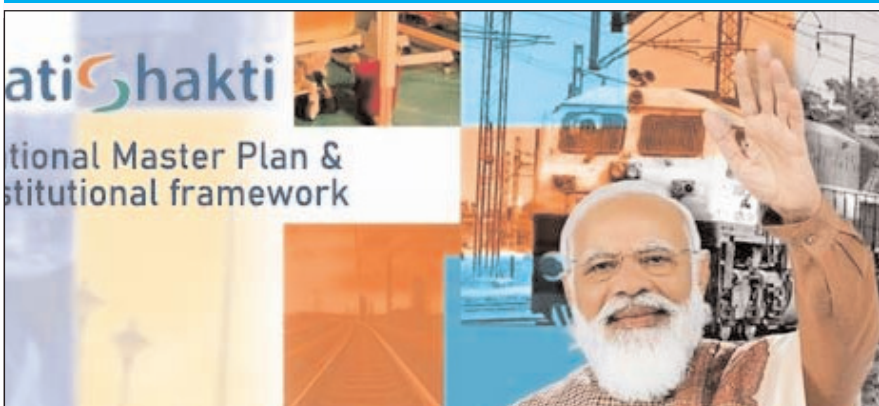
and Bahrain goalkeeper Sayed Mohammed Jaffer (161) are ahead of the record-setting India striker. Qatar hosted the FIFA World Cup 2022 with India recording the second-highest number of visitors after neighbouring Saudi Arabia. According to a report published by FIFA, 56,893 fans travelled to Doha making it the biggest group of support-

ers from a non-participating nation.

The 2023 AFC Asian Cup will be India's fifth appearance in the continental tournament, but for only the first time have they qualified for two straight editions.

"We have seen very high sales for Indian matches. I think after Qatar matches, India comes next in sales," said Al Jassim.

PM GatiShakti drives infrastructure development: Network planning group evaluates key projects



NEW DELHI
The 63rd Network Planning Group (NPG) meeting, held at Vanija Bhawan, New Delhi, under the leadership of Special Secretary (Logistics), DPIIT, Sumita Dawra, witnessed detailed discussions on three crucial infrastructure projects valued more than Rs 5,000 Crore. According to a press release by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the meeting, attended by representatives from key Ministries and Departments, aimed to enhance multimodal connectivity, strategically bypass

● According to a press release by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the meeting, attended by representatives from key Ministries and Departments,

congested areas, and stimulate socio-economic development. The projects discussed included a significant new railway line traversing Odisha and Chhattisgarh, facilitating efficient coal transportation

from mines to industries and power plants in the Northern/Western regions. Emphasizing the GatiShakti initiative's objective to minimize environmental impact, the project ensures minimal intersection with forests and provides road connectivity to the planned Multimodal Logistics Park. The initiative seeks to decongest existing railway main lines, enhance efficiency, and connect mines to Paradip Port for coastal shipping. The Mirzapur-Ayodhya Corridor, with bypass roads for two key cities.

GDP data calls for revisiting fiscal numbers

NEW DELHI: Government will have to either trim expenditure or target higher revenue to meet the 5.9% fiscal deficit target for the current financial year as the nominal GDP is estimated to grow slower than the budget estimate. Against an estimated nominal GDP of around Rs 302 lakh crore, which translated into 10.5% growth, the National Statistical Office has now pegged it at over Rs 296 lakh crore for 2023-24, which will be an expansion of 8.9%. Nominal GDP is calculated on current prices and does not take into account the impact of



inflation. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had estimated the fiscal deficit at Rs 17,86,816 crore, which worked out to 5.9% of the earlier nominal GDP estimate. With the new estimate, at the budgeted level, the fiscal deficit is expected to be a shade above 6% of

GDP. Buoyant tax collections and dividend receipts are expected to more than make up for the expected shortfall from disinvestment. With stock markets remaining strong and companies showing healthy growth, DIPAM will seek to raise more resources.

MobiKwik IPO relisted at 37% of initial issue

MUMBAI
In what will be its second attempt at going public, One MobiKwik Systems - the parent company of fintech firm MobiKwik - on Friday filed a fresh draft red herring prospectus with Sebi to raise Rs 700 crore through a fresh issue of shares. The size of the proposed IPO is

over 50% lower than the previous issue which was planned at Rs 1,900 crore. The IPO does not have an offer for sale component. The company said that it may undertake a pre-IPO placement worth up to Rs 140 crore. MobiKwik will use the IPO proceeds to fund growth of its financial services

and payment services businesses and make investments in data and technology tools like AI & ML. In an interview with TOI last year, co-founder and CEO Bipin Preet Singh had said that the company's digital credit GMV (gross merchandise value) has seen a multi-fold growth over the past few years.

CAPSULES

Narayana Health gets insurance licence

MUMBAI: The insurance regulator has granted a licence to Dr Devi Shetty's Narayana Health Insurance to carry out health insurance business in India. The licence for a health insurer, given after a hiatus of five years, takes the number of insurers operating in this segment to six. The regulator granted the approval in its 124th meeting held on December 28. However, the approval was communicated only this week through a statement. Sources said that the company, promoted by the Bangalore-based multispeciality hospital chain Narayana Hrudayalaya or Narayana Health, aimed to provide integrated health-care and insurance.

GAIL inks 10-year LNG deal with trading company Vitol

NEW DELHI: GAIL has inked a multibillion dollar deal for sourcing one million tonne of LNG annually for 10 years from commodities trading giant Vitol, marking the state-run utility's first long-term deal in a decade amid rising domestic demand. Vitol will start shipping super-chilled gas from 2026, even as GAIL is negotiating more such deals with others in view of a projected demand of 500 mcmd by 2030 from 155 at present.

Auto Expo may lose sheen as government plans mega mobility show

● While the industry lobby group has been pitching it as a main auto show, several top players have been giving it a miss



NEW DELHI
Auto Expo, which has for years been India's premier motor show, is set to lose some sheen with government lining up Bharat Mobility Expo, a three-day event starting February 1. The event will bring 11 agencies representing the multiple segments, from car makers to components, tyres, electric vehicles, construction to battery and

electronics outfits under one platform. While this year's show has been put together quickly, a talking point in industry circles is commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal's suggestion to expand the Mobility Show beyond Bharat

Mandapam (the original venue of the Auto Expo when it was called Pragati Maidan) to also include the recently completed Yashobhoomi in Dwarka, and subsequently the Noida Expo Centre (the current home of the Auto Expo).

While Goyal did not give any dates for next year, Auto Expo has been held every alternate year in January-February. At a meeting on Friday, the minister was candid about a pushback from industry players when he first suggested the mega mobility show. The minister's suggestion that this won't be a one-off event got industry players talking about the possibility of dealing with it next year too.

ED concludes searches in RFL case; documents, digital data seized

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday concluded its searches in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged diversion of funds worth more than Rs 2,000 crore from Religare Finvest Limited (RFL), official sources said.

The agency had launched the raids on Friday and searched nine locations in Delhi-NCR, including the corporate offices of RFL, M3M India Holdings, RHC Holding Pvt Ltd,



Hillingrow Infrastructure Pvt Ltd, Dion Global Solutions and Prius commercial, the sources said. The raids ended Saturday. Officials said that

"incriminating" documents, including digital evidence, were seized during the searches and large-scale proceeds of crime generated out of criminal activities have been identified. The ED's money laundering case stems from a Delhi Police Economic Offences Wing (EOW) FIR and the federal agency had arrested ex-Fortis promoters Malvinder Mohan Singh and Shivinder Mohan Singh and CMD of Religare Enterprises Ltd. Sunil Godhwani.

MedExpert to make India foray with global capability centre in Chennai

CHENNAI: US-based healthcare technology provider MedExpert, which provides billing services focused on emergency medical services, is setting up its first Global Capability Center (GCC) in India in Chennai. The amount of investment and size of operations were not disclosed.



The team in Chennai will play an integral role in further developing and strengthening MedExpert's revenue cycle management workflow platform for healthcare providers. The platform processes more than four million claims annually with 800+ clients, MedExpert said, adding that it leverages advanced predictive analytics, AI and ML technologies. The centre has growth opportunities for frontline employees

across various functions including electronic medical records, ICD-10 coding and certification, and healthcare payer relations, it added. "Chennai, a thriving hub in India's healthcare landscape, holds immense potential for MedExpert's expansion strategy. With a vision to bolster emergency medical billing solutions across Southern India, MedExpert plans to establish a robust presence in Chennai," the company said in a statement.

India's GDP growth seen at 7.3% amid global slowdown

● "It also said the first revised estimates for 2022-23 (benchmark years), due for release on February 29, may also lead to revision in growth rates reflected in the first advance estimate. "Estimates are, therefore, likely to undergo revisions for the aforesaid causes in due course"

NEW DELHI

India's economy is estimated to grow by 7.3% in the current fiscal year ending March, powered by robust manufacturing, construction and mining sector expansion - a stellar performance against the backdrop of a slowing global economy and geopolitical upheaval. The first advance estimates released by National Statistical Office on Friday showed the economy is projected to perform better than RBI's projection of 7% for 2023-24 and higher than the earlier estimates of 6.5% growth. Untitled design (73)



The strong second-quarter performance of 7.6% had prompted several agencies to upgrade India's growth projections citing robust domestic demand. India continues to remain the fastest-growing major economy in the world as China's growth slows led by a raft of problems, including real estate sector woes. The strong data comes ahead of the February 1 interim budget and before LS elections due in May and is likely to bolster government's record of handling the economy against the backdrop of global turbulence. There's no let-up in growth momentum: Finance minister

NSO said these are early projections for 2023-24. Improved data coverage, actual tax collections and expenditure incurred on subsidies, data revisions made by source agencies would have a bearing on subsequent revisions of these estimates. It also said the first revised estimates for 2022-23 (benchmark years), due for release on February 29, may also lead to revision in growth rates reflected in the first advance estimate. "Estimates are, therefore, likely to undergo revisions for the aforesaid causes in due course, as per the release calendar.

Services activity at 3-month high

NEW DELHI: Activity in the country's services sector rose to a three-month high in December on the back of strong demand, while business confidence remained robust and inflationary pressures were at their weakest in nearly three-and-half years, a survey showed on Friday. Rising from 56.9 to 59 in December, the HSBC India Services PMI business activity index highlighted a sharp increase in output that was the most pronounced since September. The 50-point mark separates expansion from contraction. The survey is compiled from responses to questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 service sector companies. The rise in total new business was supported by continued growth of international sales. Service providers noted higher demand from clients based in Australia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and South America during December.