

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Thursday 07 March, 2024

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

CBI finally gets Shahjahan custody after second high court order

It does not absolve a party of violating court order or postponing its implementation in the garb of challenging the order in a higher court



KOLKATA: The tug-of-war between state and central agencies for custody of Sandeshkhali strongman Sheikh Shahjahan culminated Wednesday in Bengal CID handing him over to CBI around 6pm, a day after dodging the first deadline set by Calcutta HC and at least an hour and 45 minutes past the second one. CBI took Shahjahan, recently suspended from Trinamool, to its regional headquarters at Kolkata's Nizam Palace under CRPF escort, capping a jurisdictional and legal battle that saw all three agencies involved — including CID and ED — approach the courts. Responding to Bengal advocate general's request to postpone hearing ED's contempt plea in HC against govt on

the ground that a special leave petition was pending in SC, Justice Harish Tandon said, "There is no reason for keeping the order (giving CBI Shahjahan's custody) in suspended animation. The order is binding on the parties." Startling facts revealed: Calcutta HC on CID dodging order Justice Tandon said, "It does not absolve a party of the charge of violating court order or postponing its implementation in the garb of challenging the order in a higher court." The day had started with ED, whose probe into Shahjahan's allegedly shady dealings turned Sandeshkhali into Bengal's latest political flashpoint, seeking an urgent hearing of its con-

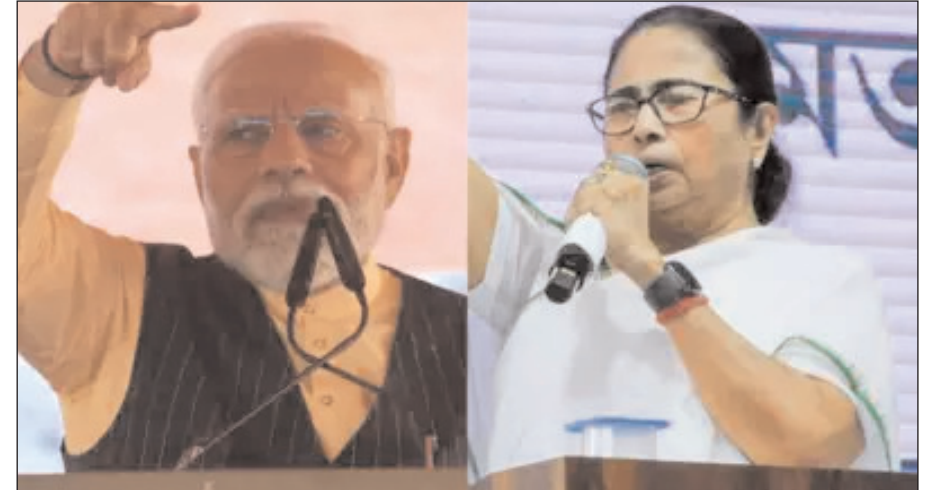
tempt plea against Bengal chief secretary B P Gopalika, home secretary Nandini Chakraborty, DGP Rajeev Kumar, ADG (CID) R Rajasekaran, among others. Additional solicitor general S V Raju said before the HC bench of Justices Harish Tandon and Hiranmay Bhattacharyya that the state had been trying to frustrate the investigation into the Sandeshkhali case. "The accused was arrested on Feb 29 and CID took him into custody.

The state is now urging the court to wait till Thursday, knowing that the SC is closed on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The purpose is to deny custodial interrogation of the accused by CBI."

On CID bypassing Tuesday's order by a division bench, Justice Tandon said, "Startling facts have been revealed on the role of CID...The (division) bench also pointed to the hide-and-seek methodology adopted by police (when Shahjahan was absconding for 55 days)." ED's contempt plea pertains to CBI not getting custody of Shahjahan by 4.30pm Tuesday, as ordered by a bench of Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam and Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya. Accused in land grab, rape, TMC leader Shahjahan Sheikh arrested, CID probe initiated "We do not find any fetter or impediment on our part in not directing the implementation of the said order in a pending contempt application despite the fact that a special leave petition is pending before SC. Furthermore, the fact remains there is no interim order of stay of the operation of the said order passed as of this time," the bench of Justices Tandon and Bhattacharyya said.

Mamata calls for massive rally as PM Modi warns her of 'storm of Sandeshkhali'

NEW DELHI: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who is under relentless all-round attack over the Sandeshkhali incident, has decided to fight back with a show of strength at Kolkata's Brigade Parade Ground on March 10. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself leading the Sandeshkhali charge against the Trinamool government, Mamata Banerjee has called for a mega rally to remind the Bohiragoto Jomidars (foreign landlords), implying the BJP, not to take Bengal's patience and courtesy for its weakness. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday tore into the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC government over alleged sexual assaults in the riverine island and said "The 'storm of Sandeshkhali' will sweep Bengal and 'Nari Shakti' (woman



power) will play a pivotal role in decimating the ruling party in the Lok Sabha polls." "What happened with the women of Sandeshkhali makes our heads hang in shame," he said. The Prime Minister also met a group of women from Sandeshkhali, shortly after the rally in Barasat and assured them of justice and security. As the BJP piles up pressure on Sandeshkhali, Mamata Banerjee has responded by mobilising her

supporters." The #JonogorjonSabha at Brigade Ground this Sunday will be a historic event on the land that has always fought for its rights. Join us as we lead the people's movement for Bengal's secure future. Bengal will show the way," the chief minister said in a post on 'X'. Banerjee also shared a video message in which she appealed to people of the state to gather at the Brigade Parade Ground in large numbers. "We will be protesting against the

way Bengal and its people are being deprived by stopping funds for road construction, construction of houses, 100-day work, health programs and several other schemes. They are trying to create a disturbed environment in Bengal which is opposed to the Bengali ethos," she is heard saying in the video message. Mamata's counteroffensive comes amid BJP's sustained and relentless campaign which has pitchforked the issue.

Even my borewells are dry, says DK Shivakumar as Bengaluru reels under crisis



BENGALURU: The borewell at Karnataka deputy CM DK Shivakumar's home is among more than 3,000 that have dried up across Bengaluru, underscoring the city's worst-ever water crisis as the groundwater table has depleted due to a poor monsoon and dry spell. This follows a crisis at CM Siddaramaiah's home office, located barely 2km from Vidhana Soudha, where tankers had to be summoned during a meeting on water scarcity on Tuesday. Drastic measures have been initiated, with residents' welfare associations (RWAs) introducing water rationing and imposing a ban on car wash and swimming pool activities with immediate effect. A prominent residential enclave in south Bengaluru has proposed to its residents the use of disposable plates, cutlery, and wet wipes for hygiene purposes to conserve water. Most of the dried-up borewells are on the city's outskirts, particularly in 110 villages incorporated into Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) that are yet to receive Cauvery river water. The impact is particularly severe on large apartment complexes in areas like Whitefield and Electronics City, which are adjacent to the city's tech corridors. Shivakumar highlighted the importance of judicious water usage and instructed civic officials to identify available sources and distribute them to areas facing severe shortages. Govt has taken over private water tankers to ensure supply to affected areas and prevent harassment.

Sandeshkhali reflects TMC apathy towards women: PM Modi

BARASAT/KOLKATA:

Sandeshkhali remained the focal point of PM Narendra Modi's Bengal campaign at his third rally in the state in five days, chipping away at Trinamool Congress's support among the 3.5 crore-strong women electorate and projecting BJP as the only party standing up for them.

Accused in land grab, rape, TMC leader Shahjahan Sheikh



arrested, CID probe initiated Modi said atrocities on women in the restive North 24-Parganas pocket that arrested Trinamool strongman Sheikh Shahjahan used to lord over reflected the gov-

state's latest political flashpoint. "Trinamool ghor paap korechhe (Trinamool has committed grave sins). Such an anti-women govt can never work for women's uplift. Sandeshkhali has shown BJP is the only voice of tormented women," the PM said. Alluding to Shahjahan, he said Trinamool govt was still "trying its best to protect the accused despite setbacks.

BJP & BJD on verge of sealing alliance for polls

NEW DELHI /BHUBANESWAR: In a major pre-poll manoeuvre, BJP and BJD appear to be inching towards an alliance that is likely to boost BJP's bid for a record tally in the Lok Sabha contest while helping BJD extend its tenure in Odisha. A big indication of the possible deal came on Wednesday when BJP's core committee for Odisha restricted its deliberations for selection of nominees to 14 of the 21 seats in the state. In 2019, BJP had contested all 21, winning eight. BJD bagged 12 while Congress had to settle for one. As part of the bargain, BJP will contest 47 assembly seats, leaving the rest 100 for



BJD. Modi-Naveen ties seen as main driver for resumption of alliance Naveen Patnaik-led BJD was part of NDA until 2009. Home minister Amit Shah and BJP chief J P Nadda attended meeting of the party's core committee for Odisha. Former Union minister Jual Oram, a prominent BJP figure

in Odisha who too attended the meeting, confirmed that possibility of BJP-BJD alliance being revived was on the table. "There were discussions on many issues, including a possible coalition plan. The central leadership will take a final call," he said. Asked by reporters in Bhubaneswar, senior BJD leader Debi

Safaris in buffer zones of tiger reserves get SC nod

NEW DELHI: Supreme Court on Wednesday allowed establishment of 'tiger safaris' in buffer or peripheral zones of tiger reserves, but prohibited the display of healthy big cats from the habitat along with those bred in a zoo. Ordering scrupulous implementation of National Tiger Conservation Authority's 2016 guidelines, a bench of Justices B R Gavai, P K Mishra and Sandeep Mehta said, "No tiger shall be obtained from a zoo (for



tiger safari). Wild tigers which are from the same landscape as that of the area in which the safari is set up should be kept there and would include injured ones after their recovery,

orphaned tiger cubs which are unfit for rewilding and conflict tigers. No healthy tiger or other species of animal should be sourced from the wild to be kept in safaris."

'Will step in if Bengal govt. fails to check poll violence'

KOLKATA: Stressing that there will be zero tolerance for violence during Lok Sabha polls, EC on Tuesday said it will step in if West Bengal administration fails to prevent it. Chief election commissioner Rajiv Kumar said while "primary responsibility" to conduct polls lay with state, it had been cautioned against any "partisan role". Kumar said Central agencies will work in tandem with those in state. CEC along with a team, including election commissioner Arun Goel, was in city to check poll preparedness. EC asked all central agencies to improve their intelligence networks as they might be used in execution of non-bailable arrest warrants, given several political parties had complained against state police.

Deal to procure first 6 bullet trains from Japan to be concluded by month-end

NEW DELHI: India will seal the deal for procuring first six E5 Series Shinkansen trains (bullet trains) from Japan by this month end. Going by the accelerated pace of progress, the railway is confident of the first train operation starting in June-July 2026 in Gujarat. Sources said the National High Speed Rail Corporation Ltd (NHSRCL) will bid out all contracts, including the procurement of trains and operating system, by August 15 this year. The 508 km bullet train corridor between Ahmedabad and Mumbai will have 'limited stop' and 'all stop' services. While the limited-stop trains will cover the distance between Mumbai and Ahmedabad in just two hours, the other service will take about 2 hours

and 45 minutes. Officials said the overall physical progress of the project till Jan is around 40%. Out of this, the progress is more in Maharashtra (48.3%) while in the past one year, the achievement is around 22.5%. They added that more than 100 km of viaduct (elevated stretch) has been completed in the project. Six river bridges have been completed in the past one year. Out of 20 bridges in Gujarat, seven have been completed. "There is remarkable progress in Maharashtra in recent months. The state administration has directed all district collectors to complete the handover of land by this month end," said a railway ministry official.

Lok Sabha elections are for the bright future of youth and creation of a great India: Shah

Chandigarh:

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah, addressing a youth conference in Jalgaon, Maharashtra, made it clear that the upcoming Lok Sabha elections are for the bright future of the youth and the creation of a great India. Shah, the stalwart leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, believes that voting for the BJP means ensuring a bright future for the youth, the creation of a great India, and making Narendra Modi the Prime Minister for the third time. If we take a keen look at the past 10 years, it is undeniable that the Modi government has undertaken unprecedented work for the youth, ranging from space to semiconductors, digital to drones, AI to vaccines, and from 5G to fintech. The journey from building the third-largest economy in the world to establishing space stations by 2035, organising the Olympics in 2036, and sending



Indian astronauts to the moon by 2040 is set to be completed because it is the 'Modi Guarantee'. As the 2024 Lok Sabha elections approach, the election activities are also increasing. Shah is gearing up to convey the message of Modi's leadership and the BJP's victory once again. When Shah, Chanakya of Indian politics, prepares for elections, even the opposition becomes his admirers. After Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amit Shah is the only leader whose election rallies attract a crowd of lakhs. In the last 10 years, under the leadership of Modi ji and the able guidance of Amit Shah, the country has traveled an unprecedented journey of progress and prosperity.

The world is witnessing the theatrics of the 'G h a m a n d i y a Gathbandhan' against the Modi-Shah duo that has given India a new identity. While the truth is that a coalition devoid of democracy will not establish democracy in the country. The alliance's sole aim is that Sonia Gandhi wants to make Rahul Gandhi the Prime Minister, Sharad Pawar's is to make his daughter the Chief Minister, Uddhav Thackeray's son is to make Aditya Thackeray the Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee's is to make her nephew the Chief Minister, and Stalin's is to make his son the Chief Minister. It's evident that nothing is left for the people of the country. In this

Congress will hoist the flag of victory in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections under the leadership of Hooda: Pradeep

Kaithal: Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee executive member and former Chief Minister Ch. Pradeep Kumar Chaudhary, a special supporter of Bhupendra Singh Hooda, said that a wave of change of power is going on in Haryana and former Chief Minister of Haryana Ch. Under the able leadership of Bhupendra Singh Hooda, the people of the state will win all the seats in the Lok Sabha elections and will work to form the government with a clear majority in the assembly elections. While talking in an interview in



the town, Pradeep Kumar Chaudhary said that the huge crowd gathering in the rallies organized by Hooda across the state is a strong proof that the

people of the state are with Hooda and for the third time, Hooda will be crowned the Chief Minister. Has resolved to decorate. State Executive Member Chaudhary said that during the time of Hooda government, there was prosperity in the state, there was peace and brotherhood in the entire area, ever since the coalition government has come, there is no peace in the state, business has completely ended, youth People are wandering from door to door in search of employment and the situation

in the state has become so pathetic that even after searching, educated youth are not able to get employment. Pradeep Chaudhary said that the people of the state are again remembering the Hooda government. Public interest works and development in the state were done during Hooda's government which has not been done by any government till date. Pradeep Chaudhary said that today there is no such thing as government in the state and every section is unhappy with the government.

Thinking Of Investing: Think Tata AIA Plans

GURUGRAM / FARID-ABAD: Over the past few years, Tata AIA, one of India's leading private life insurers, has consistently introduced new investment opportunities to investors seeking to generate wealth. Exploring several diverse themes, Tata AIA has developed a robust suite of 8 Unit linked products. These products have generated superior returns over multiple time periods, consistently beating the benchmark. The below table shows the performance of multiple Tata AIA unit linked products



across diverse themes. Commenting on Tata AIA's fund performance, Harshad Patil, Executive Vice President and Chief Investment Officer (CIO) of Tata AIA, said, "At Tata AIA, we are committed to offer best-in-class and highly rated

investment opportunities to our consumers, coupled with financial security for their loved ones. As Atmanirbhar Bharat continues on its robust growth trajectory, our investors can benefit from the diverse unit linked life insurance solutions that we offer. They can thus be prepared to harness opportunities that life offers, thereby being Har Waqt Ke Liye Taiyaar". To add to this outstanding performance is the fact that the funds are also highly rated. 95.25% of the rated AUM of Tata AIA

Life is rated either 4 star or 5 star on a 5-year basis as of January 31st, 2024, by Morningstar Ratings*, the global benchmark. Tata AIA's investment philosophy reflects an unwavering commitment to policyholders, focusing on delivering superior, consistent, and risk-adjusted long-term returns. Embracing a bottom-up stock-picking strategy backed by a well-defined research process, Tata AIA remains steadfast in sound investment practices, undeterred by market cycles.

'Satyamev Jayate': BJP on HC's Sandeshkhali order

Calling it "verdict of truth", BJP hailed Calcutta HC order to transfer to CBI the case of attack on ED officials by a mob allegedly at the behest of TMC strongman Shajahan Sheikh in Sandeshkhali in Jan. "Satyamev Jayate," BJP spokesperson Shehzad said and cited the court's critical observations on state police to assert that TMC tried to shield Sheikh.

Rajya Sabha MP Satnam Sandhu released Mayank's new book "Bauni Gudiya"

Chandigarh: The new book "Bauni Gudiya" of the city's senior journalist, writer and social worker Mayank Mishra was released by Rajya Sabha MP and Chandigarh University Chancellor Satnam Singh Sandhu. Sandhu gave his best wishes to Mayank for this book and said that children's literature is the need of the hour. Sandhu congratulated the author and inspired him to continue writing like this in future also. On this



occasion, President of Samvad Sahitya Manch, Chandigarh, Prem Vij and senior educationist, litterateur and poet Dr. Vinod Sharma were also present. This is Mayank's tenth book and his first children's

story collection. There are a total of 25 short stories in "Bauni Gudiya" published by Srishti Prakashan. Every story in the book inspires and there is a hidden message in every story. Mayank said that it is

a proud moment for him to get the book released by Satnam Singh Sandhu because in 2011 he had written the book 'Shunya Se Shikhar Tak' based on Sandhu's life which is inspirational for everyone. Giving his reaction on Mayank's new book, Prem Vij said that a lesson has been given to children in each story of the book. He hoped that this story collection would be successful in creating a special.

Parineeti Chopra-backed Clensta reaches INR 100 Crore ARR, grows 300% FY24

NEW DELHI: Parineeti Chopra-backed personal care startup Clensta has said that in the last eight months since the actor-turned-entrepreneur has come on board, it has achieved an ARR (Annual Run Rate) of INR 100 crore and is now poised to grow to an INR 1000cr ARR in the next three years. Burgeoned by a 300% growth in FY24 for that period, Clensta is now looking to penetrate deeper across its current 57 focused cities through same-store, same-city growth. Further, Clensta is now available in mod-



ern trade chains like Reliance, Walmart, Health and Glow, Wellness Forever, Tata 1 MG, Metro and Apollo among others. Additionally, due to its unique product proposition, Clensta has been expanding its global footprints through strate-

gic partnerships with global giants like The Lulu group in the GCC and UAE and Carrefour in Africa. The brand has also launched Phase II of its successful #Buy1Give1 campaign launched first in November last year—for every Clensta product sold, the brand gave one

bottle of drinking water to the underprivileged—a cause in sync with Clensta's long standing philosophy of providing water security to all. "We are thrilled to have reached this significant milestone. It speaks volumes about our team's dedication and the trust our consumers have placed in us. This journey fills us with immense pride, and now that we've accomplished so much, it is time to give back to society through social initiatives like the Buy1Give1 campaign," said Puneet Gupta, Founder, Clensta.

City dogs and their owners will run together in a unique race of its kind

Shimla: Manali Strays, a voluntary organization in Manali, has taken a unique initiative of its kind to further strengthen the sentimental bond between pets, especially dogs with their owners. Snow Marathon to be organized on March 10 at Sissu beyond Atal Tunnel, will have runners from every corner of the country and abroad contesting for their dominance. Meanwhile, aligned with the same event, Snow Tails is also being organized wherein dogs and their owners are invited to the race. The organizers of the Snow Marathon have shown their generosity by organizing this special dog race. This race will be conducted in one kilometer and two kilometer categories. The effort has been strengthened by the



support of pet care brands associated with animal welfare namely Bark Out Loud, Bear Himalayan Chew Sticks and Raymond's Bake Shop. Participants can register themselves on www.snow-tails.in. Manali Strays has contributed to improving the condition of these countless stray animals by operating rescue, medical care, vaccination and

sterilization campaigns in Manali. This event is an effort in this direction to rehabilitate the stray dogs of the city. Kamlesh, co-founder of Manali Strays, said that organizing Snow Tails amidst the beauty of Lahaul will provide a pleasant experience to everyone. According to her, with the participation of 20 dogs last year, they are hopeful.

Punjab De Sher engaged youth for CCL's matches with promotional activities.

Punjab De Sher's 'Meet & Greet' with fans will continue

Chandigarh The magic of Celebrity Cricket League (CCL) kept tricity's youth on their toes as team Punjab De Sher engaged them with a series of promotional activities. A massive craze among the youth has been witnessed for the upcoming three matches to be held at Punjab Cricket Association (PCA) Stadium at Mohali on March 8 and 9. CCL Trophy's strong contender and home team Punjab De Sher visited numerous of tricity and invited their fans to cheer them during the match. The team's leading stars - Babbal Rai and Ninja not only sliced the birthday cake with their



fans but also engaged them with many activities and gestured them with free VIP passes and gift hampers. The team visited Elante Mall, Chandigarh University, Chandigarh Group of Colleges, Dev Samaj College, CP Mall and adjacent markets. During these promotions, the team invited more than 3000 youth to watch the match. The team stars

also clicked selfies and greeted them with 200 VIP passes and 80 gift hampers. Punjab De Sher will lock horns against Bengal Tigers on March 8 followed by yet another clash against Riteish Deshmukh-led Mumbai Heroes on March 9. Celebs like Sohail Khan, Sunil Shetty, Jenelia Deshmukh would also be featured in this match.

Team owner Puneet Singh and co-owner Navraj Hans said that this series of promotional activities before the matches will continue wherein fans can hunt for their free VIP passes and gift hampers. Fans can get information about these activities and complimentary match passes through the team's official website and social media platforms.

Twice in 15 months, high court acquits Saibaba, 4 more of Maoist links

NAGPUR: Bombay high court's Nagpur bench Tuesday acquitted former Delhi University professor G N Saibaba and five others of waging war against the country by aiding and abetting Maoist activity, seven years after a sessions court in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli sentenced him to life imprisonment. This is his second acquittal in the UAPA case in nearly 15 months after the previous verdict by another HC bench was stayed and subsequently overturned by the Supreme Court. Like it did on the previous occasion, Maharashtra immediately filed a special leave petition in SC for a stay. The division bench of Justices Vinay Joshi and Valmiki Menezes cited technical grounds for the acquittal of all six convicts., one of whom is dead. As in the October 2022 acquittal, the bench ruled that the prosecution failed to prove beyond doubt charges against 57-year-old Saibaba.

Karnataka: Pro-Pakistan slogan gaffe leads to Mandya BJP worker's arrest



MANDYA: There's 'many a slip between the cup and the lip', but hardly any 'tween the cop and the lip', as this BJP worker realised the hard way! Worse still, not in his wildest dreams could he have imagined that mixing up the words 'zindabad' (long live) and 'murdabad' (death to) would return to haunt him - 15 months later. On, Mandya police arrested Danayakapura Ravi, 34, after a complaint was filed against him by Congress worker Kannambadi Kumar, saying the former had shouted "Pakistan Zindabad" during a protest in Dec 2022. A hilarious back-grounder has been

shared by BJP Mandya district chief Indresh NS on Ravi's arrest. On Dec 22, 2022, BJP had organised a protest to condemn then Pakistan foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's derogatory comments against PM Modi. According to Indresh, during the protest, Ravi, a farmer, who knows only Kannada, inadvertently shouted "Pakistan Zindabad", when all he meant to say was "Pakistan Murdabad"! In a purported video of the protest that went viral soon after Ravi's arrest, he is seen shouting "Pakistan Zindabad" even as the person behind him attempts to stop him by cover-

ing his mouth. Interestingly, Ravi's arrest comes close on the heels of the arrest of three men by Bengaluru police on Monday for allegedly shouting "Pakistan Zindabad" slogans at the Vidhana Soudha on Feb 27, following the victory of Congress MP Syed Nasir Hussain in the Rajya Sabha elections. "It was quite a comedy of errors," Indresh said, adding that Ravi's arrest after so many months clearly shows that the Congress govt is upset with the opposition for questioning the pro-Pakistan sloganeering by its supporters on the Vidhana Soudha premises.

Man removes number plate, performs stunts on Delhi road; SUV seized

DELHI: In response to a viral video depicting reckless driving and dangerous stunts along Najafgarh Road in Rajouri Garden, the Delhi Police have seized the SUV featured in the viral video.

The Resident Welfare Association (RWA) of Rajouri Garden lodged a complaint at the Rajouri Garden Police Station, highlighting the alarming behavior of certain vehicles on the road. Upon receiving the complaint, the Delhi Police launched an investigation. The video, which had gained traction on social media platforms, showcased an SUV engaging in reck-



less maneuvers while its number plate was missing, an attempt by the owner to evade identification. The Police team at PS Rajouri Garden seized the SUV despite the owner's efforts to conceal its identity.

An FIR has been registered under Section 279 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) against the individual responsible for the reckless driving. Further investigations are underway to arrest the individual.

Man crashes on to car from train, dies

BENGALURU: A white hatchback moving towards Mehkri Circle on Ballari Road direction was about to emerge from the road underbridge near Windsor Manor around 1.30pm on Tuesday when the driver's vision went blank as the car's windshield was shattered. The driver applied the brakes immediately and it took a

while for him to realise that a man had fallen on his car's front windshield from the railway tracks above. The passenger, Gourishwaran, was a resident of Vellore in Tamil Nadu. He rolled on to the road from the car's bonnet. As passersby began trying to resuscitate him by pouring water into his mouth, High Grounds

police reached the spot. They shifted the man on to the pavement even as an ambulance arrived. However, the man had already died of severe head injuries. High Grounds police, who alerted the railway police, searched the man's pockets and found a mobile phone that was switched off.

36-year old shoots himself in South Delhi, family claims murder

NEW DELHI: A 36-year-old man allegedly shot himself to death in Jawahar Park area of South Delhi's Neb Sarai, police said on Wednesday. According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ankit Chauhan, a distress call reporting the incident in Jawahar Park was received at the Neb Sarai Police Station at 11 pm on Tuesday. Both the Crime Team and Forensic units were immediately dispatched to the site. "A call was received at the Neb Sarai Police station in which the



caller said someone had come to meet his brother and bullets were fired. Police on arriving at the scene find that Bharat Sachdeva, around 36 years old, had taken his own life. He used

to drive and auto and had recently lost his job," the DCP said. According to preliminary investigation, the DCP said, "it seems the man shot himself as there is an entry and exit wound. We are

investigating further." The body has been sent to the mortuary at the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) for a post-mortem examination. However, the family of the deceased has alleged murder. "I have come here, but the police is not letting me see the body of my son," the dead man's father claimed. "With two young children left behind, why will my son take his own life by shooting himself? It is a murder," said the deceased's father.

Spanish tourist continues tour, says blame criminals, not all people

DUMKA: Five more people were arrested in connection with the gangrape of a Spanish national in Dumka district of Jharkhand even as the survivor left Dumka along with her husband on their bikes amid heavy security. This has taken the total number of those arrested to eight. The foreign national had, in her FIR, said seven people were involved. Talking to reporters for the first time since the crime took place on March 1 at a semi-forested area in Kurumahat locality



under Hansdiha police station where the couple were camping for the night, the survivor said the assault left a deep scar but won't change her positive perception about India or its people. She and her husband (63) were escorted by Jharkhand Police to the Bihar bor-

der from Dumka Circuit House. Bihar Police will assist them in reaching Nepal, the original destination of their world bike tour. Dumka district administration, meanwhile, provided Rs 10 lakh as compensation even as Jharkhand high court took suo moto cognisance of the crime

on Monday and will hear the case on March 7. Jarmundi SDPO, who is leading the SIT that investigated the crime, said, "Five fresh arrests have been made taking the total count of those in custody to eight. The eighth person is the one who assisted the seven others in the crime." On March 1, the couple reached Dumka for a brief halt en-route to Nepal via Bihar when the seven youths way-laid and assaulted them. The woman was then gangraped, triggering a global outrage.

Water woes grip Bengaluru as city faces severe crisis ahead of summer



BENGALURU: India's Silicon Valley, is facing a water crisis. As the sweltering summer approaches, the plea for government intervention grows louder, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable solutions to address the escalating water shortage in the tech hub. Speaking to ANI, resident Suresh emphasized the rising costs and inadequate water supply, expressing concerns about potential health risks in the upcoming hot

weather. 'It's been 6 months, we have not received corporation water, and Kaveri water pipe connections have been provided, but still the water connection is not been given, causing difficulties. For water tankers, booking has to be done two days in advance, and the cost of water delivery has increased from 1600 to 2000. Even after paying this amount, the water doesn't arrive on time. The water scarcity is

severe, and people are struggling even to bathe. In a few days, people won't be able to bathe due to the water shortage. The situation will worsen during the upcoming hot weather, and people might face health risks. We request the government to address the water problem and provide a solution to the scarcity issue.' Another resident Deepa highlighted the severity of the situation stating that for the last 3 months.

Water to flow into parched Bengaluru from adjoining towns via tankers

BENGALURU: With water crisis across the city worsening by the day, deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar Tuesday assured Bengalureans that the govt would resolve the issue by ensuring sufficient supply of water. "We'll supply water to Bengaluru at any cost," Shivakumar, who is also minister for water resources, said after taking part in a meeting on drought and water crisis. Admitting that the situation was alarming, he said, "We're facing a severe water crisis in Bengaluru. But no matter what it takes, we'll supply water to the city." The govt has ordered supply of water in huge tankers to Bengaluru from adjoining towns such as Ramanagara, Hoskote, Magadi, and Channapatna. "The CM and the revenue and RDPR ministers, along with others, discussed



the issue. We've directed officials to use water sources (borewells) within a 15-km radius of Bengaluru to supply water to the city. They will ferry water to Bengaluru city from Ramanagara, Magadi, Channapatna and Hoskote," Shivakumar explained. Recalling the padayatra he had led from Mekedatu two years ago, the Congress leader said, "We had conceptualized the

Mekedatu project with the sole intention of securing water for Bengaluru. Despite our repeated pleas to approve the project, the Centre hasn't cleared it. The Centre should realise the importance of it and approve it at the earliest." **Tankers from adjoining dists** Referring to surging water tanker prices, the deputy CM pointed out, "While a few operators are offering

tankers at Rs 600 per trip, some others are charging Rs 3,000. To regulate the tanker operations, we've directed all the operators to register with the BBMP. After their registration, we'll ensure a system is in place and will decide on the tanker tariff depending on the distance from source." Referring to report that the crackdown on water tankers by RTOs and BWSSB had deprived large

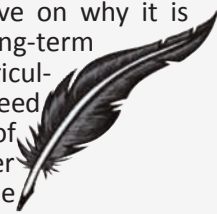
NIA begins probe into Bengaluru cafe blast after MHA diktat

BENGALURU: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday began its probe into the Rameshwaram Cafe blast that injured nine people in the city on March 1. A team of NIA sleuths, including IGP Santosh Rastogi, visited the cafe for a spot inspection and reconstructed the crime scene. Central Crime Branch (CCB) sleuths are also continuing their probe in the case, which was registered at the HAL police station. NIA registered the case following directions from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as Karnataka govt did not hand over the investigation to the central agency. However, NIA officials from Bengaluru had visited the spot and collected details of the blast. NIA officials from Telangana, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have been camping in Bengaluru since March 2 and are coordinating with the city police and Intelligence Bureau (IB).

Editorial

Agriculture sector across the world needs to break socialist trap

Ironical as it may seem, across the world, reasons for farmer protests have less to do with farming, weather, or food and more with geopolitics. The recent spate of unrest in Europe, for example, can be traced to war, tariffs, currency, fuel costs, logistics, and regulatory wokeism. Similarly, even in post-green revolution India, agriculture sector woes are less about farming and more about political brinkmanship. Therefore, the solution to these woes may not just lie within the paradigm of the farm-to-food value chain but even outside. The world produces more food than it can eat. The quantity of food an average human being can consume in a day across all five food categories is only 300 grams. Extrapolated to 8 billion humans, it translates to a food requirement of 875 million tonnes each year. Double that quantity to feed animals to account for non-vegetarians, and the world doesn't need more than 1,750 odd million tonnes of agricultural or farm produce of any kind each year. Correspondingly, we produce 800 million tonnes of wheat, 600 million tonnes of rice, 100 million tonnes of pulses, a whopping 1200 million tonnes of corn, and much more in cereal, food grains, and oilseeds. Modern inventions like home refrigerators, commercial cold storage, and advanced food processing have further widened the gap between production and consumption. Arithmetically, we live in a world of agricultural abundance, and that perhaps is at the root of all disgruntlements. Long ago, agriculture stopped being about subsistence and became a sector of the economy. As transaction commerce moved from barter to monetary, agricultural produce became a commodity, and then cash and farming transitioned from occupation to profession to commerce. To fuel that commerce, marketing curated needs beyond just satiating hunger. These needs transcended boundaries in a globalised world, and demand got internationalised. Kiwi Fruit from New Zealand in a New Delhi breakfast and Japanese Edamame in a Johannesburg bar were not a surprise, but so was the downside. When cassava replaces wheat in African meals, war in Ukraine can impact the Congolese wallets, and civil unrest in West Africa can make Choco Latte expensive at Starbucks. What, then, is the solution to the seemingly recurring woes of agriculture? More importantly, does the farm sector deserve a solution? The agronomy, after all, accounts for a mere 5 per cent of the 105 trillion global GDP. Development economics hints at an inverse relationship with agriculture. But this can be misleading and risks taking those involved in this important sector lightly. Western Europe is perhaps doing that and facing consequences since the sector accounts for a woeful 1.5 per cent of GDP. The fact is that agriculture is the most "real" sector of the economy compared to its sectoral peers. The services sector, for example, has a disproportionate gross value add and hence skews the sectoral ratio in its own favor. If the number of people gainfully employed were a measure of sectoral contribution and importance, then agriculture would rank at the top. Besides, agriculture is the deepest foundation of the economy, nay, humanity. So, nurturing the sector should be a policy priority. And this should be the central perspective before we start dealing with the sector. Contextually for India, a comparison with China offers perspective on why it is important to lock in a long-term strategy in dealing with agriculture since both countries feed roughly the same number of mouths and employ 40 per cent of their workforce in the sector.



Pakistan was already in a serious political, economic and social mess

Pakistan was already in a serious political, economic and social mess. The elections just held have deepened that mess. The functioning of all Pakistani institutions has been badly exposed and their credibility eroded further. Imran Khan defied the Pakistani military and has paid a price for that. The judiciary has pliantly played the game of the Pakistani military by sentencing Imran Khan to long periods of imprisonment for provoking violence against the army, leaking state secrets and profiting from sale of gifts he received as Prime Minister from foreign dignitaries. His wife too has been given a prison sentence for an un-Islamic marriage with Imran Khan. The Pakistani military is seen, and sees itself, as the saviour of last resort of Pakistan's survival as an ideological nation. The army, as known, has always exercised real power in Pakistan directly or indirectly. Imran Khan himself was put in power by the army as an alternative to the traditional political parties. Having fallen afoul of the army because he wanted to exercise his prime ministerial prerogative in military appointments, he was removed from power. The army then manoeuvred for Nawaz Sharif to return from London and replace Imran



Khan. The judiciary cooperated by lifting the life-long election ban on Nawaz Sharif because of his criminal conviction for dishonest practices because, it ruled, that life-bans "abridge the fundamental right of citizens to contest elections and vote for a candidate of their choice". The Election Commission of Pakistan decided to bar PTI — Imran Khan's party — from using its iconic cricket bat symbol to identify party candidates in the election on the grounds of irregularities in its internal party elections. The Pakistan Supreme Court upheld the decision of the Election Commission. Members of Imran Khan's party were barred from contesting the election under their party's

name and were compelled to run as independents. It was speculated that while the Pakistani military would manoeuvre to make Nawaz Sharif Prime Minister, it would also ensure that no party gets a majority so that a coalition government that emerges is relatively weak and can be better controlled. In the event, the military's strategy hasn't worked as expected because despite all the bans and restrictions put on Imran Khan and the PTI, his followers standing as independents have won the largest number of seats, close to 93 or so (out of 101), with PML-N winning 75 seats, the PPP 54 seats, the MQM-P 17 seats and others 12. With the delay in announcing results, the clos-

ing down of the internet and telephone networks during the counting, the accusations of rigging seem credible. A coalition government is in the offing. Nawaz Sharif has made an appeal to all parties to come together to put crisis-ridden Pakistan back on the rails, and negotiations are being conducted with PPP and others. General Asim Munir has backed Nawaz Sharif's call in stating that "Pakistan's diverse polity and pluralism will be best represented by a unified government of all democratic forces imbued with national purpose". In all this, the military as an institution has also taken a hit. The limits of its ability to control the political process have been exposed. It is not the first time though that the military has received public rebuffs, but such is its core control of power and policy in the system that it recovers from setbacks. The fact that challenged openly and persistently by Imran Khan and General Munir's determination to crush him and the PTI, the former Prime Minister's youthful supporters have resisted and emerged as the largest group-as independents-in the election, shows that the military's role in Pakistani politics is being challenged. Some believe that this show of resistance to the military's

political manipulation is a good augury for Pakistan's democracy. But then, Pakistan's political structure, the role of the armed forces, the domination of Punjab in its polity, the radicalisation of its society, the country's ideological underpinnings, the limited base of its economy and the difficulties in revitalising it because of vested interests are issues that are deeply linked to the possible evolution of a more democratic Pakistan. Leaving aside the hurdles to any genuine democracy in Pakistan that its military represents, the political leaders of Pakistan have vied for power in the country without any genuine democratic convictions. Imran Khan's vision of Pakistan is not that of a modern democracy but of an Islamic welfare state based on moral and ethical principles — a Riyasat-i-Madina — that would transform Pakistan. As for other leaders, those of PML-N and PPP, they have been in and out of power, in and out of jail, tainted by corruption. They have fought elections without seriously committing themselves to plant the roots of a stable democracy in Pakistan. Pakistan sees Turkey as a model to emulate, but Turkey itself has moved towards an Islamic state. So, what lesson is there for Pakistan in this?

Why a legal guarantee of MSP is fraught with challenges

On November 19, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the repeal of the three farm laws. Thus ended the thirteen-month long farmers' agitation on the borders of Delhi. It took the Government about nine months to take the next step on the promise made to agitating farmers' unions. It was only on July 12, 2022, that the Union Government set up an expert committee under the chairmanship of former Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agarwal. The committee has 29 members of which four are Secretaries to the Government of India and four represent the states. However, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh are not represented in the committee. Several economists and experts had



opposed the farm laws but none of them was included in the committee. Due to the complexity of the issues involved it is not surprising that the committee has not been able to submit a report. Now that general elections are only about ten weeks away, it is unlikely that the committee will be able to submit even an interim report. The terms of reference of the committee do not specifically mention legal guarantee for MSP. Instead, it mandates the committee to give suggestions of the following issues relating to MSP: Suggestions to

make available MSP to farmers of the country by making the system more effective and transparent. Suggestions on practicality to give more autonomy to the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and measures to make it more scientific. To strengthen the Agricultural Marketing System as per the changing requirements of the country to ensure higher value to the farmers through remunerative prices of their produce by taking advantage of the domestic and export opportunities.

PM Modi's deft engagement with West Asia exposes elitist

PM Modi's deft engagement with West Asia exposes elitist, prejudiced mindset of Left-'liberals' Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum the World Government Summit, in Dubai, UAE, on 14 February, 2024. In the last one week, India has received multiple good news from West Asia. The biggest one is Indian Navy veterans getting released and safely returning to their homes after they were put on death sentence in Qatar last year with the espionage charges against them being dropped. As the images of their happy faces after landing in New Delhi circulate all over the media, one can only thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his personal investment in securing their release. After all, it was a powerful meeting between him and Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on the sidelines of the COP28 Summit in Dubai that set the ball rolling towards their release in December 2023. According to foreign secretary Vinay Kwatra, the prime minister not only "personally supervised" their case but he also never "shied

away" from any initiative that would ensure their safe release and return to India. In a reciprocal gesture of goodwill, Prime Minister Modi will also pay a short visit to Qatar this week after completing his scheduled visit to the UAE. What's interesting is that this news comes on the heels of another welcome development in India-Qatar ties. In early February, India and Qatar had also agreed to renew a \$78 billion deal as a part of which India will receive Liquefied Natural Gas from this West Asian nation till 2048. India will save around \$6 billion over the next 20 years due to this deal because it has been negotiated at a price lower than the current prevailing market rates of LNG. Qatar is vying to become one of the largest LNG producers in the world and a customer like India would definitely give its ambitions new wings. Besides growing energy cooperation with Qatar, there is another reason to cheer for India as the Arab Emirate of Abu Dhabi has just witnessed the inauguration of a Hindu temple on Wednesday. In 2015, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan had generously donated a 13.5 acre of land for construction of

a Hindu temple during PM Modi's visit to UAE. This donation was topped up with another 13.5 acres of land later on. A Swaminarayan temple built on this total 27 acres of land will be opened to people on 14 February after its inauguration by Modi during his two-day visit. Interestingly in a span of just eight months, this will be Prime Minister Modi's third visit to UAE. In fact, not just the United Arab Emirates but the entire region of West Asia has witnessed closer cooperation with India in the last 10 years. India, UAE sign pact to develop trans-continental trade corridor to connect Europe with India through Middle East. In 2014 during the run up to the Lok Sabha elections, there was a wide section of the Lutyens that was questioning Prime Minister Modi's credentials to govern India specifically in the domain of foreign policy. Their leading charge was that Modi had so far only served as the Chief Minister of a provincial government and had very little exposure to foreign policy. This was not only a very elitist argument but it also reflected how Lutyens considers for-

Why Indian Navy is a preferred partner in Indo-Pacific

In response to recent missile and drone attacks by Houthis in the Red Sea, piracy, and hijacking attempts off the Somali Coast, there is one resident navy that has responded every time a distress call has been received and rendered assistance—the Indian Navy. Since the time these incidents in the Red Sea began, the Indian Navy has been deploying 8–10 ships in the Arabian Sea, Gulf, and Bab-el-Mandab regions. These deployments are over and above other deployments to tackle traditional threats that do not have a forecasted arrival time, particularly when we have two nuclear neighbours with whom we do not have the best of relations. Navies all over

the world understand the logistics support required for sustaining such operations, which do not seem to be scaling down anytime soon. These ships need to be fuelled at sea and supplied with other provisions, apart from replacement spare parts. Logistic support ships have very important functions for longer deployments, though they can also become suitable targets, being lightly armed. Ships are also required to undergo routine maintenance in the harbour, which is supported by naval dockyards and material organisations. The Indian Navy has a very robust material management network, and there are procedures

by which these spares can also be delivered at sea or in harbours in other friendly foreign countries. These eat up the running hours of engines and equipment, which could impact availability in a warlike situation. The Indian Navy has been managing this mammoth task extremely efficiently. Ships of friendly countries have also been provided with harbour support in case it is so required. India's policy has been that of a free and open sea and the right to innocent passage for vessels engaged in trade and commerce. perity is linked to trade, and seaborne trade is still the cheapest mode of transportation. Moreover, 70 per cent of the world is water. In the case

of India, 95 per cent of trade traverses the seas. The importance of free trade is well understood. Prime Minister Modi's stated policy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", meaning 'world is one family', fits in very well with the maritime strategy of India. Every country's vessel must have similar unrestricted movement. It is in this spirit that an Iranian-flagged ship was saved from being hijacked by the Indian Navy, and 15 Pakistani crew members returned to their destination safely. Secondly, the principle laid down in the United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS) suggests the right of innocent passage to all ship.

Govt takes Third Mumbai plan another step closer to reality



MUMBAI: The urban development department (UDD) has invited suggestions and objections from the general public from 124 villages that have now been made a part of the proposed Third Mumbai.

Third Mumbai largely consists of area that falls under the influence zone of the recently opened Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), or Atal Setu.

MTHL is expected to have a major impact on the economic development and growth of the region and the state govt has decided to tap the potential that will emanate from this project. On Dec 12, Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) was appointed the New Town Development

Authority (NTDA) for area that falls under the MTHL influence zone. MMRDA has envisaged Third Mumbai as a liveable and environment-friendly greenfield sus-

tainable business centre with smart city features. It will have regional-level amenities with mixed-use and integrated residential areas for job creation and economic growth of Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

Of the 124 villages, 80 villages are from Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA), 33 villages from the Khopta New Town Notified Area, two villages from Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Plan and nine from the Raigad Regional Plan.

Since some of the areas from NAINA and

Khopta New Town Notified Area have been moved to NTDA, UDD has decided to seek suggestions and objections about the modifications.

A notification issued by state UDD said: "The suggestion and/or objections in respect of the proposed modification [are sought] from the general public within

30 days (April 3). The suggestions and/or objections shall be addressed to the joint director of town planning, Konkan Division, 3rd floor, main building, room no. 305, Konkan Bhavan, Navi Mumbai- 400601."

NIA begins probe into Bengaluru cafe blast after MHA diktat

BENGALURU: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday began its probe into the Rameshwaram Cafe blast that injured nine people in the city on March 1.

A team of NIA sleuths, including IGP Santosh Rastogi, visited the cafe for a spot inspection and reconstructed the crime scene.

Central Crime Branch (CCB) sleuths are also continuing their probe in the case, which was registered at the HAL



police station.

NIA registered the case follow-

ing directions from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as Karnataka govt did not hand over the investigation to the central agency.

However, NIA officials from Bengaluru had visited the spot and collected details of the blast. NIA officials from Telangana, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have been camping in Bengaluru since March 2 and are coordinating with the city police and Intelligence Bureau (IB).

Karya, NGO create Kannada Q&A bot for TB

Bengaluru: Not-for-profit organisation Karnataka Health Promotion Trust (KHPT) has teamed up with Bengaluru-based data cooperative Karya to develop a voice-based tuberculosis Q&A bot in Kannada. Currently, the app is in beta.

A patient can ask in Kannada, "What types of food are okay to eat with my TB medicines?". And get the response in the same language: "You don't

have to worry too much about what you eat with your medication. Most things are okay, but it's good to eat lots of Vitamins A, C and E. You can get this by adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet! Here are some examples of what you can add:

orange, mango, sweet pumpkin and carrots, guava, amla, tomato, nuts and seeds." The app has a call to action button which

connects them to a helpline when necessary. The Global TB (tuberculosis) Report 2022 showed that 21.4 lakh TB cases were notified in India in 2021, 18% higher than 2020. KHPT has built a digital Kannada repository in ten dialects including Mangaluru Kannada, Sirsi Kannada, Belagavi Kannada, Mandya Kannada and Ballari Kannada through an exhaustive data collection exercise. This

includes data anonymised from those affected with TB, caregivers, social workers, frontline healthcare workers and communities to improve health outcomes of TB patients. KHPT and Karya interviewed 1,600 people to obtain 1,000 hours of data. They collected details on symptoms, treatment adherence, side effects, cost of treatment and benefits of the direct benefit transfer programme.

Over 1,300 beggars got skills

Delhi: The economic survey says the Delhi government started skill development for homeless beggars last year. It claims 1,312 of Delhi's 16,000 homeless and pavement residents were taught between March and September 2023. The government said an interdepartmental committee would train city homeless before the 2023 G20 Summit. The lieutenant governor and chief secretary ordered.

Mails to Karnataka CM, deputy CM DK Shivakumar warn of more blasts in Karnataka

BENGALURU: Close on the heels of Friday's bomb blast at a cafe in Whitefield, Bengaluru, that left nine persons injured, two emails sent to the chief minister, his deputy, the home minister and the city commissioner of police have warned of "more explosions" targeting VVIPs and crowded areas in Karnataka. One of the mails demanded \$2.5 million "to stop similar blasts".

While the first email



was sent at 2.48pm Saturday, a day after the cafe blast, the second mail was sent on Monday. Unverified reports claimed that more such mails have been received by govt and police. Threats

appear to be hoax but can't be ignored: Senior cop City police commissioner B Dayananda on Tuesday confirmed receiving the e-mails and said cybercrime police have taken up the probe after regis-

tering separate cases. The Saturday email was purportedly sent by a person identifying himself as Shahid Khan and the sender's ID read, 'Shahidkhan10786@protonmail.com'. The email was sent to the CM, deputy CM, home minister, and several police officers, barring the commissioner of police. Dayananda told, "We have written to Proton (an IT firm) to provide us the details of the email ID.

Brief court on steps taken to control noise pollution: HC

Hyderabad: Asking TSPSB and govt officials to be honest in their communication, Telangana high court on Tuesday directed director general of police and Hyderabad police commissioner to brief the court within two days the steps they are taking to control noise and sound pollution at function halls in Hyderabad and all over the state. The court, while making Secunderabad Cantonment Board as a respondent to the case, issued notices to the state govt, municipal,

police and pollution control officials. The case was posted to Thursday for further hearing. A bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J Anil Kumar, which took up a letter written to them by an additional chief engineer (environment) from the military's research and development wing as a PIL, wanted to know from the officials how they were implementing the noise pollution control and regulation rules, which were notified in a GO issued in

2010. The military engineer in his letter pointed out the inaction of officials in controlling unbearable noise levels from two function halls in Tadbund in Secunderabad Cantonment. He named Bantia Gardens and Imperial Gardens for violating the rights of the people residing in the vicinity. "These function halls collect lakhs of rupees towards rent for conducting marriages and other functions.

but show scant regard towards the

noise pollution norms," he said.

The advocates representing the state and civic bodies were quick to point out to the notices issued to the two function halls and also instances of penalties of Rs 5,000 collected from them. The bench turned critical towards the state counsel and said this kind of action will not yield any result. "We want effective steps to rein in the errant halls. Tell us what you are doing to keep the noise within the prescribed levels.

Chocolates with betel instead of cocoa, but just as delicious

Bengaluru: How about chocolates made out of betel leaf instead of cocoa beans? If you are wondering how they'd taste, here is what researchers at Bengaluru-based Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR) said: "They are quite yummy... you won't miss the cocoa much."

IIHR has been working on chocolate bars made out of betel leaf powder, betel leaf oil extract, sugar and preservatives. The prototype of the betel chocolate-making technology, along with the chocolates, were showcased at the National Horticulture Fair, which was inaugurated on IIHR campus in Hessarghatta Tuesday. Principal scientist Hima Bindu told TOI: "We wanted to make this crop a value-added product which benefits farmers and is

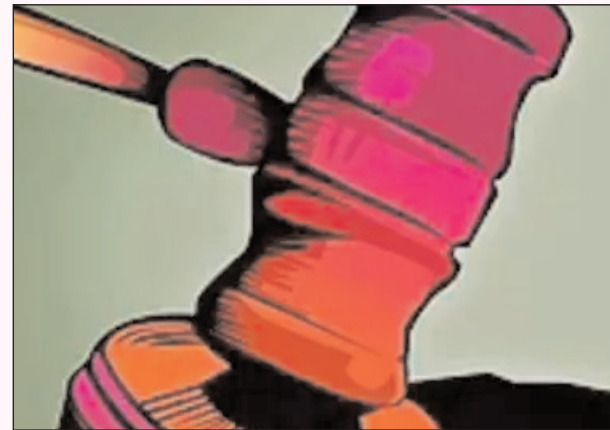


also welcomed by urban residents. We want to highlight its medicinal properties too — antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, etc." The idea of a betel leaf chocolate was born when betel vine growers in Ramanagara and surrounding areas, along with Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, faced problems during the Covid lockdown. "Betel vine is a heritage crop. We got appeals from farmers to come up with solutions as they didn't know how to sell the

produce. While we were exploring options, the idea of betel-flavoured chocolates was conceived." Explaining the process, Bindu said the leaves are dried, converted into powder and laced with other ingredients. These chocolates are not only tasty but also healthy as they contain medicinal properties and protect consumers from oral bacteria," she said, adding: "This could be one of the reasons why our ancestors used to have betel leaf in the form of paan.

Mask name of man cleared of Pocco case in e-records: HC

Bengaluru: The high court on Tuesday ordered deletion from its records the name of a man cleared of Pocco charges after a police report concluded that it was a false case. The HC cited "the right to be forgotten" principle upheld in several other cases and "the right to live with dignity". "Article 21 of the Constitution mandates that no person shall be deprived of his life or liberty except in accordance with law. The expression 'life' cannot seem to connote a mere animal existence, it has a much wider meaning. It takes within its sweep right to live with dignity," the HC's Justice M Nagaprasanna noted. The man had moved the HC for the deletion. Earlier, he was booked in Tumakuru district under sections 354A and 354B (sexual



harassment) of the IPC and Section 12 of the Pocco Act in a complaint filed in Sept 2021. The complainant had alleged that the petitioner was sending sexually intimidating WhatsApp messages to his daughter, a minor, and trying to force her into a physical relationship. However, the cops conducted a probe and submitted a "B report" — police's terminology for a false case. In the meantime, the petitioner filed a

criminal petition challenging the proceedings, and in Feb 2022, they were disposed of on the strength of the B report. Later, when the petitioner searched the internet and found his name still mentioned as an accused, he moved the HC seeking deletion/masking his name from the records. Justice Nagaprasanna noted that the right to be forgotten had been recognised in Supreme Court's Aadhaar judg-

ment, and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, also recognised the right to erasure of personal data. Further, the judge pointed out that in NT 1 vs Google LLC case, the Queen's bench in the UK, too, had recognised the principle in 2018.

"In a crime, once the accused gets acquitted - honourably discharged by a competent court of law, or this court quashes the crimes in exercise of its jurisdiction under Section 482 of the CrPC, those orders become final...

The shadow of crime, if permitted to continue in place of shadow of dignity, on any citizen, would be a travesty of the concept of life under Article 21 of the Constitution," Justice Nagaprasanna noted.

Techie working for MNC ends life in hostel room



Hyderabad: A 28-year-old woman identified as M Vidhya Sri, working as a techie with an MNC and residing in a private hostel at Kothaguda attempted suicide in the hostel on Monday evening. She died while undergoing treatment in the early hours of Tuesday. Gachibowli police registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and started a probe. SI K Bhanu Prasad said they did not find any suicide note and that they are yet to ascertain the reason behind her suicide. "We are also verifying her call data records for any suspicious activity. Based on PME report, the probe will proceed," he said.

Sebi using Artificial Intelligence for investigations, says official



NEW DELHI: The Security Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has been using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for its investigations, said the body's whole time member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney on Saturday. Varshney emphasised that entities should keep track of technological development. Referring to the instances of stock market manipulations,

Varshney said adhering to the law will be more beneficial and violation will cause problems. When asked if Sebi was using AI, Varshney said, "We are using AI for investigations... and also using for a lot of things". He was speaking on the sidelines of the 13th international convention of the Association of National Exchanges

Members of India (ANMI) in the national capital. As long as the market is transparent and no manipulation is happening, that is fine with the regulator, he said. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has been taking action against violators as well as measures to enhance transparency and curb misdoings.

Amazon says repays \$1.9 million to workers in Saudi over unlawful fees

DUBAI: Online retailer Amazon said Friday it had paid \$1.9 million to more than 700 contracted workers in Saudi Arabia as reimbursements for unlawful recruitment fees, among other alleged violations.

In October, Amnesty International accused Amazon of a range of abuses against workers in the oil-rich Gulf kingdom, prompting the US-based multinational to launch an investigation.

"We found instances where contracted workers were required to pay fees, including recruitment fees and other costs" by Saudi recruit-



ment agents and labour supply companies, Amazon said in a statement posted on its website.

The investigation revealed other violations of its company policies including "substandard living accommodations, contract and wage irregularities, and delays in the resolution of worker complaints," it said.

As a result, "Amazon paid \$1.9 million in reimbursements to over 700 contracted workers", the statement added.

The Amnesty report drew on the accounts of 22 men from Nepal who worked in warehouses in Riyadh or the Saudi coastal city of Jeddah going back to 2021, according to the London-based human rights organisation. It found that migrant workers employed in Amazon warehouses in Saudi Arabia suffered "appalling" living conditions, on-the-job safety risks and wage theft.

Trai seeks view on enabling virtual network operators tie-up with multiple telcos

NEW DELHI: Telecom regulator Trai on Friday invited views on enabling virtual network operators to tie up with more than one telecom operators for providing wireless and wireline services. At present, a virtual network operator (VNO) is allowed to partner with only one telecom

operator for providing services which need numbering and unique identity of the customers like mobile connection etc. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has issued a consultation paper on "Connectivity to Access Service VNOs From More Than one NSO (network

service operator)" following reference made by the Department of Telecom based on representation made by VNOs. "The Authority is issuing this consultation paper for soliciting comments of stakeholders on the issues related to connectivity to access service VNOs.

Brokers need to be cautious against manipulations in stock market: Sebi

NEW DELHI: Sebi Whole Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney on Saturday cautioned against manipulations in the capital market and urged brokers to keep a tab and prevent such instances. Besides, he said that the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) is using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for investigations. There is a trend of rising participation of investors in the securities market, which is also expected to contribute significantly to the country's pursuit to become a developed economy. Total demat accounts rose to 13.9 crore at the end of December 2023, a growth of 20 per cent in nine months and doubled the number in two-and-half years. Speaking at an event in the national capital, Varshney emphasised the importance of investor trust and said that if there is no trust of investors, "everything will fail".

India's forex reserves hit two-month low

BENGALURU: India's foreign exchange reserves dropped for a second straight week and stood at a two-month low of \$616.10 billion as of Feb 16, data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed. The reserves fell by \$1.13 billion in the reporting week, after having fallen by \$5.3 billion in the prior week. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) intervenes in the foreign exchange market to curb excess volatility in the rupee. Changes in foreign currency assets are caused by the RBI's intervention as well as the appreciation or depreciation of foreign assets held in the reserves. Foreign exchange reserves also include reserve tranche positio.

Buffett's Berkshire posts record cash as operating earnings rise

Berkshire Hathaway Inc. reports increased operating earnings of \$8.48 billion for Q4, attributed to higher interest rates and fewer catastrophes in its insurance business. Despite a record cash pile of \$167.6 billion, Buffett struggled to find major deals. Net earnings reached \$37.6 billion, with significant share repurchases totaling \$9.2 billion for the year. Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. posted an increase in operating earnings as higher interest rates and fewer catastrophes benefited



the conglomerate's insurance business. The firm reported fourth-quarter operating earnings of \$8.48 billion, versus \$6.63 billion for same period a year earlier. The results were helped by a jump in insurance underwriting earnings and investment income amid higher interest rates

and milder weather. The firm's cash pile also set a fresh record at \$167.6 billion, as the billionaire investor continued to confront a scarcity of larger deals. Berkshire's earnings are always closely watched as a proxy for US economic health because of the expansive nature of his businesses —

ranging from railroad BNSF, Geico and Dairy Queen. That also makes the company particularly susceptible to higher interest rates, which can crimp demand, and Buffett warned in May last year that earnings at most of its operations would fall in 2023 as an "incredible period" for the US economy draws to an end. "Our insurance business performed exceptionally well last year, setting records in sales, float and underwriting profits," Buffett said in his annual shareholder letter.

Kalyani Steel signs MoU with Odisha Government for multi-billion project

BHUBANESWAR: In a stride towards advancing Odisha's industrial landscape, KalySteel has inked a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Odisha, underscoring their joint commitment to establish a state-of-the-art Titanium Metal and Aerospace Components Manufacturing, and Integrated Advanced Specialty Steel and Automotive Components Manufacturing Complex in the region.



The MoU signing ceremony, presided over by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, marks a milestone in Odisha's journey towards becoming a hub for cutting-edge manufacturing and high-tech industries. The strategic collaboration between Kalyani Steel and the Odisha

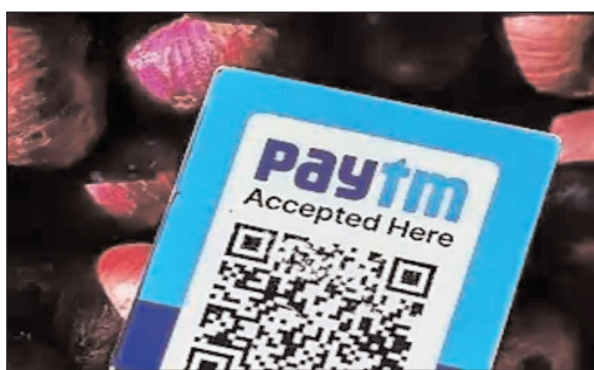
government entails the development of a comprehensive manufacturing complex situated at Gajamara, Dhenkanal. According to a release by the Odisha CM's office, with an investment infusion of a staggering Rs 11,750 Crores, the project is

poised to catalyze economic growth and generate over 10,000 job opportunities, thereby driving socio-economic development in the state.

CM Patnaik said, "By welcoming Kalyani Steel's project, including a Titanium Metal and Alloy Mill, an Aerospace Components Facility, and an Integrated Automotive Component Unit, Odisha marks its grand entry into a highly advanced and precision manufacturing sector".

RBI sets out roadmap for Paytm UPI transition

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has outlined a plan for the seamless transition of UPI users and merchants with QR codes from Paytm Payments Bank to its parent company, One97 Communications. This move aims to ensure uninterrupted UPI services for app users and merchants and will require One97 Communications to obtain a service provider license from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).



after March 15, 2024, additional measures are necessary to ensure smooth digital payments for UPI customers using the '@paytm' handle operated by Paytm Payments Bank. RBI said these measures aim to minimize concentration risk in the UPI system by promoting multiple payment app providers. Had customers been forced to stop using the Paytm virtual payment address, they would have likely migrated transactions to Google Pay or PhonePe, increasing their dominance of UPI.

The RBI has advised the NPCI to assess One97 Communication Ltd's (OCL) request to become a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) for the UPI channel, allowing Paytm app users to continue UPI transactions. If granted TPAP status, the migration of '@paytm' handles from Paytm Payments Bank to a set of newly identified banks will be carried out seamlessly to avoid disruptions. During this migration process, no new users will be added until all existing users are satisfactorily migrated to a new handle.

'EGM a farce; did not stick to established rules': Byju

MUMBAI: A day after a majority of Byju's investors voted to remove founder Byju Raveendran as CEO and restructure the board that includes his wife Gokulnath and brother Riju Ravindran, the founder wrote a letter to employees stating that the extraordinary general meeting (EGM) was a "farce" and only 35 of 170 shareholders, representing around 45% of the shareholding voted in favour of the resolution. "That in itself shows the very limited support that this irrelevant meeting received. Our Shareholder Agreement grants the authority to modify the board's composition, the management team, and the CEO's role exclusively to the board, not to a group of shareholders.



Recognising this, these few select investors have framed their resolution in a manner that requests the board to merely consider changes to the current board structure, rather than directly mandating it," Raveendran said in the letter which was sent to employees on Saturday evening. TOI has reviewed a copy of the letter. Investor sources said that shareholders collectively holding over 60% stake in the firm voted

in favour of the resolutions. Raveendran said that he will "challenge" these illegal and prejudicial actions and assured employees that he continues to remain the CEO, the management remains unchanged and the board remains the same. "Put differently, it is business as usual at Byju's," he said, adding that the group of select minority shareholders are intent on "spreading misinformation" in the

media. "Regardless of this uncalled-for drama, the management is devoting its full attention to the company's operations....this order (Karnataka High Court's interim order stating EGM resolutions to be ineffective until the next hearing), coupled with numerous procedural irregularities and deficiencies, invalidates the resolutions passed by a select, narrow group of shareholders.

Zee sets up advisory panel to tackle 'market rumours'

MUMBAI: Amid market rumours and media reports about its accounting and financial issues, among others, Zee Entertainment has set up an advisory committee to guide its board on how to tackle such issues. Embattled Paytm too has set up an advisory panel recently. Zee's committee will be headed by retired Allahabad HC judge Satish Chandra and two independent directors, Uttam Agarwal and P V Ramana Murthy. Zee noted that there has been a "widespread circulation of misinformation, market rumour and speculation leading to the formation of negative public opinion about the company" and as a result, impacts its share price and "erodes investor wealth". Although the company's share rose 3% to close at Rs 173 on the BSE, it has crashed 36% in the last six months and has lost 25% of its value since Sony called off a merger with Zee in late Jan.

'We are his proud family members': Arjun Meghwal on RJD chief's 'no family' jibe



NEW DELHI: Union minister Arjun Ram Meghwal slammed Lalu Prasad Yadav, the RJD chief and former Bihar chief minister, who has been in the eye of the storm over his comments on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The BJP and the INDIA bloc leaders have been locking horns over the "no family" jibe ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. Speaking with ANI, the Minister of Law and Justice said, "Ram is the soul of our country. Only those who talk about all this are unaware of this fact."

The senior BJP leader stated, "Corruption, appeasement, and 'Parivarvad' have become the three pillars to weaken Indian democracy, and they had to be struck to strengthen democracy". Lambasting Lalu Prasad Yadav, he said, "Making personal attacks on PM Narendra Modi does not benefit anyone because we are his

proud family members."

Lalu Yadav, while addressing the party's 'Jan Vishwas Maha Rally' in Patna on Sunday, said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi just spreads hatred in the name of religion. "These days he is talking about dynastic politics. You (PM Modi) don't have a family. You are not even a Hindu. When your mother died, every Hindu, as per tradition, shaves his beard and head. Why did you not shave? You only spread hatred in society," RJD Chief Lalu Yadav said.

Countering the opposition formed to take on the BJP in Lok Sabha polls, PM Modi

said a day ago that the ideology of the INDIA Alliance is family first, while Modi's ideology is nation first. "We are helping women so that our sisters can become 'Lakshmi Didi'. I am working to make three crore Lakshmi Didis across the country. But the corrupt people of INDIA Alliance are not liking this. These people have nothing in response to our resolutions, achievements and policies.

That is why the people of INDIA Alliance have now increased their attacks on Modi. They are saying that Modi does not have a family, hence Modi has to be removed. These family members say that it is a fight of ideologies.

UJJAIN: Congress General Secretary in-charge Communications Jairam Ramesh has said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is continuously speaking about 'Nyay' (justice) which is Nari Nyay, Yuva Nyay, Kisan Nyay, Shramik Nyay, and Hissedari Nyay. He further added that so far Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had publicly announced two guarantees associated with Kisan Nyay and Hissedari Nyay.



"Rahul Gandhi is continuously speaking about Nyay (justice) which is Nari Nyay, Yuva Nyay, Kisan Nyay, Shramik Nyay, and Hissedari Nyay. Till now Rahul

Gandhi and Congress President Kharge have talked about two guarantees associated with Kisan Nyay and Hissedari Nyay. First, passing a law granting legal status to MSP in Parliament for farmers and the MSP will be based on the formula suggested by M S Swaminathan. Second, conducting a socio-economic caste census, which will be an important step for social empowerment and economic justice," Ramesh told ANI. Meanwhile,

speaking about Rahul Gandhi addressing a public gathering at Badnawar in Dhar district on Wednesday, the Congress leader said that Rahul Gandhi would talk about Yuva Nyay and all attention would be on it. "So far there are five Nyay-Nari, Yuva, Shramik, Kisan and Hissedari Nyay. Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi have talked about Kisan and Hissedari Nyay. Today, in Badnawar, all the attention will be on Yuva Nyay.

Jharkhand court says Soren prima facie guilty of ignoring ED summonses

NEW DELHI: Enforcement Directorate has received a booster from a Jharkhand court, which held former chief minister Hemant Soren prima facie guilty under IPC Section 174 for defying seven summonses issued by the probe agency. The ruling exposes Soren, already in judicial custody, to the risk of a jail term, one month each for the summonses he ignored. ED has also invoked Section

174 against Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal for not complying with its repeated summonses related to its investigation into the alleged liquor scam. The matter is pending in a Delhi court, which has summoned Kejriwal on March 16 to decide the validity of ED's complaint. Hemant Soren arrested by ED, to be produced in court on Thursday. The Jharkhand court has summoned Soren on April 3 when it

is expected to pronounce its order on the culpability of the former CM. During the last hearing on Kejriwal on Feb 7, additional chief metropolitan magistrate Divya Malhotra had said that "in view of the discussions, the complaint filed by the complainant (ED) and accompanied by the supporting documents discloses all the necessary ingredients constituting the offence punishable under Section 174 of IPC.

Section 63(4) of PMLA enables prosecution under Section 174 of IPC for disobedience of any direction under Section 50 of the Act." The judge also noted that people summoned by ED are bound to comply with the same by virtue of Section 50(3) of PMLA. Under Section 174, a court can summon a suspect evading investigation and enforce his/her presence before the enforcement agency.

'Satyamev Jayate': BJP on HC's Sandeshkhali order

Calling it "verdict of truth", BJP hailed Calcutta HC order to transfer to CBI the case of attack on ED officials by a mob allegedly at the behest of TMC strongman Shajahan Sheikh in Sandeshkhali in Jan. "Satyamev Jayate," BJP spokesperson Shehzad said and cited the court's critical observations on state police to assert that TMC tried to shield Sheikh.

Why 2024 will see extreme weather events

NEW DELHI: The 2023-24 El Nino has peaked as one of the five strongest on record and will continue to impact global climate in the coming months despite a weakening trend, the World Meteorological Organisation said on Tuesday.

The UN agency also said above-normal temperatures are predicted over almost all land areas between March and May. The prevailing El Nino conditions fuelled



record temperatures and extreme events the world over, with 2023 being the warmest on record. According to the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service, the global mean temper-

ature breached the 1.5-degree Celsius threshold for an entire year for the first time in January. A permanent breach of the 1.5-degree Celsius limit, specified in the Paris Agreement, however,

refers to long-term warming over many years. In its latest update, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said there is about a 60 per cent chance of El Nino persisting during March-May and an 80 per cent likelihood of neutral conditions (neither El Nino nor La Nina) during April to June. There is a chance of La Nina developing later in the year but those odds are currently uncertain, it said.

Why an HC judge joining BJP has triggered a row?

Abhijit Gangopadhyay, a former Calcutta High Court judge, announced his decision to join the BJP on March 7. He cited the corruption of the ruling party TMC in Bengal and their derogatory language and instigations as the reason for his move to fight against the TMC. His tenure was supposed to end in August. Why an HC judge joining BJP has triggered a row? What Hours after resigning as a Calcutta High Court judge on Tuesday, Abhijit

G a n g o p a d h y a y announced that he is joining the BJP. "I will be joining the BJP, possibly on March 7. I am joining the BJP as it is a national party, which is fighting against the corruption of the TMC in Bengal," he said. **Blame on TMC?** Gangopadhyay, whose rulings on various education-related matters stirred political debates, blamed Bengal's ruling party TMC for his decision to quit judicial services and join politics. "TMC leaders have been

using derogatory language against me for quite some time. If they don't like a judgment, then they can't just verbally attack a judge. Such instigations only helped me to take the decision to join politics and fight the TMC," he said. **'Told you so' moment** The speculation was doing rounds for several weeks. In fact, on January 25, Bengal's advocate general Kishore Dutta startled many by telling Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay

that he would soon join the BJP and contest the Lok Sabha election. Gangopadhyay's tenure at the bench began in May 2018, and was due to retire in August. **Run-ins with TMC** As a Calcutta HC judge, several of Gangopadhyay's rulings and observations triggered controversies for their alleged political overtones. The most controversial was a matter related to Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee's MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee.

India seeks to expand partnership with South Korea in new areas like critical technologies, semiconductors: Jaishankar

SEOUL: India wants to expand its strategic partnership with South Korea into new areas like critical and emerging technologies, semiconductors and green hydrogen to make the bilateral ties more contemporary, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Wednesday. Jaishankar's remarks came as he co-chaired the 10th India-South Korea Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) with his counterpart Cho Tae-yul. In his opening remarks, Jaishankar said that during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to South Korea in 2015 the bilateral relations were elevated to a special strategic partnership. "It is important that we live up to that. We have grown from strength to strength in



the years that have passed. We have become truly important partners for each other and our bilateral exchanges, trade, investments, defence and science and technology cooperation have all seen a steady growth while keeping up the momentum in the traditional areas of cooperation," the minister said. "We would be very much interested now in expanding into new areas, such as critical and emerging tech-

nologies, semiconductors, green hydrogen, human resource mobility, nuclear cooperation, supply chain resilience, etc to make our ties more contemporary," he said. He said the two nations witnessed a growing convergence of their views in the international fora. "The focus on the Indo-Pacific region is good case to point, and we both have stakes and its stability, security and prosperity," he said.

Kerala man killed in Israel: Nibin knew it was not safe. By then, it was too late...

KOLLAM: On Monday morning, when Patnibin Maxwell phoned his family at home in Kollam, he was his usual exuberant self. But his father detected an unusual undercurrent of anxiety.

Patnibin (31), who was calling from Galilee, northern Israel, chatted to his seven-month-pregnant wife Seyona, joked with his five-year-old daughter, Amiya, and then spoke to his father, admitting that the chicken farm at Margalioth, a moshav (collective agricultural community) where he worked, was no longer safe. Hours later Patnibin was dead, killed in a cross-border anti-tank missile attack by the Lebanese Shia militant group Hezbollah. Seven others, including two other Keralites, Joseph George (from Vazathope) and Paul



Melvin (from Vagamon), were injured in the attack. Patnibin's father, Pathrose Maxwell, revealed there had been a similar cross-border attack two weeks ago in the same locality and he had advised his son to move to a safer zone. "However, he could not as he did not get consent from his sponsor," Pathrose told TOI. "My elder son, Nivin, who is also in Israel, called me around 4.30pm on Monday and told me that Nibin was injured

in the attack and hospitalised. Later, around 12.45am, he told me that Nibin had died," Pathrose said. **Patnibin Maxwell had moved to Galilee just 2 months ago** Patnibin had moved to Galilee just two months ago to work on the farm on an attractive salary. Raised in a poor family — his father is a daily-wage labourer — he was excited about going to Israel, believing his future was now secure. After securing a diploma in electrical

engineering from Chavara ITI, Patnibin had moved to Muscat, where he had worked in an ice plant, and later shifted to Dubai to work in a manpower supply company. His wife, Seyona, is a nurse by profession but not working at present. "Seyona's sister and my eldest son, Nivin Maxwell, work in Israel. They had arranged an agricultural visa for five years for Nibin to work there," Pathrose said. Hezbollah shelled the farm in Galilee on Monday afternoon and Patnibin and the other injured were rushed to a hospital nearby. His body is currently at Sieve Hospital. "We have been informed the body will be taken to Tel Aviv on Wednesday and in four days it can be brought here," said Pathrose.

Twice in 15 months, high court acquits Saibaba, 4 more of Maoist links

NAGPUR: Bombay high court's Nagpur bench Tuesday acquitted former Delhi University professor G N Saibaba and five others of waging war against the country by aiding and abetting Maoist activity, seven years after a sessions court in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli sentenced him to life imprisonment. This is his second acquittal in the UAPA case in nearly 15 months after the previous verdict by another HC bench was stayed and subsequently overturned by the Supreme Court. Like it did on the previous occasion, Maharashtra immediately filed a special leave petition in SC for a stay. The division bench of Justices Vinay Joshi and Valmiki Menezes cited technical grounds for the acquittal of all six convicts, one of whom is dead. As in the October 2022 acquittal, the bench ruled that the prosecution failed to prove beyond doubt charges against 57-year-old Saibaba.

'No room for exclusive, pick & choose approach in double engine'



Etawah
In double engine government, there is no room for exclusive, pick and choose approach, which obstruct development and tarnish image of a society, said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Wednesday, underscoring the importance of inclusive development with benefits reaching every person without discrimination. Speaking at a programme to inaugurate a 500-bed Super Speciality Block at Uttar Pradesh Medical Sciences University in Saifai, the Chief Minister said that previously the mere

names of Saifai and Etawah were enough to scare a person. However, today youths from all over the country are coming to the cities to study medicine, he added. Mentioning an anecdote from his own life, he said that once while travelling to Kanpur from Agra he was stopped by the police on the pretext that travelling at night to the city could be risky, adding that the fear no longer exists in these cities. The Chief Minister appealed to the doctors of the University of Medical Sciences to attend to as many patients as possible every patient provides a new learn-

ing experience for the doctor. In addition to opening a 500-bed Super Speciality Block at the Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences, CM Yogi inaugurated/ laid foundation stone of 37 development projects worth Rs 147 crores in the Etawah district. It included inauguration of 24 projects worth Rs 34.66 crores and laying the foundation stone of 13 projects worth Rs 112.59 crores. The Chief Minister mentioned the transformation taking place in rural areas in the wake of the ongoing construction of new medical colleges and hospitals in different districts.

PM Modi virtually inaugurates Agra Metro, CM Yogi takes inaugural ride from Taj Mahal Station

Agra
Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the Agra Metro from Kolkata on Wednesday. The Metro has created history for being the first in the country to start running on the tracks almost nine months ahead of schedule. On this occasion, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flagged off the Agra Metro from Taj Mahal Metro Station. The Agra Metro is the sixth metro running in Uttar Pradesh. Notably, the construction of the primary underground section was supposed to take 32 months, but it was completed in just 23 months. On December 7, 2020, PM Modi laid the foundation stone for the Agra Metro. In the first phase, the metro will run for up to 6 kilometers, including six stations in the priority corridor. The general public will be able to travel in the Metro from Thursday onwards. AI surveillance will be conducted within the metro station. It's worth mentioning that Chief Minister Yogi himself



embarked on a journey in the Agra Metro, traveling from the Taj Mahal station to the Taj East station, accompanied by public representatives. Sharing his experience in the visitor book, the Chief Minister wrote, "Agra Metro was virtually inaugurated by the Honorable Prime Minister today. Timeliness is important along with the quality of the project. Agra Metro has upheld this standard. Best Wishes." On this occasion, CM Yogi said that the work on Agra Metro began in December 2021, and within two years, the first 6 kms work of the Priority Section was completed. This includes three elevated and three underground metro stations. With the completion of this work, metro services have also started. Yogi continued, "With the commencement of the Agra Metro, Uttar

Pradesh has achieved the distinction of being the first state in the country to provide metro services in most of its cities. Prior to this, metro services have already been running in Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Noida, Greater Noida, and Kanpur. Today, I am pleased that the sixth Metro facility is being made available to the people of Braj and Agra as well", Yogi added. The Chief Minister further mentioned that the Uttar Pradesh

Metro Corporation's dedication to the Kanpur Metro, Lucknow Metro, and Agra Metro projects has been commendable. Agra Metro has become the first in the country to achieve the record of developing three underground stations in an area of 3 km at a fast pace by completing the work before the stipulated time.

CAPSULES

Ours is a sensitive govt, takes cognisance of all genuine news reports: CM Yogi

Lucknow

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Monday, said that media is a powerful medium to convey the sentiments of society to the government, adding that his government takes cognisance of all authentic news reports brought out by the media, which are not propaganda. Addressing the 'Samvad' program of a media house organized at a hotel in Sushant Golf City in Lucknow, the Chief Minister said that the government today considers every piece of news as a suggestion and takes cognisance of news reports based on facts. The Chief Minister emphasized that the media, encompassing Print, TV, and increasingly, social and digital platforms, stands as a cornerstone of a flourishing democracy, exerting significant influence on society. "Even today, the role of print media cannot be undermined. Each of these mediums has its own set of followers", he stated. He added, "Many people do not consider their day complete without reading a newspaper even today. At the same time, numerous individuals have connected with digital media through smartphones and have not turned on their televisions for years. Regardless of the platform, the foundation of media should be based solely on truth." According to the CM, the media serves as bridge between the people and government, making the latter aware of the former's views and suggestions. Moving beyond 'Rising UP' and discussing 'Shining UP', he mentioned that a lot has changed in the country in the past 10 years. "India is respected globally today.

Unlimited possibilities in health tourism sector through AYUSH in UP: CM Yogi

Lucknow
Health tourism has immense potential in Uttar Pradesh through the AYUSH medical system, said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at an event held at the Lok Bhavan Auditorium on Wednesday. He expressed confidence that proficient implementation of the AYUSH methodologies could serve as a model for traditional medical systems worldwide. Speaking at the AYUSH Department program, the Chief Minister



emphasized, "Efficient implementation of AYUSH practices will not only contribute to holistic healthcare but also generate substantial employment opportunities. Additionally, it has

the potential to significantly enhance farmers' income." On this occasion, he inaugurated 271 development projects, including 50 bedded integrated AYUSH hospitals in Basti, Ballia,

Jalaun, and Rae Bareilly, 226 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, hostels for girl students in Prayagraj and Jhansi, five e-libraries, construction projects in different 19 homeopathic and 14 Ayurvedic departments across the state, with a total budget of Rs 238 crores. CM Yogi noted that under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the AYUSH Mission in UP is gaining public trust rapidly. He cited today's inaugurated projects as evidence.

Over 61K students receive skill training under 'Project Praveen' in UP so far

Lucknow

Aiming to equip students with the skills required for the jobs of today and those of tomorrow at a young age, the Uttar Pradesh government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, has provided skill training to over 61,000 boys and girls of the state through 'Project Praveen'. Under this scheme, youths are being provided free skill training and new-age courses to get prepared for the job market. This project is meant for students of

class 9th to 12th, studying in higher secondary schools of the state. It is noteworthy that 'Project Praveen' is being operated under an MoU between Secondary Education and Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission. The primary objective of this project is to revamp the education system and curriculum of the state. Project Praveen started as a pilot project in 2022-23. State Minister of State for Vocational Education, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

(Independent Charge) Kapil Dev Aggarwal said that Project Praveen was initiated as a pilot project in the financial year 2022-23. During this period, 20,582 students received training across 150 government secondary schools. Besides, Kasturba Gandhi Girls School was also linked to this scheme, facilitating training for 3,450 girl students. Similarly, a total of 315 government secondary schools have been included under Project Praveen for the year 2023-24. So far, skill

development training has been provided to 61,400 students through these institutes. The Skill Development Minister highlighted that students enrolled in classes 9 to 12 in secondary schools are receiving daily free training alongside their regular studies in trades aligned with their interests such as the IT sector, Electronics, Beautician, Healthcare, Apparel, and Accounting. All courses offered are certified and approved at the all-India level.

Farmers to get complete compensation for damaged crops in UP

Lucknow
The Yogi government has provided significant relief to farmers who were excluded from compensation for losses due to natural disasters in the last two years. Relief Commissioner GS Naveen informed that following Chief Minister Yogi

Adityanath's directives, a comprehensive survey was carried out for the second time across all districts of the state to provide compensation to those farmers who were previously left out. Subsequently, a total of Rs 83,13,46,875 has been disbursed to these farmers for crop damages incurred during the fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23, based on the findings of the survey. It is noteworthy that the state government provides compensation to the farmers based on the guidelines of the Government of India for crop loss of over 33 per cent due to floods, hailstorms and excessive rainfall. However, due to data failure during the

of compensating them is now underway. Relief Commissioner GS Naveen added that when entering data for a significant number of farmers affected by crop damage from disasters, the process of compensating them becomes challenging due to errors in Aadhaar details, account numbers, and instances of duplication. In such cases, re-verification is carried out, but there has been negligence at the district level in the past two years, resulting in the non-issuance of compensation to farmers, he pointed out. Following Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's directive, a re-survey is being conducted to expedite the transfer of financial aid to farmers previously excluded from compensation.

Yogi govt working on an effective strategy to prevent industrial disasters

Lucknow

In its ongoing pursuit to provide impetus to industrial growth in order to realize the one trillion dollar economy goal, the Uttar Pradesh government led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is now working on an effective strategy to prevent, mitigate and manage industrial disasters. As part of this move, the government will engage experts to find ways of mitigation and management of chemical, industrial, biological and nuclear disasters through a series of seminars and conferences. In this sequence, the Relief Department is organizing a one-day CBRNI Conference on March 7 at Hotel Lebuva, Mall Avenue, where subject experts will discuss the issues related to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and industrial disasters due



to the increasing urbanization and industrialization in the state. It is worth mentioning here that the Yogi government has introduced several new policies made to attract industries, providing them with various facilities and subsidies. Recognizing this initiative by the Yogi government, renowned companies in India and abroad are showing their interest in investing in Uttar Pradesh. In light of this, Chief

Minister Yogi Adityanath is issuing continuous directives to the Relief Department to address industrial disasters, prevent loss of lives, and secure industries. Principal Secretary Revenue P Guru Prasad said that on the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a one-day conference is being organized on the prevention and management of industrial disasters. In the program,

discussions will be held on reducing the chances of industrial, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear disasters and measures to address any kind of potential threats. In this event, people from the department, senior representatives of many institutions, industrial organizations and other stakeholders including many experts will be involved. Relief Commissioner GS Naveen Kumar said.

AIIMS gives touts complaints WhatsApp no.

Delhi: AIIMS Delhi has a WhatsApp contact for reporting touts exploiting patients. Starting February 29, 9355023969 will be dedicated. The administration ordered on Wednesday that the hotline would only be for reporting such incidents, including soliciting bribes, and that the security department would monitor it 24/7. The number will be publicly displayed in English and Hindi around the institution. We send a rapid response team to verify complaints immediately. If a complaint is valid, outsourced security professionals will be relieved and regular guards suspended pending investigation. Supervisors in each region will likewise be held accountable.