

AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Thursday 09 May, 2024

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

South Indians look like Africans ...': Sam Pitroda's racist remark stirs controversy

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Sam Pitroda on Wednesday courted another controversy as he compared Indians from different parts of the nation to Chinese, Arabs, Whites and Africans while talking about diversity and democracy in India during an interview. "We are a shining example of democracy in the world...we could hold country together as diverse as India where people in East look like Chinese, people in West look like Arab, people in North look like maybe white and people in South look like Africa. Doesn't matter, we are all brothers and sisters," said the chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress. Soon after the clip of the remark went viral on social media, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lashed out at Sam Pitroda during his Telangana rally. "I am very angry today... I am very angry with the remark made by Sam Pitroda". The PM added, "We will not accept this racist men-



"Sam bhai, I am from the North East and I look like an Indian"

The tweet posted by Assam chief minister read: "Sam bhai, I am from the North East and I look like an Indian. We are a diverse country - we may look different but we are all one. Hamare desh ke bare mein thoda to samajh lo! (Have some understanding about our country)." Screenshot 2024-05-08 115926 Kangana Ranaut, BJP's Lok Sabha candidate from Himachal Pradesh's Mandi, reacted sharply to Pitroda's remark, calling it a "racists and divisive jibes for Indians". "Sam Pitroda is Rahul Gandhi's mentor. Listen to his racist & divisive jibes for Indians. Their whole ideology is about divide & rule. It's sickening to call fellow Indians Chinese and African. Shame on Congress!" Kangana wrote on X.

talities". "I can tolerate it when abuses are hurled at me, but not when they are hurled at my people. Can we decide a person's merit based on skin colour? Who permitted the 'Shehzada' (Rahul Gandhi) to look down on my people like that? We will not accept this racist mentality!" said PM Modi. The Prime Minister also linked Pitroda's statement to Congress's decision of fielding a candidate against Droupadi Murmu for the presidential election in 2022. "I was thinking a lot that Droupadi Murmu who has a very good reputation and is the daughter of Adiwasi family, then why is

Congress trying so hard to defeat her but today I got to know the reason. I got to know that there is an uncle in America who is the philosophical guide of 'Shehzada' and just like the third umpire in cricket this 'Shehzada' takes advice from the third umpire. This philosophical uncle said that those who have black skin are from Africa. This means that you are abusing several people of the country on the basis of their skin colour," PM Modi said. Earlier, reacting to the racist remark of Sam Pitroda, Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said: "I am from North East and I look like an Indian."

'Send CBI-ED to probe them,' Rahul Gandhi hits back PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Congress on Wednesday debunked PM Modi's charge that Rahul Gandhi has not been attacking Ambani and Adani during these elections because of a deal, circulating a video with snippets of Rahul's speeches between May 2 and the one he delivered in Jharkhand on Tuesday, where he highlighted the PM's "nexus" with Adani and Ambani. In a video issued Wednesday, Gandhi himself challenged the PM to send agencies to probe his own allegations that Ambani-Adani had sent crores to Congress. "Modiji, are you scared? Normally, you speak of Adani-Ambani in closed rooms. For the first time, you have taken their names in public. You even know that they send money in tempos, is that your personal experience? Send CBI-ED to them, get an inquiry done as soon as possible," Rahul said in the message, hours after Modi made the surprise attack. Congress chief



Court convicts 5 for 'anti-India activities', links with an IS front

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court has handed down jail terms to a Kashmiri couple and three others found guilty under UAPA for engaging in anti-India activities and their affiliation with IS K P, an IS front. It sentenced Jahanzaib Sami to 20 years for raising, receiving, & providing funds through cryptocurrency to propagate IS ideology. He had pleaded guilty. "For any organisation to survive, continue and act to achieve its objectives, availability and movement of funds is one of the most important factors. speeches," Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said. He added that Congress had repeatedly demanded the formation of a joint parliamentary committee to investigate the "Modani scam".

Mallikarjun Kharge joined in the counter-attack and said the PM had turned on his friends because of his fear of imminent defeat in elections. "Since April 3, Rahul Gandhi has mentioned Adani 103 times and Ambani more than 30 times in his

Diet mantra for Indians: Less oil, sugar, avoid protein supplements

HYDERABAD: After a 13-year hiatus, city-based National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) has revised its 'Dietary Guidelines for Indians', considering new scientific findings, lifestyle changes, diseases, and food habits. It advised Indians to restrict intake of sugar to 20-25 grams a day (a teaspoon is roughly 5.7g) since it comes from natural carbohydrates, avoid protein supplements and reduce oils. It also gave a thumbs-up for air-frying and granite-coated cookware. NIN also for the first time released guidelines for interpreting packaged food labels. ICMR director-general Dr Rajiv Bahl released the revised guidelines on Wednesday.

Will back Congress if it wants to topple Saini govt: Dushyant

HISAR/SIRSA: BJP's estranged ally JJP is ready to support Congress-led opposition's bid to topple the Nayab Singh Saini govt in Haryana, former deputy CM Dushyant Chautala declared on Wednesday, simultaneously firing a warning to his MLA colleagues that defying a whip to side with the saffron party would invite disqualification. Chautala's statement came a day after three Independent MLAs withdrew support from the BJP-led coalition, reducing its strength to 43 in what is effectively an 88-member assembly after the resignations last March by ex-CM Manohar Lal Khattar and Independent MLA Ranjit Singh Chautala.

We stand by allegation on Nijjar killing: Canada; India warns separatists

NEW DELHI: Days after three Indian men were arrested in Canada for the killing of Khalistan separatist and Canadian national Hardeep Singh Nijjar, foreign minister Melanie Joly backed the police action saying Canada stood by its allegations that Indian agents murdered Nijjar, an India-designated terrorist. Speaking later on Tuesday, Indian high



commissioner Sanjay Verma accused foreign Sikh groups of crossing the "big red line" by casting an evil eye on the territorial integrity of India. "We stand by the allegations that a

Canadian was killed on Canadian soil by Indian agents," Joly said. "The investigation by the RCMP is being done. I won't further comment and no other officials from our govt will further comment," she added. We stand by allegation on Nijjar killing_ Canada; India warns separatists. In his first remarks since the Nijjar arrests, Verma seemed to link the case to domestic crime, according to a CTV News report. "Indians will decide the fate of India, not the foreigners," Verma told the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations, a prominent.

Purohit says framed by Karkare, PBS & then govt

MUMBAI: In his final statement in the 2008 Malegaon blast trial in the special NIA court, accused Lt Col Prasad Purohit has said that all the police officers who carried out what he called the "fabricated, orchestrated and concocted" investigation - on the orders of Hemant Karkare (then ATS chief), Param Bir Singh (then joint commissioner of ATS), and Mohan Kulkarni (then ACP-ATS and investigating officer) - were



part of a conspiracy hatched by the senior officers to suit the political requirements of the government of the day at the Centre and the state. A Congress-led govt was in office at the Centre and state when

Purohit was arrested in 2008. He said that in Aug 2008, the president of a political party spoke about the existence of Hindu terrorists and the term 'Hindu terror' was coined.

India surpasses Japan as world's third-largest solar power generator: Report

NEW DELHI: India surpassed Japan to claim the title of the world's third-largest solar power generator in 2023 as it has climbed from ninth ranking in 2015, according to a report from global energy think tank Ember. On Wednesday, the Global Electricity Review 2024 was published which offers a comprehensive examination of the global power landscape in 2023, drawing on data from individual countries. Accompanying this review is the world's inaugural open dataset on electricity generation in 2023, encompassing 80 nations that represent 92 percent of global electricity demand, along with historical data from 215 countries. "India's growth in solar generation in 2023 pushed the country past Japan to become the world's third-largest solar power generator. It has climbed from ranking ninth in 2015," the report said. In 2023, solar energy achieved a milestone as it contributed 5.5 percent to global production and India alone generated 5.8 percent of its electricity from solar energy.

Did Ambani-Adani buy Rahul's silence, says PM Modi; Congress hits back

HYDERABAD/ NEW DELHI:

In a curious twist to the electoral discourse on crony capitalism, PM Modi on Wednesday accused Congress of striking a deal with "Ambani and Adani" and asked if the party had received "tempo loads of black money" from the two businessmen in return for Rahul Gandhi to stop "abusing" them during the elections. "You must have seen, for the past five years, the Congress shehzada used to chant morning to evening... Since his Rafale issue got grounded, he started chanting about 'five industrialists'... then 'Ambani-Adani'. But ever since elections have



announced, these people (Congress) have stopped abusing Ambani-Adani," the PM said at a rally in Karimnagar in Telangana. The PM said, "Mein aaj Telangana ki dharti se poochna chahta hoon... shehzade ghoshit kare ki chunaav mein yeh Ambani-Adani se kitna maal uthaya hai. Kaale dhan ke kitne bore bhar kar ke rupyee maare hain? Kya tempo bhar kar ke notein Congress ke liye pahunchi hai kya? Kya sauda hua hai? (I ask from the soil of

Telangana, let the shehzada declare how much money he has taken from Ambani-Adani these elections... how many sacks of black money? Have tempos full of currency notes reached Congress? What deal has been struck?)" For five years, Cong's shehzada used to chant five industrialists, Ambani-Adani... But since elections were announced, these people (Cong) have stopped abusing them. Let him declare how much money has been taken from

Money saved through zero or low-interest loans taxable: SC

NEW DELHI: In a setback to employees of public sector banks, Supreme Court has ruled that money saved by availing interest-free or low-interest loans from their employer would be liable to be taxed as it upheld the validity of Section 17(2)(viii) of the Income Tax Act and 3(7)(i) of I-T Rules. A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta pronounced this ruling on Tuesday while dismissing petitions filed by All India Bank Officers' Confederation and a batch of appeals filed by staff unions and officers' associations of several banks, who had challenged the validity of the provisions of the I-T Act and its rules allowing levying of tax on money saved.

Post-Covid measles cases reveals big gaps in vaccination

NEW DELHI: In some districts in Uttar Pradesh, with high number of births, prevalence of zero-dose children was as high as 34.2% in Prayagraj and 32.2% in Hapur. In almost all northeastern states, zero-dose prevalence was roughly 25%. In a paper published in the journal Vaccine, the researchers investigated dose-wise measles vaccination coverage and explored gaps in immunization focusing on zero-dose, one-dose, and two-dose coverage among children aged 24-35 months. analysed information from 43,864 children taking into account socio-demographic variables such as birth order, wealth quintile, gender, social group, religion, residence, mother education, delivery

related factors, and media exposure. The study noted that a significant percentage of children receiving zero doses signalled a concerning gap in immunization coverage. The analysis showed considerable variations between states and districts in zero-dose prevalence. Even within a state, there were significant differences at the district level. For instance, in Arunachal Pradesh, West Siang district had the highest prevalence of children classified as zero-dose cases, 49.6%, while Lower Dibang Valley district had 2.8%. Another major cluster region was in UP where Prayagraj and Banda districts had 34.2% and 32.2% respectively, while in Hapur and Etawah 2.6% and 2.1% were zero-dose children.

Help your pet to stay cool

PRAYAGRAJ: As the scorching heat crosses the 45 degree Celsius mark, summer days become stressful for pets too. To protect and soothe their pets, owners are looking for apt means to beat the blazing sun taking frequent veterinary consultations and precautions from diarrhoea, a common ailment due to dehydration. "Dogs feel 20% more heat than humans," said Dr Nisha Verma. Unlike humans, dogs are far more sensitive to heat. "Fresh food and cool water does wonders," said another veterinary doctor. "Provide them with proper balanced food and a bowl of clean and cold water with glucose or honey at all times," he advises. The metabolic activity increases due to which owners need to take precaution", he added.

The months of April, May and June are marked by dry heat, so coolers are enough to maintain body temperature of pets. But July, August and September are killer months for dogs. Not all dogs have coats that are water-resistant or friendly. A German Shepherd cannot sit in water because that will harm its coat. Labradors, though are water babies. One must check with an expert before exposing dogs to water for a prolonged period.

Logically, dogs maintain body temperature by panting. When they pant, evaporation takes place leading to cooling of their body. Just as humans eat less during summers, the appetite of dogs reduces too. Their feet are most susceptible to heat and burns and one should get shoes for them to wear while walking outside. Normal temperature for a dog is 101.5 degree Fahrenheit. Avoid giving meat because during this season meat is sometimes infected. Just following some simple summer tips can help your animal friends stay healthy and energised so that you can still have fun with them in the sun.



The dominance of mining mafia in Manda area of Yamunapar area has become a cause of trouble for the common people. Even the police seem to be bowing down before the mafia. Mining continues day and night. But the police remains a spectator. Apart from this, the entire village has been polluted by dust. Even after many complaints, the police is not coming out of Kumbhkarni slumber. Similarly, mining is going on in different villages of Manda area. Even in Dighiya Pulos Chowki area, mining mafias excavated the soil of the government pond in broad daylight and sold it at huge prices. But the police remained indifferent.

'GITB 2024' concludes in Jaipur; Pitches India as wedding destination

Lucknow: The 13th edition of India's largest B2B inbound tourism event 'The Great Indian Travel Bazaar' (GITB) concluded here with an ambitious pitch of India as a world's wedding destination under 'Wed in India' initiative.

Along with host state Rajasthan, India's premier tourism event saw as many as 9 state tourism boards, including Odisha (theme state), Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Goa and Punjab attracting around 250 FTOs from 52 countries and 16 international wedding planners enquiring about various wedding destinations and the offerings.

With over 300 booths in the exhibition, a large number of domestic tour operators and 60 wedding planners engaged with their foreign counterparts resulting in over 11,000 B2B meetings, business deals and 'Coolcation' - Ministry of Tourism's fresh initiative striking a chord among both buyers and sellers.

On the 3rd & final day of the expo, a master class by Chef Ajay Chopra saw a large gathering of both Indian and foreign culinary connoisseurs. Post the event, FAM tours on 3 tourism routes have been organized for both foreign and domestic tour operators and wedding planners.

India's premier inbound tourism event was inaugurated by Ms. Manisha Saxena, IAS, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Smt. Gayatri Rathore, IAS, Principal Secretary, Government of Rajasthan, Dr. Rashmi Sharma, Director, Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, Mr. Dipak Deva, Chairperson, FICCI Tourism & Culture Committee & Managing Director, Travel Corporation of India, Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Past President, FICCI & CMD, Lalit Suri Hospitality Group and Mr. S.K. Pathak, Secretary General, FICCI.

Other industry representatives present during inaugural of GITB2024 and 'Wed

in India' were Mr. Chetan Vohra, Chair, FICCI Wedding Tourism Taskforce & Managing Director, Wedding Line, Mr. Kuldeep Singh Chandela, President, Hotel & Restaurant Association of Rajasthan (HRAR) and Mr. Sabbas Joesph, Past President, Event & Entertainment Management Association (EEMA).

GITB 2024 was organized by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, along with Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). It was supported by Hotel and Restaurant Association of Rajasthan (HRAR), Indian Heritage Hotels Association (IHHA) and Rajasthan Association of Tour Operators (RATO). The focus of this year's event was to promote India as a wedding destination.

A number of cultural events were organized to showcase India's deep cultural heritage, including scintillating and spellbound

cultural performances by folk artists of Rajasthan who enacted a number of dance acts around wedding theme. A 'Wed in India' film titled 'Say I do In India' and an audio-visual presentation titled 'Romance in Rajasthan' based on rural Rajasthan's potential for wedding as well as honeymoon were premiered showcasing India's enchanting destinations and architectural marvels for weddings which attracted huge applause from the audience.

GITB, a perfect example of public-private partnership has contributed immensely towards the growth of tourism sector and has become a permanent fixture in India's travel & tourism marts. With robust infrastructure development happening across the country, including the number of airports doubled in last few years, and strong physical and digital connectivity, the tourism sector has contributed 9.2% towards GDP generating 42 million jobs.

Increasing productivity of fields by planting trees: Prof. Anupam Kumar Nema

Mirzapur: A program was organized on National Agroforestry Day on Wednesday in Terha village under Pahari block under the ongoing dry agriculture research project at the Institute of Agricultural Sciences of Kashi Hindu University (BHU). Also, saplings of 'Narendra Amla-7' variety were distributed to the farmers to encourage agroforestry. Chief Scientist Prof. Anupam Kumar Nema discussed various topics with the farmers. He explained the benefits of forestry along with agriculture and gave information about increasing the productivity of the fields by planting trees along with agriculture. He also listened to the problems of the farmers and solved them. He told that farmers can increase their income by growing trees like Amla, Mango, Guava, Neem, Teak, etc. in their fields. Growing plants in the fields through agro-forestry will be helpful in reducing the ill effects of climate change.

Assistant Scientist Dr. Sudhir Kumar Rajput said that planting trees in the fields will improve the environment in dry areas and agricultural production will also increase. Trees increase the oxygen level in the atmosphere and reduce carbon dioxide. Apart from this, trees improve the quality of the soil. On the lines of Bundelkhand, plant trees on the ridges of the fields in the Vindhya region, the quality of the soil will improve. He also told the farmers about various schemes related to carbon credits of the government to increase their income. A successful example was given from the Bundelkhand region, where the slogan of the farmers is 'Ridge in every field, tree on every ridge'. There, farmers are planting trees on the ridges of the fields, which improves permanent moisture conservation in the fields and enhances the quality of the soil. Farmers said - will take steps towards a safe, healthy and prosperous future. Farmers assured that they will adopt the solution and move towards a safe, healthy and prosperous future. During this, lab technician Divya Darshan Singh, research student Ambikesh Tripathi, Nishtha Sharanagat, Alka Singh etc. were present.

ABVP made new voters aware in UP

Banda: On Wednesday, under the voter awareness campaign (Mera Vote Meri Awaaz) at Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru College Banda, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad made new voters aware and appealed for 100 percent voting. District head Ashok Singh Parihar said that the Vidyarthi Parishad is the world's largest nationalist student organization which has been working since its inception with the aim of rebuilding the nation. "In this great festival of Lok Sabha, voters in the society and college students have become new voters. Making them aware of the power of their vote which helps in building the nation. Voters should contribute to the upliftment of the nation by forming a nationalist government with votes," he said. On this occasion, Department Organization Minister Brijnandan Rai, District Chief Ashok Singh Parihar, City Vice President Kundan Singh, District Convener Nitish Kumar Nigam, Swatantra Sahu, Shlok Dwivedi, Shiva Shukla, Sundaram Singh, Khushi Singh, Priya Mishra, Chanchal Vishwakarma etc. workers were present.

Police returned money of three victims of online fraud

Fatehpur: On Wednesday, the police returned Rs 6.13 lakh to the bank accounts of three victims of online fraud in the district. In this case, Area Officer Horilal Singh said that on February 13, the victim Anurag Uttam, son of Anil Kumar Uttam, resident of Isepur Alampur Fatehpur, currently living at Omkar Nagar VIP. Road police station Kotwali Nagar Fatehpur complained to the Superintendent of Police about transfer of Rs 9 lakh thirty-four thousand through online medium. Taking the matter seriously, the Superintendent of Police directed the Cyber Crime Police Station team to dispose of the matter quickly. Taking action on this, after getting the details of the money transferred from the applicant, he immediately talked to the officials of all the banks and informed them about the matter. After which, three lakh sev-

enty thousand rupees of the victim were returned and meaningful efforts continued for the recovery of remaining amount. On May 3, the remaining amount of Rs 5 lakh 64 thousand was also safely returned to the victim's bank account. Thus, the entire amount of Rs 9 lakh 34 thousand of the victim has been returned to the applicant's account. Similarly, on April 5, Vikas Soni, son of Awadhesh Soni, resident of Shantinagar Police Station Kotwali, sent an application through the cyber portal that an unknown person by calling him, Rs 25058 was transferred from his account. Taking immediate action, the Cyber Crime Police Station team coordinated with the nodal officer of the bank and the Flipkart nodal and as per the rules, a total of Rs 25058 was safely returned to the bank account of the victim.

Hybrid variety of watermelons a huge hit among buyers

Prayagraj: Hybrid variety of watermelons and melons with a higher content of TSS (Total Solid Sugar) value have hit the markets and are in demand across the country including UP, MP, Delhi and other states. Farmers claimed that demand for hybrid varieties of watermelons including Saraswati (bright red interior and green exterior) and Anmol (green exterior and yellow interior) has increased manifold in fruit markets across the state and traders dealing in watermelon and melon business in Ganga belt of the region have already booked orders in advance for the crops during summer season.

Scores of farmers this summer have cultivated watermelon and melon crops, using the mulch film cultivation technique. Similarly, hybrid variety of melon - Mridula - is also in demand among fruit lovers.

Agriculture expert Manoj Kumar Srivastava said, "This season, farmers in Prayagraj and

Kaushambi have cultivated hybrid varieties of watermelon and melon seeds being brought from Taiwan and yielded a good crop in limited resources. Small sized watermelon and melon in round shapes are more in demand as they have a total solid sugar (TSS) value up to 14 to 15 percent". A farmer can earn profit up to Rs 80,000 to Rs 90,000 per acre. Currently, hybrid variety of watermelon and melon is being cultivated in Allahabad, Mooratganj in Kaushambi and Khaga in Fatehpur district.

Kaushambi based farmer Bharat Singh said "I have grown watermelon crop in around 25 acre in Laxmanpur Myohar village through silver mulching and cultivated good crop this summer season. Silver mulching method farming is largely adopted by farmers in UP, MP, Maharashtra, Punjab and others states as crops of seasonal fruits could be cultivated in lesser amount of water in region".

Popularity of hobby courses on the rise

PRAYAGRAJ: To give the kids some time which they can dedicate to themselves to get an edge over their classmates, parent in the city are now getting their wards enrolled in one or the other hobby classes. The city being an educational hub, offers the children a wide array of hobbies to choose from, including dancing, music, painting, sketching, salsa, hip-hop, jazz, foreign languages and cooking.

"Hobby classes help them in developing a creative knack. The more you keep your child's mind engaged in activities, the more interested they will get in them," says a mother of a 12-year-old son.

Director of a Club, which gives dance, music and painting training to over 50 children says, "I believe painting can enrich a child's imagination and creativity, like no other thing. Among the students of up to class X, painting is a very popular hobby."

But the most popular hobby among kids remains dancing and singing due to craze for Bollywood music and reality shows that nurture dancers and singers. He added, "Hip-hop, contemporary and western are most popular

dance forms in the city. In this age of cut-throat competition, parents want their children to excel in co-curricular activities too, as performing well in other activities increases their confidence."

"Most of the children joining our classes want to learn Bollywood-style dance. We have introduced a new dance form - creative dance - a fusion of various dance forms," said owner of Kidzee Wings.

Among the city kids learning to play various music instruments, guitar remains the most preferred instrument. "Guitar looks stylish and if I learn that, I can be a part of the college band once I go to some college," said Puneet, a class 10 student.

Learning foreign languages is rapidly turning a hobby among kids, and they have many options here. There are several institutes in the city, where Spanish, French, Russian, German and English are taught to hundreds of students every year. "Learning a foreign language is sometimes work-driven, but we also see a lot of people coming in to learn different language simply for the love of the language," says Neha Nigam.

Lucknow Univ showcases power of democracy with voting awareness rally

Lucknow: A special voter awareness rally was organized today under the leadership of Professor Alok Kumar Rai, Vice Chancellor of Lucknow University. Sweep unit and NCC of Dayanand Mahavidyalaya, Bachhrawan, Rae Bareilly. The students of the unit participated in the rally and made the general public aware about the importance of voting in Bachhrawan market. During the rally, the market was decorated with slogans like "First vote then refreshment", "Go to vote, do not celebrate holidays" and "Leave Slogans like "Do all work first and vote" echoed. During this campaign, the Vice Chancellor communicated with the general public on the need to vote and motivated them to

vote. Chief Proctor of Lucknow University Prof. Rakesh Dwivedi, Dean-Student Welfare Prof. Sangeeta Sahu, Dean-CDC participated in this campaign. Prof. Awadhesh Tripathi, Dean RAC Prof. Manuka Khanna and other members of the Dean's Board were also present. Apart from this, college teachers and students were also present in large numbers in this campaign. The objective of the voting awareness rally is to motivate the citizens for active participation in the voting process and respect this important right of democracy. Such awareness campaigns not only increase the importance of voting, but are also extremely essential for the strengthening of democracy.

Drone will tell about the development journey of Kashi

Drone show will be organized at Dashashwamedh Ghat from 9th May to 12th May

Modi government will resound for the development of the country including Kashi

This unique event will be a witness to the unbreakable relationship between PM Modi and the public

VARANASI: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Kashi has prepared for a unique program. This preparation is to give information about the development work done in Kashi till now. Amidst the ban on hoardings, banners, posters, publicity on social media may have gained momentum. But 'drone' is a powerful medium to bring it on the ground, which is going to be used this time. Yes, the drone will tell the

account of the development work done in Kashi till now. Complete preparations have been made for this.

There is no harm in saying that every person of Kashi has started chanting 'Modi government once again'. There is no doubt in the minds of Kashivasis that this time PM Narendra Modi will get more votes than in the last two Lok Sabha elections. Every Kashivasi is praying that PM Narendra Modi wins

with record number of votes.

Everyone is eager to tell the world that PM Modi is not considering Kashi as his own without any reason. He has not made Kashi his own by leaving his ancestral birthplace and karmabhoomi. PM Modi also says that he lives in the heart of every Kashivasi and the entire Kashi is in his heart.

To show this love and affection of Prime Minis-

ter Modi and the people of Kashi, a unique program has been decided for the publicity of the Lok Sabha elections in view of the preparations from land to sky. This program is a drone show. A drone show program is proposed at the famous Dashashwamedh Ghat of Kashi. Through the drone show, the development work done in Banaras till now will be showcased. At the same time, it will be told how

Kashi is rapidly moving on the threshold of modernity while wearing its ancient culture. Today Kashi is being praised everywhere. Not only India, but the entire world is not eager to see the wonderful and supernatural changes that have taken place in Kashi without any reason. For the publicity of the Lok Sabha elections, the help of about one thousand drones will be taken in the drone show. Along with

the development work done in Kashi, the slogan of 'Modi government once again' and 'Abki baar 400 paar' will resound. This event is proposed from May 9 to May 12. A unique drone show will be organized after the Ganga Aarti. There is no hesitation in saying that this drone show lasting for about 15 minutes will be a witness to the unbreakable bond between Prime Minister Modi and the public.

Div Commr inaugurated race organized for voter awareness by flagging off

Prayagraj: District Administration organized a 10 km voter awareness race in Prayagraj district as per the instructions of the Election Commission of India and the Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh in view of the Lok Sabha General Election-2024 by the district administration. Cross Country Race (Men and Women) at 6.00 am from Amitabh Bachchan Sports Complex, Myohal. The race was inaugurated by Vijay Vishwas Pant, Divisional Commissioner, by administering oath to all the players and officials and showing the green flag and all the players were invited to their respective places on 25th May, 2024. Voters and were asked to cast 100% vote



from their family and village.

The said competition will be held from Maharana Pratap Square (Myohal), Dhubhi Ghat Square, Eklavya Square to the left via Head Post Office, Patthar Girja Ghar Square to Subhash Square, Civil Line Hanuman Mandir Square,

Medical Square, CMP Degree College Square. From Balsan Square via George Town Police Station on the left, via Indian Press Square on the left and ended at Gate No. 03 of Chandrashekhar Azad Park. A total of 358 players, 256 men and 102 women, participated in this

competition, in which in the boys category first-Shailesh Kushwaha, second- Pradum Nishad, third-Doodhnath Yadav, fourth-Karan Nishad, fifth- Dinesh Yadav, sixth- Mohd Farah and women. First in the category was achieved by Pooja Patel, second by

Pushpa Yadav, third by Shreya Singh, fourth by Mila Devi, fifth by Mansi Nishad and sixth by Rani. The distribution of prizes to all the players was done by Chief Development Officer Gaurav Kumar. Chief Guest Divisional Commissioner was given bouquet by Chief Development Officer and badge was given by Sandeep Gupta, Sports Officer Myohal and Chief Development Officer, Municipal Commissioner and Observer were given bouquet by Regional Sports Officer Vimla Singh and badges by Arvind Sonkar, Deputy Sports Officer and Devi Prasad Deputy Sports Officer. All the guests were welcomed. On this occasion, Municipal Commis-

sioner Prayagraj, P.N. Singh District School Inspector and L. B. Maurya, Sub District School Inspector, Brijesh Srivastava, Secretary District Sports, Prayagraj Municipal Corporation and Health Department officials and dignitaries were present. The competition was conducted by the judges Satyendra Singh, Ashish Yadav, Sanjay Kumar Singh, Jai Ram Singh, Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, Sanjay Kumar Gupta, Shreya Singh, Praveen Jaiswal, Ankit Tiwari and under the supervision of Devi Prasad Deputy Insect Officer and all the guests were felicitated. Singh, Regional Sports Officer expressed his gratitude.

Exhibition kicks at Naini Industrial Training Centre

Prayagraj: Two-day skill development books publication exhibition kicks at Naini Industrial Training Centre. Under the aegis of skill development, the exhibition was inaugurated by Police Traffic Inspector Pawan Pandey, Kamlo, whose output of skill development latest publication was published. Chief guest, Inspector Guardian Order Police Prayagraj Pawan Pandey discussed about skill development and also told about traffic management.



Primary teacher booked for molesting minor, absconding Villagers locked school gate, stage protest at police station

Prayagraj: The Sarai Inayat police lodged an FIR against a teacher of a primary school for allegedly molesting a girl of Class 2. Enraged over the incident, villagers locked the school and surrounded the police station for several hours. Following the protest, police registered an FIR against the accused teacher under POCSO Act, molestation, harassment and other sections of the



IPC. It is alleged that the accused primary school teacher was harassing and molesting the girl for the past one year. On May 4, the girl reached home crying. She informed her mother about the harassment by her teacher. The girl said that the teacher has threatened her to keep mum or else he will kill her and her family members. The family members were searching for the teacher since then but he was absent from school for four days.

On Wednesday morning, a large number of villagers reached the school and locked the gate. The school principal called the police, but the enraged crowd reached the police station. They staged a protest while demanding immediate action against the teacher. Police officials said on the complaint of the girl's mother, an FIR has been registered against the teacher Brajesh Maurya. Efforts were on to trace and arrest him, they added.

Voting awareness campaign conducted

Prayagraj: On Wednesday, at Bahadurganj Sulaki intersection, the Municipal Corporation organized a voting awareness campaign rally to make all the voters



aware, in which a large number of Municipal Corporation officials were present and appealed to the people to definitely exercise their vote. Zonal Officer Dilip Kumar, Srivastava Revenue Inspector Sarvesh Kumar and employees were present.

Satakshi Maurya scored 97% marks in ICSE Board exam

Prayagraj: Girls High School student Satakshi Maurya has made her school proud by scoring 97 marks in ICSE Board Class 10 examination. With this excellent performance she has made her beloved teachers and parents proud. Seeing this achievement of Satakshi, the administrative team and teachers of the school are praising her. Satakshi Maurya has achieved a high standard with her hard work and dedication and has made her family and community proud.



Five-year-old student gets liquor shop shut

Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court has banned the renewal of the liquor vend that has been operating for 30 years near MR Jaipuria School in Azad Nagar in Kanpur. Atharva, a five-year-old student from Kanpur, filed a petition in court in February, seeking the removal of the liquor shop. The court of Chief Justice Arun Bhansali and Justice Vikas on Tuesday gave this order on the PIL of Atharva, studying in Lower KG. Atharva, through advocate Ashutosh Sharma, had approached the High Court demanding the removal of the 30-year-old liquor shop near the school. The court had asked the state government's counsel to seek a response from the authorities as to why the licence of the liquor shop in Kanpur Nagar was being renewed even after the school came into existence in the vicinity.

RPF, under Operation Seva, sent injured passenger to hospital for treatment

Prayagraj: Railway Protection Force/Tundla received information from the Deputy Station Superintendent about the injury of a passenger. Based on the information received, information was received to attend the general coach of train number 12556, Gorakhdham Express. Assistant Sub Inspector, Railway Protection Force/Tundla, Omveer Singh along with Hamrah staff and On Duty Ticket Inspector, Vishram Kumar and Railway Doctor, Shri Rohit Kumar attended the stoppage of Gorakhdham Express at Platform No. 06 of Tundla station and found that The passenger's leg is broken. The injured passenger told his name as Hariom Singh son of Shri Jaiprakash, age 28 years, resident of village Polanki, police station Bora Rohtak, district Rohtak. On being interrogated by the Railway Protection Force, Hariom told that he was traveling from Bahadurgarh to Lucknow by sitting at the gate in the general coach and while the train was leaving Ghaziabad, his leg got injured after hitting the platform. After the doctor gave first aid to the injured passenger Hariom Singh, he along with Constable Vaibhav Raj Bhadoria and the family members of the injured passenger were sent to Tundla Primary Health Center for further treatment in the ambulance. The injured passenger was treated by the first aid center Tundla. Due to this incident, train number 12556, Gorakhdham Express ran after standing from 1:30 am to 01:38 am.

Under Operation Dignity, the Railway Protection Force handed over the angry boy from home to his father. On 06.05.2024, a boy named Yatish Bhardwaj son of Mayank Sharma, age 24 years, resident of Shiv Mandir Teachers Colony, Bulandshahr, train number 22460, Anand, Bihar was leaving his home angry on seat number 27 of coach number B1 of Terminal-Madhura Express. On the information of Divisional Security Control Room, the said boy was dropped at Prayagraj Junction by Railway Protection Force Sub Inspector Tulsi Prasad Saroj and his family members were informed. On 07.05.2024, Mayank Sharma, father of the said boy Yatish Bhardwaj, came to Prayagraj post at 5:00 pm. Sub Inspector, Omveer Singh handed over Yatish Bhardwaj to his father Mayank Sharma.

Plethora of activities mark Swami Chinmayanandji b'anniv

Prayagraj: 'Janmesubhodine tava he sadguro, Mudritamanara vai tvadm namahe. The 108th birth anniversary of Pooja Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandji was celebrated with great enthusiasm, reverence and spiritual fervor here at MPVM Ganga Gurukulam on 8th May 2024. The celebration commenced with the traditional lamp lighting. Floral tributes were offered to the great soul by the Principal, coordinators and the students of classes 1 and 2 in the morning assembly. An inspiring thought based on the quote of Swamiji was presented by the students of class 3. This was followed by an impactful speech by the students of class 9. Through the

speech, the students were not only enlightened about the relevance of the principles of Swamiji in the present world but were also urged to imbibe and follow the same. Based on the famous thought, Guru



Stotram was chanted in unison by the students of class 7 and they also pledged to walk on the path of the inimitable master.

After an eventful morning assembly, a plethora of activities were also ar-

ranged to celebrate this great day. Pooja Gurudev has said, 'Our present work maybe great or small Yet, the important thing is to do it.' Keeping this in mind, the young ignited minds of class 4 penned down cer-

tain inspiring thoughts of Swamiji. Beautiful cards celebrating the illustrious life of this great soul was made by the students of class 5. Following this, certain interesting and thought provoking stories based on the

life of Swami Chinmayananda were narrated by the students of class 6.

A documentary based on the life and works of Swamiji, was viewed by the students of class 8, followed by a quiz on his life and work. Class 10th students wrote some interesting and thought provoking articles on the topic 'The Spiritual Journey of Swami Chinmayananda.' Beautiful flyers and attractive E-Cards were designed by the students of classes 11 and 12. The cultural events were organized to not only commemorate the life and teachings of Swamiji amongst the students but also spread his message that every individual has the potential to achieve spiritual growth.

'People troubled by inflation, unemployment'

Prayagraj: Amar Nath Maurya, candidate of India Alliance from Phulpur parliamentary constituency, said that it is necessary to defeat Modi government and BJP to save the democracy and constitution of the country. Speaking at a meeting organized in Bamrauli on Wednesday evening, he said that instead of talking about development during the ten years of rule, the Prime Minister is talking about nepotism, hatred and Pakistan, which speaks of his failure. People are troubled by infla-



tion, unemployment and broken economy. Every section including farmers, women, businessmen are feeling cheated. BJP is completely clean in the three phase elections. SP President Syed Ifukhar presided. Former Congress spokesperson Kishore Varshney conducted the proceedings. PCC members Fuzail Hashmi, Harikesh Tripathi, Abhinav Varshney, Manju Yadav, Gaurav Pandey, Taslimuddin, Talat Azim, Jaunty Yadav, Parvez Siddiqui, Arshad Ali, Prem Sagar Mishra etc. addressed.

Deep resentment among crores of Sanatanis over anti-Hindu statements

Prayagraj: There is deep resentment among sadhus, saints and crores of Sanatanis over the controversial statement given by Samajwadi Party's National General Secretary Professor Ram Gopal Yadav regarding Ram Temple. Whereas, Industrial Development Minister of Uttar Pradesh Government, Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi has given a

befitting reply to the statement of Ram Gopal Yadav. Minister Nandi has said in his statement that this statement given by Ram Gopal Yadav, who is considered the main ideologue of SP and a so-called scholar, regarding the Ram temple, shows that he is a great fool hiding under the hollow cover of scholarship. By Ram Gopal Yadav



Responding to Maryada Purushottam Prabhu Shri Ram's temple being called useless, Minister Nandi said that after continuous struggle, hundreds of sacrifices and centuries of waiting, crores of Sanatanis around the world have the ultimate joy of seeing their idol not in the plight of a tent but in a grand building and got sat-

isfaction. But the evil attempt to tarnish the center of faith formed by judicial decisions and democratic processes only for the greed of Muslim votes is the height of meanness of the Samajwadi Party and its leaders! It is clear that attacking the faith of the majority and hurting their sentiments is the one-point agenda of the anti-

Ramdroni and anti-Hindu Indi alliance! People like Ram Gopal Yadav, who are considered to be the main ideologues and so-called scholars of SP, this statement shows that they are great fools hiding under the hollow cover of scholarship! Anti-Ram devotees will pay the price for such poisonous statements on 4th June.

Sultry summer hits business community hard

PRAYAGRAJ: The ongoing heatwave in the city, besides testing the patience of residents, has hit the business activities hard. Frequent power cuts have exacerbated the woes of people.

Traders are complaining that the local business was definitely affected by the searing heat. Most of the businessmen were already prepared for a dip in business, as scorching summer is an annual feature in the city. Local traders are also complaining that the adverse weather has reduced the festivity of shopping; people are mostly shopping only for essential commodities.

Manager of an accessories' shop located in Civil Lines, said footfalls in his showroom have fallen sharply. People belonging to high-income group were reluctant in coming out of their homes for shopping. Frequent power cuts have made the situation even worse. On being asked about the impact of rising mercury on his business, owner of a computer peripherals' shop, sarcastically said, "Aache din aa gaye hain (the good days have come)".

Resolution of social service reiterated by distributing sherbet

Prayagraj: The sherbet distribution program continued and thousands of people drank the sherbet and breathed a sigh of relief. Along with this, he appealed to all the voters to use their franchise in the upcoming elections. Free sherbet was distributed by Poonam Sant Mahila and Vikas Samiti in Rajrooppur, Prayagraj on Wednesday, 7th May. In view of this scorching heat, the organization will provide the facility of continuous distribution of sherbet and drinking water to the general public at various places and the continuous distribution of sherbet in Rajrooppur continued like every day even today. President of the organization Poonam Sant said that this is a sacred work and more and more people should



participate in this work and keep distributing sherbet and water to get relief from the heat. Rickshaw pullers, working class people and common people are benefiting from this noble cause. This is truly an act of social consciousness which every citizen should take the responsibility of doing. In today's work, organization's coordinator Isabel Brandish also distributed sherbet and water to the passers-by. She considered herself blessed while doing this work. Mainly secretary of the organization Abhishek Sant, Shrishti Kumari, Prince Kumar, Shubham Kumar, Chahat Tiwari, Satikala, Meera, Gudiya, etc., a large number of women participated in the program and provided support in this noble work.

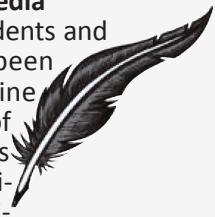
Editorial

Hypocrisy of Western media amidst ongoing anti-Semitic protests in the US

As the world witnesses anti-Semitic protests erupting across universities in the United States, numerous questions regarding Western media reporting have ignited among free thinkers. This isn't the first instance of the Western media's hypocritical behaviour coming to light; rather, it signals the onset of the worst credibility crisis the Western media has faced since its inception. With the advent of digitalisation and the rise of social media, previously unheard voices are now gaining prominence and challenging the established credibility of hegemonised media outlets. Numerous articles and books have been penned with the aim of exposing and debunking the orchestrated agenda of the Western media. The worst phase for the credibility of the Western media reached its zenith when it tried to create a perception regarding the possession of WMD (Weapon of Mass Destruction) in Iraq under the reign of military general Saddam Hussain without giving any evidence to their claims. There have been allegations in the Western media pertaining to the reporting of the possession of WMD by Iraq that it favoured the narrative that justified the NATO-led invasion of Iraq. The United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) Chief Weapons Inspector Hans Blix said in January 2003 that Iraq had cooperated well with the investigation team, and after the completion of the investigation on whether Iraq possessed WMD, they did not find any evidence pertaining to the alleged claims of the presence of WMD. Was it the first instance or the last, when the United States and the Western media accepted its mistake and tendered an apology? The answer to this question is no. There have been several instances in history where the US acted as the aggressor and participated in the killings of innocents, more than what we know about Hitler-led Germany. In the context of India, there have been various instances in history when the Western media have shown hypocrisy in covering similar issues through two lenses and tried to present different perspectives catering to their interests. In the pandemic era, the Western media left no stone unturned to criticise India for the number of deaths due to COVID-19, labour migrants, vaccines, etc., ignoring all the efforts of the Indian government that micromanaged the crisis with a population of around 1.3 billion people (approximately). Similarly, during the Russia-Ukraine war, there was a huge influx of negative reporting in the context of India, especially when she abstained from voting in a UN General Assembly that condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the oil was purchased from Russia despite calls for sanctions on India. Assessing the level of anti-India reporting by the Western media, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said while addressing a joint press conference with his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock in December 2022, "Our trade with Russia is at a very small level—\$12–13 billion, in comparison to European countries." "I would urge you to look at these figures. There is a website called 'Russia Fossil Fuel Tracker' that would give you country-by-country data of who is really importing what, and I suspect that might be very, very helpful," he added. The statement was made during a period when the Western media sparked a controversy about India by asserting that it was providing financial support to Russia for the war.

The hypocrisy of Western media

Recently, more than 100 students and faculty members have been arrested in a pro-Palestine protest at the University of California, Berkeley, which is yet another centre of anti-Asian and anti-Semitic activities in the United States.



Why Uttarakhand forests are on fire this season?

This year forest fire has created mass destruction in Uttarakhand. Visitors touring the hill state are shocked by the sight of smoke coming out from the forest. The smoke has affected the air quality and visibility. The local people are looking at the sky and praying to the rain god to come for their rescue in controlling and defusing the forest fire. Forest fire remains a major problem for the Uttarakhand forest department, especially during summer. This year over one thousand incidents of forest fire have been reported from different parts of the hill state. The raging fire has affected 1,318 hectares of land (data till 8 May). The forest department assesses a loss of over Rs 29 Lakh due to forest fire. Heavy deployment of forest staff, local people and others has been made to help douse the flames. Even the Indian Air Force choppers are in operation. On the grave situation, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami said, "Our government is working on every front to control forest fires. Along with taking the help of the army, forest officers have also been instructed to reach ground zero and control the forest fire. Our government is also ensuring strict action against the miscreants who are causing damage to forests by setting them on fire." The forest fire



is an annual phenomenon in Uttarakhand. Some years the loss is high and sometimes low. This year a record number of incidents have taken place and this again demands active involvement of the local community in controlling the forest fire.

Why do forest fires take place?

More than 99 per cent of the forest fires are man-made. Less than one per cent of fires take place due to natural reasons or accidentally. Like a power grid falling due to heavy storms and other odd instances. This year the forest fire is raging in Uttarakhand due to low rainfall received during winter. The grass is dry and due to low moisture the fire has become rampant in different areas. Many allege

that the forest department staff set fire to hide their failed plantation projects.

Why do villagers set fire?

Villagers set fire for many reasons. To get new grass in monsoon the dry bushes are burned. Local people also clear bushes from the village area to remove hiding places of leopards and other wild animals. Miscreants also set up fires for fun. Very recently three youths from another state were arrested at Gairsain (Chamoli) for promoting forest fire by shooting reel for social media. Many times the villagers set fire as a precautionary measure. They set fire near their village when they see the forest fire approaching their habitat area. This is done to avoid forest fires causing harm in

the village and clearing the dry grass in advance.

Role of local community

The role of the local community is big as even after receiving information about any fire the forest department staff will take some time to reach the affected area. On the other hand, local villagers can instantly reach the affected area and help in early intervention. Renowned environmentalist Chandi Prasad Bhatt says, "Forest department alone can't control forest fire. They need active support and cooperation from the villagers. Groups should be formed in the village and they should be provided all support. Awareness should be created at grassroots level about fighting forest fires."

High casualty this season

Four persons have lost their lives and four others have sustained high burns this forest fire season (till 8 May) in Uttarakhand. The state forest department claims that no loss of animal life was reported from any part of the state. Plantation in over 16 hectares of land was affected and 427 trees were destroyed in the forest fire.

Pine needles are considered to play a major role in spreading fire. Social activist Vijay Jardhari says, "Villagers should be involved and they should be provided equipment and other support. Only villagers can tackle forest fires as they understand their forest well. Efforts should be made to utilise the pine needles for power generation and making other products." It is generally observed that the forest fire gets controlled by occasional rains in Uttarakhand. Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts received much awaited showers on Wednesday.

Most of the forest fires in these two districts were doused. The Indian Meteorological Department has predicted rainfall in many districts in Uttarakhand in the coming days.

People are praying for the weather forecast to turn true and extinguish the forest fire to turn their life normal.

With Taiwanese President set to assume office, China's woes will only exacerbate

Given that there is no let-up in either Taiwan's defence preparedness posture or the US' backing of the island, China is likely to dig into its coercive toolkit to respond to Lai's swearing in. Image: REUTERS

With newly elected Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te set to assume office on May 20, there is intense speculation surrounding China's potential response to the event. In anticipation of an aggressive response, Tsai Ming-yen, Director-General of Taiwan's National Security Bureau, announced on May 1 that island authorities will be implementing measures to strengthen national critical infrastructure. Aiding the island's overall defence posture, on April 24, United States President Joe Biden has also

signed a bill to mobilise \$8 billion in defence aid to the Indo-Pacific in general and Taiwan in particular. With neither the US nor China backing down on their respective positions on the Taiwan issue, these developments add fire to the already deteriorating cross-strait dynamics.

US' proactive role worries China

During the recently concluded meeting between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, Xi conveyed that the very first "red line" the US should not cross in its relations with China is the Taiwan issue. However, the US' decision to continue to provide political and military support to Taiwan is motivated by two key factors: shared values

and national security interests. While from a values-based perspective, the US sees its role in the Taiwan Strait as a defender of democracy and a provider of net security, from a national security interests perspective, it sees immense value in deterring China, preventing undue escalation, and securing supply chains in critical sectors such as semiconductor chips, wherein Taiwan plays a vital role. Hence, in the run up to Lai's assumption of the presidential office, the US has embarked on a mission to demonstrate commitment to Taiwan. In addition to quickly signing the above-mentioned Indo-Pacific Security Supplemental Bill into law, over the past week, the Biden administration has also engaged with counter-

Why India should not put all its 'eggs' in military junta's basket alone

Three years after the military coup in Myanmar, there seems to be no signs of the conflict abating between the junta and the various Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) across the country. Especially after the successful launch of Operation 1027 against the military junta by the Three Brotherhood alliance members comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA) from the Kokang region of the Shan state, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army also from the Shan state, and the Arakan Army (AA) based in the Rakhine state. After the success of Operation 1027, the rebellion quickly spread across Myanmar and by November 7, 2023, with the launch of Operation 1107 in support of Operation 1027, many other insurgent groups across the country joined hands. This was perhaps one of the rare occasions in the troubled history of Myanmar where EAOs from a variety of ethnic groups had come together in a meticulously coordinated attack against the junta. Subsequently, many Myanmar observers debated the pushback by the rebel groups as a victory for democracy, with some

reports stating only 30-40 per cent of Myanmar was under the control of the junta. However, whether that means it is a victory in the real sense for the disparate groups that are fighting the junta is arguable. The junta has been relentless in its own offensive against EAOs. Not only does the junta have larger access to weapons but also has decades of experience in dealing with EAOs. It was evident in the recapture of Myawaddy, a border town and entry point for Thailand. A town destined to be a full international crossing as part of the Asian Highway Route Network AH1, that will extend to Tokyo, Japan. It also is a route for border trade of over \$1 billion. There were various reports that claimed that the strategic town of Myawaddy was actually never captured by the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Though KNLA didn't claim it in explicit terms, through videos and strategic perception building, it gave the impression that it had captured the whole town. On the contrary, the truth might be that the town is actually under the control of the Border Guard Force (BGF), a Karen-dominated pro-junta militia group. And

if not entirely pro-junta anymore, it is still playing a neutral role as the junta pays the salaries of its soldiers. Earlier this week the BGF warned, saying: "All foreigners who are doing online business around the Kayin state, Myawaddy township, must leave between May 1 (1-5-2024) and October 31 (31-10-2024). Foreigners who illegally cross the border must leave the country by the way they came. If found after October 31 (31-10-2024), effective action will be taken." This warning was aimed at online scammers and gambling operations that have found place in Shwe Kokko Myaing, the "new city" that is a short distance from Myawaddy funded by Chinese money and BGF partnership. The notice was posted in Burmese, Chinese and English. The statement in itself is reminiscent of the fate of the "four families" of Laukaing in the Shan state who were involved in cyber-crime, cyber slavery and gambling operations that adversely impacted China. With the launch of Operation 1027, Tatmadaw looked towards the Chinese for support and in return withdrew support from the "four families".

Government's outreach ties need renewed

India has enjoyed historical, cultural and civilisational links with Central Asia for several millennia. Brisk trade of goods, ideas and thoughts took place from India to Central Asia and beyond over the Silk Road from 3rd century BC to 15th century AD. Buddhism travelled to Afghanistan, Central Asia and western China from India over this route. India and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) viz. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan shared vibrant economic, people-to-people and cultural ties till recent times when the latter were a part of the Soviet Union. India has not been able

to take full advantage of its close ancient linkages with this region after their independence from the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1991 because it does not share a de facto land boundary with any of these countries (although de jure it shares a border with Tajikistan through the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir). To overcome this obstacle, several initiatives which have been in the pipeline for many years have now been fast-tracked. Two of the most significant are the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Chabahar port.

Evolution of relations

In current times, Central Asian

Republics constitute the extended neighbourhood of India. Peace and security in Central Asia is critical to peace and stability in India. This is intimately connected with peace and security in Afghanistan. Three Central Asian Republics — Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan — share borders with Afghanistan.

India and Central Asia need to collaborate with other regional powers like Russia, Iran, China and Pakistan as also with the US and the EU to promote security and stability in Afghanistan. The advent of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in August 2021 after the sud-

den and unceremonious withdrawal of the US and NATO troops has introduced further complications in promoting connectivity between India and Central Asia. In addition to the above, the region is also richly endowed with natural and mineral resources like oil, gas (Turkmenistan contains the world's fourth largest reserves of natural gas), uranium (Kazakhstan is the world's largest producer of uranium ore and has the world's second largest reserve of this mineral), lead, iron ore, coal, rare earths, water, etc. The region can contribute to India's energy security through fossil fuels and hydro-power.

Vi becomes the first in the industry to achieve SOC 2 Type II Attestation; reinforcing commitment to customer trust and data security



GURUGRAM / HISAR : Leading telecom operator Vodafone Idea (Vi), today announced that it has achieved SOC2 Type II attestation. Currently, the only telecom operator in India to successfully complete the SOC 2 Type II attestation, this marks Vi's commitment to maintaining highest standards of data security and safeguarding sensitive client information and their privacy, while mitigating Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) attacks. Awarded after a stringent evaluation process conducted by AICPA (Association of International Certified Professionals

Accountants) registered independent CPA and VISTA InfoSec is based on the SOC 2 "Trust Service" for managing customer data on key parameters like security, availability, processing integrity, confidentiality, and privacy. The attestation demonstrates a company's ability to not only implement critical security policies but also prove compliance over an extended period. Commenting on this attestation, Mathan Kasilingam, CISO, Vi said, "Our customers trust us with their most sensitive and confidential data. This attestation reaffirms that our security

measures meet best-in-class standards, thereby providing our customers with added confidence that their data is in safe hands." The SOC 2 Type II audit confirms that Vi's internal controls, policies and procedures conform to stringent security and operational standard. This implies that Vi has robust design and operating effectiveness of its security controls along with highest level of DDoS protection. It has a faster detection and response to any sort of security threat and thus is a reliable service provider for all the businesses.

DealShare Maha Loot Sale – started from 1st May

New Delhi : DealShare Maha Loot sales started from 1st May 2024, featuring great deals and offers across categories like Grocery, Packaged food, Personal care and Home & Kitchen. DealShare gives the lowest price guarantee so that people can face the rising inflation boldly. At DealShare, we strive to provide our customers with the best products at affordable prices. As part of the DealShare Maha Loot sale, DealShare customers can get great deals like 1kg Detergent Powder @ Rs 25, Buy 2 get 1 on Shampoo & Tooth Paste, up to 50% off on Home appliances & kitchen



items and much more. In this DealShare Maha Loot sale, customers can get many items like Tea @ 99, Biscuits @ 99, Namkeen @ 99 per kg, Ghee @ 399/ltr, Almonds @ 299/500 grams, and buy 1 get 1 on big brands like Ariel, Sunfeast, etc. DealShare CEO Mr. Kamal Deep Singh said "We aim to bring change to every home. DealShare is a

simple way for the common man to get the best deals, keeping both his pocket and budget safe. Along with this, we also promote MSME, SME, local and regional brands through our platform. DealShare Maha Loot Sale has started from May 1 with these promises. Every month more than 10 lakh customers shop through our app to whom we provide such great offers".

10 'negligent' forest staffers suspended

Following a review meeting on forest fires and upcoming Char Dham yatra on Wednesday, Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami ordered suspension and disciplinary action against 17 forest department employ-



ees on grounds of

"negligence and dereliction of duties". Of these, 10 have been suspended, 5 others have been 'attached to headquarters' and show cause notices have been issued to two employees.

3rd terrorist killed on Day 3 of Kulgam operation

SRINAGAR: Security forces gunned down another terrorist of The Resistance Force (TRF) holed up in a house in J&K's Kulgam district Wednesday, following the killing of the banned outfit's "area commander".

Basit Dar and an unidentified associate the day before in the same Redwani locality.

A police officer said the terrorist killed on the third day of the



operation has been identified as Momin Gulzar, a native of downtown Srinagar.

He said the gunfight began Monday evening after security forces surrounded a house in Redwani following information about terrorists hiding there. Although the operation was temporarily suspended at night, it resumed Tuesday morning and Dar was among those gunned down during the confrontation. A resident of Redwani, Dar had been missing from his home for the past three years before joining TRF, a front organisation of Lashkar-e-Taiba. He was allegedly involved in a dozen murders, particularly targeted killings, over the past two years. NIA had announced a bounty of Rs 10 lakh on his head. There was initial confusion Tuesday when police sources announced the conclusion of the operation following Dar's death. However, it later emerged that a third gunman was still hiding in the area. He was traced during a search of nearby houses and another round of shooting began Wednesday.

State level meeting of Hindustan Scouts and Guides today

Chandigarh: Hindustan Scouts and Guides is recognized by the Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. It is providing guidance through activities across the country. State Secretary Dr. Vinod Sharma from Chandigarh told that the state level meeting of Hindustan Scouts and Guides will be held on 9th May at Arya Samaj, Sector-



7-B, Chandigarh at 10.00 am. Heads of all educational institutions

have been requested to participate in this meeting either personally or as the

most responsible person of the institution and avail the opportunity of the said activity for the students.

Reputed institutions have been informed and invited to the meeting. For more information, you can get information on mobile numbers: 9816550752, 9872319475. This meeting is specifically for information and enrollment of schools in Scouts and Guides activities.

World Thalassaemia Day: Fertility Specialists at Nova IVF Fertility, Rohtak observe 5-6 couples with this genetic condition in a year

Rohtak: This World Thalassaemia Day, Nova IVF Fertility, releases insights into this genetic condition. Fertility experts see at least 5-6 couples a year with this genetic condition in the age range of 25-35 years. According to state government data, Haryana is home to approximately 3,000 individuals afflicted with thalassaemia. Couples carrying the Thalassaemia gene generally do not display any symptoms and are

healthy. Sometimes they display a history of miscarriage or already have a child with this genetic condition. However, they can transmit the genetic disorder to their children, potentially creating serious health issues. When both couples have the thalassaemia trait, their unborn child is at risk of inheriting the condition. This genetic disorder affects haemoglobin formation in the blood and people with

Thalassaemia condition generally require lifelong blood transfusions. Dr Sandeep, a fertility Consultant at Nova IVF Fertility in Rohtak, said, that considering Thalassaemia is common in regions like Haryana, we recommend thalassaemia testing in routine workup of infertility. In patients who are thalassaemia minor, their partners are tested. If a partner is also a thalassaemia minor, then the embryo must be tested. We recom-

mend IVF treatment combined with PGT M. IVF treatment includes fertilizing eggs with sperm outside the body and creating embryos. PGT M can be performed before pregnancy to greatly reduce the risk of having an affected child. PGT M involves testing embryos created through in vitro fertilisation transferring unaffected embryos into the uterus, reducing the chance of passing down genetic conditions.

HDFC Bank Parivartan supports social sector start-upswith Rs 19.6 crore grants

HISAR/AMBALA, May 8, 2024: HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, today announced the winners of its Parivartan Start-up Grants programme for FY2024. This year, 41 incubators and accelerators in the field of social impact entrepreneurship will receive grants totaling Rs 19.6 crore to support 170 start-ups working across specific focus areas. This year's programme is undertaken in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, a Government of India initiative under NITI Aayog. The focus areas for the 2024 grants include Climate Innovation, Financial Inclusion, Agriculture and Sustainable Rural Economy, Accessible and Affordable Healthcare, Education and Livelihood Enhancement, Gender



Diversity and Inclusion. The start-ups that have received grants come from various states across the including Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Delhi, and Haryana, with the largest number originating from Maharashtra. Over a half of the 170 start-ups hail from over 60 tier II/III cities. Ms. Nusrat Pathan, Head CSR, HDFC Bank said "Our Parivartan Start-up Grants programme reaffirms our steadfast commitment to fostering social innovation and driving positive change in our communities. Innovation is the key to addressing the development needs of society.

Through strategic collaborations and targeted investments, we aim to nurture and amplify the impact of innovative social start-ups across key sectors, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive future for all." The grants were awarded to leading and emerging incubators such as HTIC at IIT Madras, Awadh at IIT Ropar, T-Hub (Hyderabad), FITT - IIT Delhi, RISE Foundation at IISER (Kolkata), VJTI (Mumbai), Forge Forward (Coimbatore), NTIBIF at NIFTEM (Kindli). Some of this year's high-impact tracks were developed in association with nodal agencies.

Children in Urban India Are More Likely to Develop Environmental-Induced Asthma, Warn Experts at Paras Health on World Asthma Day

Panchkula: A growing concern for child asthma in India is the alarming rise of environmental asthma, particularly in urban areas. Experts at Paras Healthcare on World Asthma Day warn that children residing in cities are significantly more likely to develop asthma induced by environmental factors like burgeoning outdoor air pollution, traffic-related air pollution, nitrogen dioxide, and second-hand smoking exposures. "There are many studies also that suggests significant impact of outdoor air pollution on the children in urban India, making them significantly more vulnerable to asthma," said Dr. Surinder Kumar

"There are many studies also that suggests significant impact of outdoor air pollution on the children in urban India, making them significantly more vulnerable to asthma"

Gupta, Associate Director, Pulmonology, Paras Health Panchkula. According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, ambient air pollution, or outdoor air pollution, is estimated to have robbed children under 15 of a staggering 2.3 million years of life in 2019 alone. This translates to a significant health burden, highlighting the

urgent need for stricter air quality regulations and cleaner air initiatives to safeguard the well-being of India's future generation." There are several myths associated with asthma like people commonly believes that asthma is incurable disease but in 98% cases, it is easily treatable and other common myth is inhaler becomes habitable which is

not true.

Dr. Robin Gupta, Consultant, Pulmonology, Paras Health Panchkula, stated, "This increased risk is attributed to several factors associated with city life, including declining air quality in metro cities as well as tier 2 & tier 3 cities where pollutants like PM10 and PM2.5 are contributing

highly to trigger more asthma problems among children. Moreover, urban environments often have higher concentrations of allergens like dust mites, pollen, and mold spores, which can exacerbate asthma symptoms."

The irrigation department will manage 22 major city drains

Delhi: All major 22 city drains would be turned over to the Delhi government's Irrigation and Flood Control Department (I&FC) by the end of May for improved maintenance and operation, an MCD official said. Delhi's urban development department ordered on April 29 that 'all concerned departments shall hand over the 22 open drains to the I&FC department' by May 31. The Delhi High Court ordered the Delhi government to assign all open drains in the city to one agency on April 8 to streamline drainage management, prevent flooding, and improve Yamuna water quality. A Delhi official said this will be a thorough exercise. "As per the court's order, the I&FC will submit a report which will include assessment of the quantity of silt in these drains as well as an action plan for desilting," said the spokesman.

In election season, Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's 16-day foreign jaunt raises eyebrows



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The row over the three-nation "private trip" of chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his family in the midst of Lok Sabha elections continued on Monday, with opposition Congress and BJP raising questions about its timing and expenses. CM Vijayan, his wife Kamala and their grandson had left for the UAE on Monday. His daughter Veena Vijayan and her husband and minister P A Mohammed Riyas, who reached the UAE early this month, will

be joining them on the trip. Though no official announcement has been made, it is learnt that the family will be in Indonesia till May 12 before flying to Singapore. They will return to the UAE on May 18 and fly back to India on May 21. Rebutting the charges, LDF convenor E P Jayarajan said there was no need to publicise who was sponsoring the trip. "You are not sponsoring the trip and there is no need for you to know about it," he told the media.

The trip is being undertaken with the party's knowledge and there is no need for the CM to hand over charge to anyone, he said. On CM not attending election campaigns in other states, Jayarajan said it was the party that takes a call on who goes where. "There is no need for a controversy over the chief minister's trip. He has not flouted any norm and his trip is not illegal. We know what to do and what to do."

Fraudsters seeking money for mosque in Ayodhya booked

AYODHYA: An FIR has been filed following reports that fraudsters were collecting donations in the name of Ayodhya mosque proposed to be built on five-acre land in Dhannipur village of the temple town.

The mosque trust, Indo Islamic Cultural Foundation, lodged the FIR with Lucknow police on Tuesday against the unknown fraudsters who were running donation drives for Ayodhya masjid and receiving funds in the bank accounts opened in public and private banks under fake names. Chief trustee Zufar Farooqui said that complaints against two bank



accounts, one with the government bank and other with a private bank, and against related websites, were lodged with the cyber cell in Gautampalli police station of Lucknow. The mosque, which will be built about 25 km away from the Ram Mandir site, is a result of the Supreme Court verdict that settled the long-standing Ayodhya dispute in 2019. The

court ordered the construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site where the Babri Masjid once stood, and directed the government to allot an alternative plot to the Sunni Waqf Board to build a new mosque.

The construction of the mosque and the associated complex is under the supervision of the Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF), a trust formed by the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Central Waqf Board for this purpose. The construction of the mosque began on Jan 26, 2021.

The IICF has announced that the mosque will be named after the father of Prophet Muhammad, Mohammad Bin Abdulla.

Bengaluru: When ice apple vendors make a killing

Bengaluru: Tati Nungu, or ice apple, are drawing Bengalureans in droves this hot summer. From Banashankari to Malleswaram, streets are abuzz with vendors selling these refreshing translucent, jelly-like palmyra fruits. Though each fruit, comprising

two or three jelly-like pieces, priced around Rs 100, citizens are relishing it with no complaints. Srinivas Madeyan, a vendor in Banashankari said, "The demand has increased, compared to last year. People buy in bulk and store in fridge as it has a cooling effect. I

am making a profit of minimum Rs 1,000 every day." Karthik, a vendor from Jayanagar, said production of ice apples this year is low, leading to skyrocketing prices. "In hot afternoons, people like to stand here and relish nungu like a refreshment or snack."

CAPSULES

20 suffer food poisoning after eating 'poha'

VADODARA: Around 20 casual labourers and their children were rushed to the SSG Hospital on Tuesday after they complained of vomiting and pain in the stomach, reportedly after consuming poha. They are residents of a slum in Suryanagar near Navayard in the Fatehgunj area. Poha was being distributed free to everyone near Suryanagar polling booth in Fatehgunj area. "When they were going to work, someone offered them 'poha' which they ate and after some time started vomiting," said Prakash Bhuria, who accompanied the labourers at the hospital. He said that around 25 casual labourers and their families had consumed the 'poha' which were distributed in Mehsanagar, Abhilasha crossroads, Sama and Fatehgunj areas. The labourers, however, were not aware who distributed the 'poha'. "They were related to elections," said Bhuria, adding that most patients are native of Madhya Pradesh and are staying in the slums working as casual labourers. Doctors said that the patients suffered symptoms of food poisoning and their condition is stable.

LKP Securities Ltd. Earnings for Q4FY24, PAT Jumps 249% QoQ

CHANDIGARH: LKP Securities Ltd. (BSE: 540192), a leading financial services provider, has reported stellar earnings for Q4FY24 and FY24. For the quarter ended 31 March, 2024 (consolidated), the revenue from operations was reported at Rs. 3278 Lakhs, an increase of 34.20% QoQ. EBITDA jumped 76.63% QoQ, from Rs. 1405 Lakhs (Q3FY24) to Rs. 1831 Lakhs (Q4FY24).

Will turn Sukhbir's Mohali resort into plushest govt school: Mann

Bathinda: Continuing to target Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal's family wealth, Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday threatened to take over his rival's upscale resort, Sukhvilas, and make it a govt school, "world's first where every class has own swimming pool". In a public meeting at Bahawwala village of Balluana assembly segment in Ferozepur parliamentary constituency, Mann said: "You know about Sukhvilas? It has a swimming pool behind every room. A night's stay in



this luxury resort in the Malwa region's Shivalik foothills costs Rs 7 lakh, Rs 12 lakh if it is a presidential suite. The hotel got free electricity and tax exemptions for many years; I have the records." This isn't his first swipe at the Badals through Sukhvilas. On Monday, he had made the same point at Jhunjir

village in Sardulgarh assembly segment of Bathinda Lok Sabha seat. On Feb 29, he claimed: "When they ran the govt, the Badals had robbed the exchequer of Rs 108 crore by making an eco-tourism policy to tax-exempt their luxury hotel." Sukhbir has called the allegations "absurd" and, on March

15, sent Mann a legal notice, giving him 7 days to apologise or face another legal suit. Mann said he didn't fear those threats, so he continued to attack the Sukhvilas deal while campaigning for every AAP candidate. On Jan 11, Sukhbir 2024 had filed defamation suit against Mann before the civil judge of Muktsar, seeking Rs 1 crore in damages for the utterances of Nov 1, 2023, that the Badals (by agreeing for the SYL) had robbed Punjab of water for channelling it to their Haryana farmhouse at Balasar via private canal.

Sippy, whom Kejriwal called sister, to contest from Sangrur

Bathinda: Unemployed physical training instructor (PTI) Sippy Sharma, whom Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal had called his sister, has decided to contest parliamentary elections from Sangrur while accusing the AAP of "miserably failing to fulfil its promise". Sippy said she would campaign on "two issues of unemployment and rampant drug addiction" in Punjab. Sippy, who will file the nomination papers on May 10 in Sangrur, says the AAP govt has "failed to use green pen", which it



had assured to use for unemployed people from various categories, including the 646 PTIs. She was in protest for over one and half months atop a water tank at Sohana near Mohali when Kejriwal, along with Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann, had visited her in Nov 2021

in the run-up to the assembly elections. Kejriwal, calling her his sister, had urged her to give up protest and come down as "their appointment will be a priority once the AAP gains power". "After AAP had formed the govt in Punjab, we had hoped that now we will get the promised jobs but soon our hopes started going down," Sippy said. "At the time of Sangrur byelection in June 2022, I had gone atop a water tank at Sangrur and cabinet minister Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer, along with MLA Neena Mittal, had come to us

and made us come down from the water tank by making a promise of jobs," she said. Sharma, who had lost her husband some months ago, said, "Again education minister Harjot Singh Bains had promised us the jobs but no one fulfilled the promises. Now when all our hopes have gone haywire. I have decided to contest the elections to tell people the reality of the AAP." The merit list of 646 PTIs was prepared in 2011 but appointments were not made as the selection was challenged and matter was referred to courts.

Demand for air coolers hot up, stores run out of stock

BENGALURU: With increase in demand, popular electronic stores and rental apps have been left high and dry as stocks of air coolers are flying off their shelves, leaving Bengalureans to grapple with rising temperature despite brief and irregular spells of summer rain. Akash Nair, 34, a resident of Koramangala, said purchasing an air conditioner for summer will cost heavy on the pocket. "I'm sure that I will not use AC after June. So, I decided to invest in an air cooler, but I see no options or stock in the city, either offline or online," he said. Many electronic stores say they have not seen such a demand for air cool-

ers in the past few years. Harish, stock manager, Croma Koramangala, said, "Croma has around 27 stores in Bengaluru, and none of them has stock. In a span of a month alone, we have sold minimum 500 units at each store. Last week, we restocked 32 units of air coolers, but they were all sold out within 30 minutes." Vinayak, a customer relationship manager, Reliance Digital, HSR Layout said, "Each store in the city has sold more than 200 air cooler units and we still have a long wait list of people for air coolers. They can order online on our website but it takes a fortnight for deliv-

ery." Even on rental furniture apps like Rentomojo and Furlenco, air coolers have been out of stock for few weeks, leaving people in despair. During summer, coolers for large rooms offer efficient cooling with various features like adjustable speed settings, high air delivery, and inverter compatibility, ensuring comfort and convenience for large spaces. Stubble burning caused poor air quality in Greater Noida and Noida. Authorities buy wheat residue. CAQM monitors Delhi-NCR AQI at 300 due to dust from wind changes. Car fire in Chuhadpur village under investigation.

Baby gets Rs 17.5 cr 'gene therapy' jab & a shot at life, first in Bengal govt

KOLKATA: A one-year-eight-month-old boy, who has spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), recently underwent gene therapy to manage his condition, which cost Rs 17.5 crore, at NRS Medical College Hospital, a first in a Bengal govt-run hospital. SMA is a rare disorder that affects motor neurons, nerve cells that control voluntary muscles. It is incurable but can be managed through therapy. A patient typically suffers from progressive weakness of voluntary muscles - with arm, leg and respiratory muscles being affected first. The line of treatment for Soumyajit Paul at NRS involved one of the costliest drugs in the world - Zolgensma, just one



shot of which cost Rs 17.5 crore. This was the first such treatment at a govt-run hospital, but Soumyajit was the second patient to get the treatment in Bengal. The first was in Peerless Hospital last August. "NRS doctors diagnosed my son with SMA when he was only six months old. Since then, they had been trying to administer gene

therapy," said the boy's father, Ranajit Pal, a resident of a village in Howrah's Shyampur, who works as goldsmith in Mumbai. "We followed the advice of the doctor, Jasodhara Chaudhuri, and received the drug free of cost," he added. Kolkata: Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) is a condition due to an abnormality in a

gene (the SMN1 gene), and is diagnosed in infancy. As muscles weaken a child can't crawl, sit or lift head. Health experts said gene therapy was the best management or treatment option. But due to high cost and the lengthy documentation required for approval, only about 45 children in India have availed of the therapy.

Mini-truck carrying 810kg gold worth Rs 666 crore crashes

COIMBATORE: A mini-truck carrying 810kg of gold ornaments worth 666 crore fell on its side after a tarpaulin from another truck fell on the vehicle's windshield in Erode district early Tuesday. The ornaments in the mini-truck remained intact as they were kept in safety boxes. A private security company transported the ornaments to jewellery shops in Salem from Coimbatore. A Sasikumar, 29, was driving the mini-truck. M Naveen, 21, and Paulraj, a private armed security guard, were also in it. When the mini-truck reached Samathuvapuram Medu around 2am, Sasikumar applied a sudden brake and lost control when the tarpaulin from another vehicle ahead fell. Sasikumar and Paulraj suffered minor injuries. Commercial tax officials verified documents and with police protection, the ornaments were shifted to another vehicle.

Rain god is not the answer, take steps to douse wildfires: SC



DEHRADUN: Supreme Court, while hearing a plea filed by Dehradun-based advocate Rituparn Uniyal, seeking immediate action to safeguard the region's forests, wildlife, and birds from the devastating impact of wildfires, told the state govt on Wednesday that "cloud seeding or depending on rain god is not the answer" to the raging forest fires and the authorities will have to take preventive measures to tackle the problem. In response, the state govt informed apex

court about steps taken to control the forest fires and said that "only around 0.1% of the wildlife cover in the state was on fire due to such incidents." Deputy advocate general of Uttarakhand Jatinder Kumar Sethi told the bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta that since Nov last year, there have been 398 such incidents, all caused by human activities, leading to five fatalities. The applicant told the bench that the state is painting a "very rosy picture", but media

reports claim that the state machinery is pre-occupied with election duties rather than fire-fighting efforts. The petitioner called for the central and state govts, as well as the principal chief conservator of forests in the hill state, to establish pre-fire strategies and a policy framework to mitigate such disasters, underscoring the vital role forests and wildlife in maintaining the ecological balance, economic health and social fabric of the hilly regions. The court has scheduled further hearing on May 15.

Stopped producing Covishield in Dec 2021: SII after AstraZeneca recall

NEW DELHI: UK-based drug major AstraZeneca's decision to withdraw its Covid-19 vaccine globally, days after admitting to side effects, prompted Serum Institute of India to disclose that it had stopped manufacturing Covishield in Dec 2021 due to a fall in demand as well as the emergence of new variants. "With India achieving high vaccination rates in 2021 and 2022, coupled with the emergence of new mutant variant strains, the demand for previous vaccines diminished significantly. Consequently, since Dec 2021, we have stopped the manufac-



ture and supply of additional doses of Covishield," said a SII spokesperson. The global drug giant had recently admitted to Vaxzevria causing Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia (TTS) in very rare cases. Covishield accounted for nearly 80% of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in India.

AstraZeneca said its decision to withdraw marketing authorisation of Vaxzevria was due to a "surplus of available updated vaccines" since the pandemic. The SII spokesperson said the company fully understood the ongoing concerns. "We have disclosed all rare to very rare side effects, including Thrombosis with TTS, in the packaging insert in 2021," the spokesperson said. TTS refers to the formation of blood clots with low platelet counts. The condition is rare but is usually serious, particularly when the blood clot happens in major vessels, say doctors.

Candidates in Gurgaon ramp up campaigns

Delhi: Sitting BJP MP and Lok Sabha candidate for Gurgaon Rao Inderjit Singh campaigned in Sohna villages, urging voters to vote for the BJP based on Haryana's ten-year development. Singh stated that the ₹ 1,500 crore elevated Sohna Road project has reduced

the travel between Gurugram and Sohna to 20 minutes.

Improved connectivity and the Delhi-Mumbai expressway will make Sohna a residential and business hub, he said. Sohna would be connected to Nuh, Palwal, and Sonapat by the Orbital

Railway Corridor, creating job and economic prospects, the Gurugram MP added. The BJP is seeking votes based on its 10-year work. He addressed public meetings in Bhondsi ward-8, Ghamdoj, Alipur, Saanp Ki Nangli, Baluda, and Sohna to gain party.

Bengal counters Centre in SC, says CBI can't conduct probe sans state consent

NEW DELHI: Countering Centre's stand that it wields no power over CBI which is an independent agency, West Bengal govt on Wednesday told Supreme Court that Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, under which the agency was formed specifically says that its superintendence shall vest in the central govt in all cases except those related to corruption and contended CBI probe can't be ordered in the state without its



consent. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal told a bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta that Sections 4 and 5 of the Act confer the power pertaining to superintendence and jurisdiction of the agency to the Centre.

Putting forward the stand of the state govt that the central agency could not conduct a probe within its jurisdiction without its consent, Sibal said that it would destroy the federal structure if Centre forced its way into the state and conducted a probe. "Centre has no jurisdiction to allow its investigating agency to come in my state against my consent. Such an act is unconstitutional. It would be an encroachment on the rights and jurisdic-

tion of the state and its police. It would be constitutional overreach and exceeding of jurisdiction and would destroy the federal structure of the country," Sibal said. The lawyer referred to various sections of Delhi Special Police Establishment Act to make a point that Centre controls CBI but clarified that role of Centre is only upto the registration of case but not investigation and probe was not influenced by it. Reading Section 4.

To fulfil 70-year-old's last wish, Kerala driver makes 2,500km dash

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:

Arun Kumar is no stranger to navigating the bustling streets of Kerala's Kollam or racing down the highway to Thiruvananthapuram with sirens blaring. Yet, when faced with the daunting prospect of a 2,400km journey from Kollam to Raiganj in Bengal, doubts crept in. With the doctors advising minimal stops for food and fuel, the challenge seemed insurmountable. For 15 years, ever since she moved to Kollam with her son Sowthish, 44, in



search of greener pastures, Bodhini Bhahan had never had the urge to return to the hard-scrabble life she had left behind.

Sowthish worked at a brick factory in Mynagappally and the family was getting by blissfully. However, earlier this year, Bodhini suffered a stroke and

became bedridden. She wished to return to her hometown and reunite with her close relatives. Sowthish understood her wishes but faced challenges in fulfilling them. He was at a loss - he couldn't afford the exorbitant airfare, and his mother wouldn't survive a midsummer train journey from

Kollam to Raiganj. "The only option was an ambulance, but no ambulance driver was willing to take us to Bengal due to the distance," Sowthish said. In his search for a solution, Sowthish came across Emirates Ambulance Service. Contacting its owner Kiran G Dileep, he found a glimmer of hope. Despite financial constraints, Emirates Ambulance Service agreed to transport Bodhini to Bengal for a reduced fare, driven by compassion rather than profit.

WB governor to show CCTV clip to 100 people, not Didi or cops

KOLKATA: West Bengal governor CV Ananda Bose, facing molestation charges from a former employee of Raj Bhavan, announced Wednesday that he would present Raj Bhavan's CCTV footage to 100 private citizens of Bengal, excluding "Mamata Banerjee and her police". "Under the Sach Ke Same programme, anyone who wants to see the CCTV footage can send an email to adrcrajbhavankolkata@gmail.com or call the Raj Bhavan to register their names at 033-22001641. The first hundred would

be allowed to see the footage inside Raj Bhavan at 11.30am on May 9," Raj Bhavan said in a statement. The programme is aimed at addressing what was described as "mischievous and fabricated allegations" by police regarding the handling of CCTV footage related to the case. In response, state finance minister Chandrima Bhattacharya questioned governor Bose's decision, asking why he was withholding the CCTV footage from police if he was innocent. She said: "The CCTV footage

should be on public display if he is such an honest and innocent person. But here he is playing with the dignity of women, so he wants to shield it from police and is even unwilling to show it to the CM. Why can't the CM see it, if there is no foul play?" CM Banerjee and Trinamool have been going after the former Raj Bhavan employee filed a police complaint against Bose last Thursday. "He is now trying to show it (footage) to his own henchmen and get a certificate from them.

SC: Can't carry Raj-era bias to tag castes, tribes 'history-sheeters'

NEW DELHI:

Supreme Court had ruled that police cannot carry colonial era biases against persons belonging to certain tribes and scheduled castes to mechanically brand them in their records as 'bad characters' or 'history-sheeters' and said such archaic mindset violated individuals' right to dignity guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution. After nudging the Delhi Police to amend the format for history-sheeters, which was copied from 90-year-old Punjab Police Rules of 1934, to exclude the minor children and wife of a person from getting included with him as a bad character, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V



Vishwanathan on Tuesday asked all states to revisit their rules within six months regarding inclusion of a person in police's 'history-sheeter/bad character' record and weed out colonial era biases from relevant provisions. After deciding the case from Delhi, the bench resorted to its suo motu jurisdiction and examined the desirability of ensuring that no mechanical entries in 'history sheet' are made of innocent individuals, simply

because they hail from socially, economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, along with those belonging to backward communities, SCs and STs. Referring to certain studies on this aspect and without going into their authenticity, Justice Kant-led bench said these reveal a pattern of an unfair, prejudicial and atrocious mindset as they allege that police diaries are maintained selectively of individuals belonging

to vimukta jatis (denotified tribes that were listed originally under Criminal Tribes Act of 1871, as criminal tribes because of their alleged addiction to committing crimes) reflecting biases of colonial times. Writing the judgment, Justice Kant said, "All state governments are expected to take necessary preventive measures.

to safeguard such communities from being subjected to inexcusable targeting or prejudicial treatment. We must bear in mind that these preconceived notions often render them 'invisible victims' due to prevailing stereotypes associated with their communities, which may often impede their right to live a life.

CSIR: No circular issued on ironed clothes

NEW DELHI: A day after CSIR reposted the visual of a campaign 'Wrinkles Achhe Hain', posted by one of its institutes, it clarified on X Wednesday that it has not issued any order to its labs to refrain from wearing ironed clothes. On May 7, CSIR-NIScPR posted on X that "Join CSIR's #WAHMondayscampaign and say #WrinklesAccheHain. Wear your non-ironed clothes every Monday. Let's iron out climate change, not our clothes!" CSIR Wednesday said, "With regard to certain news reports, CSIR wishes to clarify that NO CIRCULAR or OFFICIAL ORDER has been issued by CSIR HQ to its labs asking staff to refrain from wearing ironed clothes."

New milk shake? Amul now eyes MP brand



BHOPAL: Amul is in talks for a possible takeover of Sanchi Dairy - a brand as familiar to Madhya Pradesh homes as Nandini in Karnataka, and just as emotive. The BJP-led MP gov't wants to adopt the Gujarat-based Amul-like model for Sanchi in MP, sources told, adding that whether Amul will 'assist' Sanchi to increase its base in MP or take it over will be decided soon after Lok Sabha polls. MP gov't feels it will be beneficial for the state's dairy farmers. Principal secretary of animal husbandry and dairy department, Gulshan Bamra, told, "A decision on Amul's role in MP for the ben-

efit of milk-producing farmers will be decided by gov't soon." Since Jan this year, several rounds of discussions have taken place between the animal husbandry department and Amul on this. Officials said Amul is keen on a takeover and merger of Sanchi with Amul. However, gov't is wary of a Karnataka-kind Amul vs Nandini battle that turned into an explosive political issue during the assembly polls there around this time last year. On Jan 10 this year, MP chief minister Mohan Yadav took part in a joint meeting of Sanchi and Amul in Ahmedabad to ensure

procurement of milk from milk producers of MP and help dairy farmers' interest getting guarded. At the Ujjain investors' summit in March, the MP gov't wanted to enter into an MoU with Amul for collaboration to promote Sanchi. "It couldn't happen, despite last minute efforts, as Amul was not keen on it (collaboration) and MP gov't had nothing to offer to get it interested," said an official. Sanchi is one of MP's best known brands. Run by Madhya Pradesh State Cooperative Federation, it boasts of a range of products from milk and milk products to sweets.

EC publishes a "rate list" for enticing competitions

Delhi: you can get a buffet or a packed lunch that includes two curries, rice, achaar, roti, and sweets for Rs 80. You can also get a mini meal of chhole bhature or poori aalu for Rs 37. You can also get a small cup of tea or coffee for Rs 6. These prices do not include the cost of a roadside eatery or canteen. Every cup of tea or coffee, packed lunch, or small meal provided to a political worker conducting a campaign during the capital election will be tracked and contributed to the candidate's overall poll expenditure. Not only will food costs be important, but so will the price of the



chairs and tables that will be used at candidate polling places or during election gatherings. The candidates' election expenses also include the cost of renting vehicles for campaigning, posting posters, banners, and hoardings, hiring a man to beat a drum, hiring horses and elephants for a road show, and hiring videographers, photographers, and drones to record the events.

Every penny spent by the candidates is tracked from the time of nomination filing to the casting of ballots, with the total amount not to exceed the Rs 75 lakh cap on election expenses set by the Election Commission of India. The tariff list of services and materials utilized by the candidates is prepared by each returning official, according to the officials.

Bournvita and Other Drinks Will No Longer Be Listed as "Health Drinks"

Delhi Divya: The Central Government ordered all e-commerce sites to remove all so-called drinks and beverages, including the well-known milk supplement Bournvita, from the 'healthy drinks' category, dealing a severe blow to fitness drink businesses. The National Commission

for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) undertook an investigation and came to the conclusion that the FSS Act of 2006 did not specify a health drink, thus the Ministry of Commerce and Industry issued the order. "National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), a

statutory body constituted under Section (3) of the Commission of Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005 after its inquiry under Section 14 of CRPC Act 2005 concluded that there is no 'health drink' defined under FSS Act 2006, rules and regulations submitted by FSSAI.

CAPSULES

Pot calling kettle black: Finance minister on Rahul's PSU policy criticism

NEW DELHI: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday hit out at Rahul Gandhi's criticism of Modi gov't's policy on public sector companies and argued that state-run companies and banks had been severely neglected during the UPA regime.

Dismissing Rahul's charge in a social media post, Sitharaman said the claims were a textbook example of the pot calling the kettle black.

She said that public sector undertakings (PSUs) are thriving, benefiting significantly from the culture of professionalism infused in them along with increased operational freedom. State-run banks too had seen an improvement during Modi gov't's tenure. PSUs that were previously neglected under the UPA gov't, such as Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, have seen a resurgence, she said. "Repeated claims from the @INCIndia ecosystem and @RahulGandhi in particular that Public Sector Undertakings are being dismantled & are in disarray under the current gov't are a textbook example of 'ulta chor kotwal ko daante' (pot calling the kettle black), as the facts reveal a very different picture," Sitharaman posted on X. She said gov't's focus on capital expenditure has led to substantial growth in the stock performance of PSUs, as the net worth of all central,



Stopped producing Covishield in Dec 2021: SII after AstraZeneca recall

NEW DELHI: UK-based major AstraZeneca's decision to withdraw its Covid-19 vaccine globally, days after admitting to side effects, prompted Serum Institute of India to disclose that it had stopped manufacturing Covishield in Dec 2021 due to a fall in demand as well as the emergence of new variants. "With India achieving high vaccination rates in 2021 and 2022, coupled with the emergence of new mutant variant strains, the demand for previous vaccines diminished significantly. Consequently,



tly, since Dec 2021, we have stopped the manufacture and supply of additional doses of Covishield," said a SII spokesperson. The global drug giant had recently admitted

to Vaxzevria causing Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia (TTS) in very rare cases. Covishield accounted for nearly 80% of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in India.

AstraZeneca said its decision to withdraw marketing authorisation of Vaxzevria was due to a "surplus of available updated vaccines" since the pandemic. The SII spokesperson said the company fully understood the ongoing concerns. "We have disclosed all rare to very rare side effects, including Thrombosis with TTS, in the packaging insert in 2021," the spokesperson said. TTS refers to the formation of blood clots with low platelet counts. The condition is rare but is usually serious.

One-year DDA flat maintenance with RWAs

Delhi: Delhi Development Authority would give residents' welfare societies maintenance work within a year of creation to ensure flat maintenance. This will also apply to Diwali Special Housing Scheme 2023 units. This conclusion followed Real Estate Regulatory Authority criteria. A maintenance fee is normally collected by DDA during allotment. It has maintained flats for 10-20 years, depending on the scheme. A DDA official stated that applicants must join the registered



agency or RWA to maintain common services. Per pocket, one RWA will be registered. All new DDA plans require upfront monthly costs for one year, depending on flat type. "DDA shall do daily maintenance from maintenance charges for one year or until

RWA is formed, whichever comes first. An RWA will get the balance maintenance fund if it is founded before one year. If a RWA is not created within a year, it will be done on actuals," said the official. "For subsequent years, the necessary arrangement will be communicated

to the residents," he said. Residents expect standard changes to speed up DDA flat maintenance, which had been delayed for a long period. The authority defined maintenance as green space maintenance, campus, colony, and housing pocket cleaning, light fitting replacement in common areas, lift maintenance and operation, and common area electrical bill payment. "After transfer, the urban authority will be responsible for common areas in many housing pockets.

'Rents rise by 16% across 13 major cities in March quarter'

Mumbai: Rents across 13 major Indian cities surged 16% year-on-year in the March quarter with Greater Noida, Gurugram and Bengaluru taking the lead. In Greater Noida, an emerging home to several techies and corporate employees, rents soared 32.1% while Gurugram and



Bengaluru saw an increase of 24.5% and 23.7%, respectively. Sequentially, rents increased by 2.8% during the Jan-March period, following an increase of 1.6% between Oct and Dec 2023, Magicbricks said in a statement.

The data, which is based on the reading of preferences of over two crore customers, rental accommodation of Rs 10,000 to Rs 30,000 a month was the dominant segment, accounting for

42% of the demand. Chennai, Navi Mumbai and Noida led the rental demand on a quarterly basis. However, the supply couldn't keep pace with the demand and has increased only marginally by 1.8% q-o-q, due to swift absorption of available rental units. Overall, rental demand grew 16% q-o-q during the March quarter. In Chennai, rental demand increased by nearly 25% q-o-q in the March quarter.

India got \$111bn in remittances in 2022, first to go past \$100bn mark

MUMBAI: India is the origin of the largest number of international migrants — nearly 18 million, with large diasporas in UAE, US and Saudi Arabia. And it continues its march as the top country receiving remittances from its diaspora: the figure crossed \$110 billion in 2022.

According to the World Migration Report, 2024, released in Dhaka on Wednesday by the UN's International Organisation for Migration, India, Mexico and China were the top three remittance recipient countries in 2022, followed by the Philippines, France and Pakistan. India received \$111 billion in all, the first country to reach and even surpass the \$100-billion mark. In 2020, it had received



\$83 billion. Mexico, with inward remittances of \$61 billion, was the second-largest recipient; in the previous year it had replaced China to occupy the second spot and continued to hold sway. China's inward remittances in 2022 were \$51 billion. The contraction and its slipping to third spot has been attributed to multiple factors, including demographic shifts that have resulted in

shrinking of the working age population and the country's zero-Covid policy, which prevented people from travelling abroad for work. During 2022, India's other neighbouring countries Pakistan (rank 6) saw an inflow of nearly \$30 billion and Bangladesh (rank 8) received \$21 billion. The report points out that international remittances have recovered from the dip in 2020 due to the

pandemic. Migrants sent an estimated \$831 billion in international remittances globally in 2022, an increase from \$791 billion in 2021 and significantly more than \$717 billion in 2020. In 1970, there were just 84 million international migrants, which translated to 2.3% of the world's population. By mid-2020 (per latest available data), nearly 280 million people lived in a country.

Currency circulation increases despite 2k note ban

Delhi: Despite the elimination of Rs 2,000 banknotes, the currency in circulation increased by Rs 1.3 lakh crore in FY24 from Rs 33.5 lakh crore at the end of March 2023 to Rs 34.8 lakh crore. Growth has slowed the most since 2018. In FY24, currency in circulation as a proportion of GDP fell since 4% is slower than GDP growth. CIC grew 7% last year and over 10% the year before due to a pandemic cash rush. Currency in circulation grew 0.5% to Rs 35.3 lakh crore in the week ended April 5. RBI data shows that the increased issue of Rs 500 notes has more than offset the withdrawal of Rs 2,000 notes. ON May 19, 2023, RBI announced their withdrawal. In March 2024, Rs 2,000 notes were worth Rs 8,202 crore, down from Rs 3.6 lakh crore a year earlier. The value of Rs