

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ Saturday 21 September, 2024 UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

## Ukraine war, Global South, IPEF on agenda as PM Modi heads to US

**NEW DELHI:** PM Narendra Modi's bilateral meeting with US President Joe Biden on Saturday will see substantive talks on carrying forward the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, including through exchange of agreements for formalization of India's accession to 2 additional pillars – clean economy and fair economy - of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) and another related to the India-US dug framework. While the Russia-Ukraine war is expected to figure prominently in the Modi-Biden engagement, and also the Quad meeting later in the day, in the outgoing president's Wilmington hometown in Delaware, the Indian government remained non-committal on proposing any peace initiative of its own. Modi is expected to brief Biden in detail about his recent meetings with both Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Ukraine counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky.



### 'If they don't listen ...': Amit Shah's stern warning to Maoists

**NEW DELHI:** Union home minister and BJP leader Amit Shah on Friday made a bold statement, saying that the government is aiming to eradicate Naxalism and its ideology from India within the next 1 to 1.5 years. During an interaction with 55 victims of Naxal violence in Chhattisgarh at his residence, Shah gave a stern warning to Naxals, asking them to give up violence, lay down arms and surrender. He added that an

"Talks are ongoing between the leaders. As for putting forward any proposal, we'll have to

### FIRs filed against Rahul Gandhi in Chhattisgarh for allegedly hurting Sikh sentiments

Three FIRs have been registered against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Chhattisgarh for allegedly making remarks that hurt Sikh religious sentiments during his US visit. BJP leaders lodged complaints accusing him of disrespecting Sikh traditions. The cases were filed in Raipur, Bilaspur, and Durg districts under sections 299 and 302 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Three FIRs have been registered against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Chhattisgarh for allegedly making remarks.

see how much consensus is reached and whether we can reach a stage where a proposal can be put before a larger audience. So, I think we need to wait a little," said foreign secretary Vikram Misri.

## Congress demands SPG security for Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi amid 'terrorist' remark row

**NEW DELHI:** Congress has demanded SPG security for both Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi following controversial statements made by Union minister Ravneet Bittu and other NDA leaders. Kuldeep Rathore, an AICC national spokesperson and Congress legislator, expressed his disapproval of Bittu's comments and the BJP's actions, emphasising the need for increased security for both Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi, including the reinstatement of their SPG protection. During a press conference in Shimla, Rathore reminded Bittu of his family's history with the Congress and questioned the motives behind his appointment as a minister by the BJP. He accused the BJP of fostering a hostile environment against Rahul Gandhi, which he believes threatens the leader's safety. Rathore demanded an apology from Bittu for their statements and



### UP medical aspirants converting religion to secure MBBS seats:

**NEW DELHI:** A startling case has surfaced in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, where more than a dozen medical aspirants allegedly underwent religious conversion to secure admission to minority medical colleges. This troubling incident, now under investigation by local authorities, is believed to contravene the provisions of the Unlawful Conversions of Religion Act of 2021 (UPPUCRA-2021). The individuals involved hail from various regions, including several districts in Uttar Pradesh, New Delhi, and Maharashtra. Uttar Pradesh Home Department and other relevant authorities are aware of the ongoing probe.

Police Station in response to Bittu's remarks about Lok Sabha leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Sunday. "Bittu had told Rahul Gandhi that he would be in the same condition the way his grandmother was.

### New weight of expectation for Vinesh, but it's 'an election, not wrestling match'

**JULANA:** Vinesh Phogat's kaafila is running three hours late. What should have been a 3 pm Sunday afternoon election rally at village Gatauli is taking place hurriedly at dusk. Fine specimens of buffaloes make their way back home in twos, unperturbed by the organised cacophony that has engulfed them – tractors and SUVs parked at odd angles, pamphlets hauled out and passed around, hundreds of bright orange laddoos in huge wicker baskets being carried in as a village's offering to their guest. Everyone seems to be coming in everyone else's way, but no one seems to mind. Elections in Haryana are a public affair and like most things in the state, mostly a male exercise.

## 'What was the need to disrespect?': Priyanka Gandhi slams PM Modi over JP Nadda's reply to Kharge



**NEW DELHI:** Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for getting BJP chief JP Nadda to reply to Mallikarjun Kharge's letter -- which highlighted slanderous remarks against Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi. In the letter, Kharge had asked PM Modi to "impose discipline and decorum" on the BJP and NDA leaders, citing "highly objectionable, violent and rude statements" against the Congress scion. Priyanka, who also happens to be Rahul Gandhi's sister, said: "If the Prime Minister had faith in democratic values, equal dialogue and respect for elders, he would have personally responded to this letter. Instead, he got an inferior and aggressive response written by Nadda ji and sent it." Stepping up her attack on PM Modi she further said it was unfortunate that leaders in the highest position in the government have shrugged off great traditions keeping dignity and etiquette. "What was the need to disrespect an 82 year old senior leader? The tradition and culture of democracy is to ask questions and communicate. Even in religion, no one is above values like dignity and etiquette. There is a lot of poison in today's politics, the Prime Minister should have set a different example by keeping the dignity of his post," the Congress leader wrote on X. She further wrote: "If he had respectfully replied to the letter of a senior colleague politician, his image and dignity would have increased in the eyes of the public.

## Land-for-jobs scam case: CBI seeks sanction to prosecute Lalu Prasad

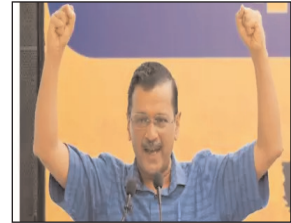
**NEW DELHI:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) informed a Delhi court on Friday that it has secured the necessary sanctions from relevant authorities to prosecute former railway minister Lalu Prasad in a corruption case related to the alleged land-for-jobs scam. The CBI submitted the sanctions to Special Judge Vishal Gogne. The agency also notified the court that there



were approximately 15 days to allow 30 additional accused individuals in the case for whom prosecution sanction was still pending. The CBI requested the court to grant an additional

ing accused and scheduled the next hearing for October 15. According to officials, the case involves Group-D appointments made in the West Central Zone of the railways based in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, during Lalu Prasad's tenure as the railway minister from 2004 to 2009. These appointments were allegedly made in exchange for land parcels gifted or transferred by.

## Kejriwal to hold 'Janta ki Adalat' at Jantar Mantar on September 22



**NEW DELHI:** Ex-Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, who recently stepped down from the post in the wake of corruption allegations, will be holding "Janta ki Adalat" at the Jantar Mantar in the national capital on September 22. Praising Arvind Kejriwal for foiling BJP's "conspiracies", Senior AAP leader Gopal Rai said all the office bearers will have to become like the party convenor. "Arvind Kejriwal foiled

all the conspiracies of BJP in the last 2 years and now it is a face to face fight. If Arvind Kejriwal is made the Chief Minister with a huge majority, then the country's respect will increase and the respect of the conspirators will be denied. Therefore, all the office

bearers will have to become Arvind Kejriwal. On September 22, 'Janta ki Adalat' (a public court) will be held at Jantar Mantar, which will be addressed by Arvind Kejriwal," Gopal Rai was quoted as saying by news agency ANI. While Kejriwal has not given any statement since his resignation on Tuesday, sources said he will take questions from the public about his decision at the event.

## Delhi coaching centre deaths: SC directs Centre-appointed panel to submit interim safety measures within 4 weeks

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Union government to establish a high-level committee tasked with submitting interim safety measures within four weeks, following the tragic deaths of three IAS aspirants in a coaching centre basement in Delhi's Old Rajendra Nagar area in July. The bench, comprising Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan, also instructed the governments of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi to inform the court of any policy, legislative, and administrative changes implemented to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future. The bench also pointed out the necessity for consistent safety initiatives across the



National Capital Region (NCR) to avoid another tragedy like the one in Old Rajendra Nagar. On August 5, the Supreme Court had expressed serious concern over the safety of students in coaching centres, noting that they were rapidly becoming "death chambers." The court had issued notices to both the Central and Delhi governments, urging immediate action. The matter gained judicial attention when a coaching centre association challenged a December 2023 Delhi high court

order, which required inspections of all coaching centres in the capital to ensure compliance with fire safety norms. The apex court dismissed the association's plea, deeming it frivolous, and imposed a penalty of Rs 1 lakh. The bench clarified that no coaching centre should operate unless they meet fire safety standards and other essential regulations. To further ensure transparency, the Delhi high court had transferred the investigation from the Delhi Police to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI),

### Blinkit to deliver iPhone 16 and iPhone 16 Plus "in minutes" in these cities

**Apple** launched its latest iPhone 16 series of smartphones earlier this month. The iPhone 16 series is now up for sale in India. Apple iPhone 16 series consist of four iPhones — iPhone 16, iPhone 16 Plus, iPhone 16 Pro and iPhone 16 Pro Max. Now, Zomato-owned Blinkit has announced the availability of iPhone 16 series on the platform. Blinkit has partnered with Apple Premium Reseller Unicorn Infosolutions. As part of the partnership, Blinkit will deliver all-new iPhone 16 and iPhone 16 Plus to customers' doorsteps within minutes. Customers living in Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Pune, and Bengaluru can order the latest iPhones on Blinkit and have the product.

## 'Can't wait to meet him': Indian Diaspora expresses excitement ahead of PM Modi's US visit



**Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** visit to the United States from September 21 to 23 has stirred excitement among the Indian diaspora. He will attend the Quad Summit and address the UN General Assembly. Over 24,000 Indian-Americans have registered for a community event on September 22 in New York, celebrating Indian-American diversity and success. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi's is set to commence his United States visit on Saturday, the members of the Indian diaspora exuded fervour and excitement to meet him. From children to adults, several members of the Indian diaspora expressed their excitement for the PM's visit and praised his leadership for the work in India. Speaking to ANI, Prakash Shantilal Patel, a member of Indian diaspora in the US, said, "We are super excited to meet him. PM Modi is one of the excellent Prime Ministers of the country and he is famous in the world so we are excited.



## Parvez Akhtar Ansari made observer of Panipat in Haryana elections

Prayagraj: National Secretary of All India Congress Committee Minority Department and in-charge of West Bengal, Mr. Parvez Akhtar Ansari has been made the National Chairman of the Department and MP on the instructions of Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Honorable Mr. Rahul Gandhi and National General Secretary, Honorable Mrs. Priyanka Gandhi. Imran Pratapgarhi has made Panipat district observer in Haryana elections. On making Mr. Parvez Akhtar Ansari the observer, all Mr. MP Ujjwal Raman Singh ji, city president Pradeep Mishra, Manish Mishra, Taslimuddin, Shaukat Ali, Alok Pandey, Irshad Ullah, Abdul Kalam Azad, etc. congratulated and expressed gratitude to the high command.



## Namo exhibition inaugurated

Prayagraj: Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Minister Rakesh Sachan and Minister of State Narendra Kashyap inaugurated the NamO exhibition at Nirala Art Gallery Katra by Municipal Corporation Prayagraj under the leadership of Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani under the birthday service fortnight of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On this occasion, Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Minister Rakesh Sachan and Minister of State Narendra Kashyap inaugurated the exhibition. He observed the NamO exhibition and said that the NamO exhibition embodies the work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for building a strong and strong India in the di-

rection of nation, society and politics, which is a great the intelligentsia, students and businessmen will



platform for the nation to build a developed India. Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani said that the NamO exhibition will be held from today till 25th September in which

gather to view the exhibition on the life of Modi ji. District media in-charge Rajesh Kesarwani said that the work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi

and his government in the exhibition was noteworthy. On this occasion, BJP Metropolitan President Rajendra Mishra, Regional Vice President Awadhesh Chandra Gupta, Kunj Bihari Mishra, District President Ganga will take inspiration from the nation. Kavita Patel, Councilor Kiran Jaiswal Varun Kesarwani, Devsh Singh, Sunita Chopra, Bhola Tiwari Shyam Chandra Hela, Aman Kesarwani, Regional President Pichda Morcha Ashwani Kumar Patel, Manoj Kushwaha, Rohit Pappu Pandey Anand Jaiswal, Angad Singh Patel, Ishu Kesarwani, Shyam Prakash Pandey Harsh Brijesh Gupta etc. were present.

## Orient Electric's Stella Neo MCB range

Varanasi: Orient Electric Limited [BSE: 541301, NSE: ORIENTELEC], part of the diversified USD 3 billion CK Birla Group, has expanded its Switchgear portfolio with the launch of Stella Neo range of miniature circuit breakers (MCBs) in the mass premium segment. Designed with a focus on four defining aspects of safety, ease of installation, durability, and performance, Stella Neo MCBs offer enhanced electrical safety and reliability. The launch is part of the company's plans to strengthen its foothold in India's fast-growing low-voltage switchgear market.

Ravindra Singh Negi, MD and CEO, Orient Electric Limited said, "Our focus has always been on delivering best-in-class Switchgear products that meet the electrical safety needs of Indian consumers. The launch of our new Stella Neo range of MCBs is a key step in this direction, featuring advanced technology to enhance both safety



and performance. To support this launch, we've added a new production line at our Noida plant, equipped with state-of-the-art automatic calibration and verification systems for MCBs. Our focus remains on strengthening this business through continuous innovation and by working closely with key category influencers to raise consumer awareness." Orient Stella Neo MCBs come with advanced features designed to enhance safety and performance. It has high short circuit breaking capacity of 10,000A (10kA) with lesser watt loss, which is suitable for all heavy electrical appliances. The arc extinguishing device has 13 plates that quickly put out the electrical arc, making the MCB safer and more reliable. Another interesting feature of Stella Neo MCB is side channel ventilation which keeps it cool, preventing nuisance tripping and improving operational accuracy and lifespan. Additionally, the two-position Din rail clip offers great convenience for installation and removal, making the process both safer and time-efficient. With a rated current range from 6A to 63A, Orient Stella Neo MCB's are available in various configurations - including Single Pole, Single Pole & Neutral, Double Pole, Three Pole, Three Pole with Neutral, and Four Pole - to suit diverse needs. Orient Electric is a trusted brand for consumer electrical products in India, offering a diverse portfolio of fans, home appliances, lighting, switches, switchgear, and wiring accessories.

## Shrimad Bhagwat Katha on Sept 21

Prayagraj: Shrimad Bhagwat Katha organized by Shri Prachin Dadhikando Mela Committee Krishna Nagar Triveni Marg was started by taking out Mangal Kalash Yatra. On this occasion, the patron of the committee, Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani and his wife former councilor Savita Kesarwani led the Mangal Kalash Yatra by keeping Shrimad



Bhagwat Geeta on their heads and wishing for public welfare. Before this, Katha Ras streamer Pandit Pujya Batuk Ji Maharaj Ji worshipped the feet of media in-charge Rajesh. Kesarwani said that the Kalash Yatra started from the Knowledge Library and ended at the Knowledge Library via ADC College, Manj Giri Baba Ashram, Shankar Lal Bhargava Road. On this occasion, Manish Kesarwani, Krishna Sahu, Ajay Jaiswal, Lallan Jaiswal, Amresh Jaiswal, Varun Kesarwani, Pramod Jaiswal, Giri Baba, Raju Pathak, Subhash Vaish, Meenu Pandey, Dinesh Vishwakarma, Bharat Kesarwani, Lala Bhai, and hundreds of women were present.

## Chhora Ganga Kinare Wala again brought fame to Prayagraj in B'wood

Prayagraj: Ayub Khan has been working in Bollywood for four decades as a film producer, director, writer, producer and distributor. Ayub Khan made and released many films, wrote many films under his direction, the short film Family First, which has received more than 27 awards including national and international till now and recently a film festival named Dreams International Film Festival is being organized in August. began. The first year's festival was organized successfully for three days at Juhu PVR Cinema. Where films from about thirteen countries came, films from every language of India came, films in different languages from thirteen countries came, a total of 578 films. The jury together



screened the good films with a lot of hard work and those Ayub showed good films for free in Juhu PVR Cinema for two days from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm.

A large number of people from Mumbai and outside Mumbai came to see the film festival and were happy. Many famous people from the Bollywood industry also came like Boman Irani Sahab, Poonam Dhillon, Yashpal Sharma, Mishika Chaurasia, Kamlesh Pandey, Amrita Tangania, Dabboo Malik, Manoj Joshi etc. There were people from the film industry who watched the films and appreciated the work of Ayub Khan. Appreciated and Ayub Khan is thankful to Allah that he organized this festival in the best way and on 28th August, those selected films were seen by special people and on 29th August, Ayub Khan gave awards to those selected films which were well made. Those were very good films which were appreciated a lot by the people and awards were given to those films in different categories like Best Film, Best Producer, Best Tractor Basic Story, Best Writer, Best Cinematography as well as for Ayub Khan. A good thing has happened which perhaps for the first time, he has started in his festival which no one in our Bollywood industry has done till date, that is, Ayub Khan has not honored the writer in any award function in any festival.

## Om Mishra's selection in SAI Rae Bareilly

Prayagraj: Om Mishra, of 45 kg weight category and 162 cm height, has confirmed his place in SAI Rae Bareilly by showing his extraordinary talent in Taekwondo. Currently Om is receiving special training at Allahabad Taekwondo Academy. His basic coach Suneet Kumar has played an important role in Om's initial Taekandy education and expressed pride in his achievement. On this occasion, Taekwondo Association President Shri Shivbhan ji, Vice President Nishant Mehrotra, Joint Secretary Sunny Singh, Satyadev Yadav, Shreya Singh, Abhishek Tiwari, Haseeb Ahmed, Navneet, Vimal, Sushmana, Kamal Yadav, Suchitra Kumari, Aditya Kumar, and Mulyam Singh heartily congratulated Om Mishra and wished him a bright future. Sanghat President Shivbhan ji said, "Om Mishra's success is the result of his hard work and dedication. Our support will always be there for players like him, so that they can reach the highest level."

## 'Even AI cannot alter the true essence of love,' says Rajeev Siddhartha

Prayagraj: Rajeev Siddhartha has come a long way from his debut in the 2007 film 'Dil Dosti Etc' and has a vast body of work spanning cinema, television, and web shows today. He also headlines Zee Theatre's teleplay 'Love', a futuristic adaptation of the George Bernard Shaw classic, 'Pygmalion.' The former investment banker has a special place in his heart for the theatre, having also starred in Lillete Dubey's directorial 'Adhe Adhure' as well as plays like 'August Osage County' among many others. Set in the future, 'Love' is about an inventor who develops a robot with Artificial Intelligence (AI) to fool his mother into believing he has found love. The teleplay goes on to show how science is infiltrating our lives and impacting relationships.

Talking about his own role in the teleplay and its seminal themes, Rajeev says, "I loved every single moment that I spent preparing for my part. Despite being set in the future and in-

corporating elements of AI and technological advancements, this teleplay, as the title suggests, is rooted in love. I play a snobbish, snooty, arrogant sort of inventor who finally falls in love with his creation. Love



transcends all barriers to show that despite technological advancements and the presence of AI, pure emotions will always exist. Nothing can alter the true essence of love."

Though technology and AI have altered the way we connect with people, the actor does not think they will fundamentally redefine love. As he says, "The

depth and unconditional nature of romantic love will probably remain the same. And I hope that life doesn't become so superficial that we start depending on the click of a button to pair us with someone we don't know fully. Technology may help us to meet many interesting people but a soul connection requires emotional depth."

Discussing his idea of love, Rajeev says, "True love is unconditional but in the times that we live in, the depiction of love in books, movies, and even in life seems to be very conditional. True love should have the kind of unconditional commitment that the sun displays towards the earth." 'Love' is adapted by Iti Aggarwal and also stars Yuki Elias, Shivam Patil, Sonali Sachdev, Payal Nair, Nandini Sen, Priti Shroff and Suhani Gandhi. It is filmed by Karan Talwar and can be watched on 23rd September on Dish TV Rangmanch Active, D2H Rangmanch Active and Airtel Spotlight.

## Tourism management gave 5-day training to Civil Defense team

Prayagraj: The entire team of Prayagraj Civil Defense was given a five-day training. With a view to the upcoming Mahakumbh, work is being done on a war footing in all areas with a view to ensure the safe completion of the Mahakumbh. Tourism Management also organized a five-day training in Mahakumbh to provide comprehensive support to the devotees and tourists coming from India and abroad and to create a comfortable environment. The Civil Defense team also took cooperation and got the opportunity to participate in the tourism training, which was I got the opportunity to know and learn a lot through better



training. I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Tourism Department, especially Prakar Tiwari ji, Santosh Kumar ji of Tourism Management and Traffic Sir Pawan Kumar Pandey ji Fire Officer Management. They

got the opportunity to get better information through each other. Thank you very much for giving information about Kumbh, traffic control, mob control, communication skill development, digital payment, disaster

management, fire safety, historical places, weather management etc. Which included Mohammed Yakub, Mahendra Saxena, Mani Mehra, Asish Vajpayee, Kamlesh, and the lady warden.

## Official locks should be installed in the offices of derecognized unions: Manoj Pandey

### Union code of conduct is being flouted

Prayagraj: National President of Indian Railway Employees Federation and General Secretary of North Central Railway Workers Union, Manoj Pandey, immediately locked the central office, divisional office, and branch offices (all railway buildings) of both the unions (NCRMU / NCRS) which have lost recognition from the railway administration and have demanded a ban on its use. In a letter written to the General Manager of North Central Railway, Manoj Pandey has alleged that after the release of the Union Code of Conduct, the Railway Board has banned all the facilities provided to the recognized unions, yet both the unions are using the offices pro-



vided by the Railway Administration. They are doing it for election work which is a blatant violation of the code of conduct. The General Secretary of the Workers Union has written in the letter that if the Railway Administration does not close all the offices of both the unions within a week, then the Workers Union will take refuge in the court. Comrade Manoj Pandey demanded the Railway Administration to stop the deduction of union donations from the salaries of railway employees and said that after the recognition is terminated, it is not the responsibility of the Railway Administration to collect donations from the salaries.

after the recognition is terminated, it is not the responsibility of the Railway Administration to collect donations from the salaries.

## Ram drohis (traitors) are averse to saints: Nandi hits out at Akhilesh

Prayagraj: Samajwadi Party National President Akhilesh Yadav had recently given a statement that Mafia and Mathadhih are one and the same. Regarding which the people and saints of the state had expressed anger and displeasure. On Friday, once again Akhilesh Yadav made an objectionable post on social media regarding saints. On which Uttar Pradesh Government's Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi has given a befitting reply. Akhilesh Yadav wrote in a post on social media on Friday that identify the real Saint Mahant by language, the cunning Anant wandering in the world in the guise of a monk. Responding to this post, Uttar Pradesh Government's Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi has written on his social media that why would the saints like Ram traitors, the public will give the fruits of their deeds and end the SP.

## Jayant Chaudhary inaugurated Skill India Centre in Chapprauli, Baghpat

Varanasi: Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Govt of India, today inaugurated the Skill India Centre (SIC) in Chapprauli, Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh. The centre will offer specialized training programs to prepare candidates for careers in the Indian Police Force, Indian Army, and country's Paramilitary Forces. Hon'ble Minister Shri Jayant Chaudhary also flagged-off the 'Kaushal Rath', a bus providing skills on wheels designed to provide skill training and certification to aspiring candidates. The initiative, led by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), under the aegis of MSDE, aims to provide accessible and hands-on skill training to foster growth and innovation.

During the inauguration ceremony Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Minister of State, Ministry of Education, Govt of India, emphasized on the importance of equipping Indian youth with the necessary skills to succeed in challenging professions like the Indian Security forces. He said, "Today, the inauguration of the Skill India Centre in Chapprauli, Baghpat, marks a key advancement in our efforts to equip India's youth for critical roles in our national security forces. This centre will serve to be a recruitment preparation center essential for training of youth who wish to join the Police, Army, and Paramilitary forces, directly addressing the needs of the many young aspirants from Uttar Pradesh. The 'Kaushal Rath' further extends our reach, offering targeted skill training to those who need it most." "As we celebrate the first anniversary of PM Vishwakarma tomorrow with the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Wardha, connecting with 50 skill centres digitally, I also would like to take this opportunity to call upon all our artisans and craftspeople to register and participate in this transformative initiative, get upskilled, learn new tools and reap the benefits of getting loans to improve their livelihood. Our commitment is to nurture this talent and foster national growth," he further added.

## Centre for Future Skills: NSDC collaborates with Ethnotech Academy and Cambridge

Varanasi: The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, has launched the "Centre for Future Skills" an initiative in collaboration with Ethnotech Academy and Cambridge University Press & Assessment. This state-of-the-art facility, a vibrant hub of innovation and learning aims to provide technology infrastructure and expert guidance in the latest technologies to higher education institutions (HEIs), creating a launch pad for students to excel in the rapidly evolving tech landscape and connecting the aspirations of our youth with the ever-changing demands of industry. The key highlight of the event was to create partnerships between academic/corporate partners and NSDC, alongside Ethnotech and Cambridge University Press & Assessment. This was followed by panel discussions that delved into current challenges and potential solutions in the fields of emerging technologies.



## Blood donation camp organised at SHUATS

Prayagraj: Under the banner of "Swachhata Hi Sewa" Programme, a blood donation camp was organised by NSS at SHUATS campus on Friday. The Chief Guest of the programme was Prof.(Dr.) Ashok Tripathi, Dean, VIAE&T, NSS Programme Coordinator Deepak Kumar and Bose welcomed the chief guest and shared the importance of



blood donation. The Chief Guest encouraged the NSS volunteers and gave thanks for donating blood. Assistant Program Coordinator Mr Satyam Kesari guide the NSS volunteers for successful of the camp. A total of 32 units of blood donated by NSS volunteers and faculties of SHUATS. A team of Motilal Nehru Medical Hospital under guidance of Chief Coordinator were collected the blood. NSS Programme Officers Dr.Prashant Ankur Jain, Dr. Satyendra Nath, Dr. Hira Bose, Dr.Jyotsana Jaiswal, Dr.Reena Meheta, Dr.Alka Gupta, Dr. R.N.Shukla, Dr. Anupriya Paul, Dr.Ann Maxton, and Dr. Shankar Suman Singh were actively participated in the programme. ?

## Inter house volleyball tournament held at SHUATS

Prayagraj: The final match of inter house volleyball tournament was played between yellow house versus pink house in men category and yellow house versus blue house in women category at SHUATS volleyball ground. Pink house (men) won the match against yellow house by 23-25,25-14,25-16 while Blue house won the match against yellow house by 25-13,25-16 in the women category.

The Chief Guest of the final match of the tournament was Chief Proctor Dr. Raghav Yadav. He congratulated



the winner and runner-up team. On this Occasion Dr. Sunita B. John, Head Dept. of Physical Education and Secretary Athletic Committee welcomed the chief guest.

Prof.(Dr.) C J Wesley, Additional Registrar & Chairman Athletics Committee gave prizes to the player and congratulated them for good sportsmanship. Mr. Gaurav Suman and all staff and students of Physical Education Department were present. The tournament was organized by volleyball game In-charge Mr. Ashish Massey. Main referee and assistant referee were Mr. Akshay Mr. Gourav respectively. Best player of the tournament prize given to Sabin (Yellow house) in men category while promising player of the tournament was Bori Shohe(Yellow house). Similarly, in women category, best player of the tournament was Sonali Kumari(Blue house) and promising player of the tournament was Ashmita Terrance (Yellow house).

## Journo's son dies in mishap, traders hold condolence meet

Prayagraj: Traders hold condolence meeting, pay homage. On Friday, a bullet went out of control and hit the divider in Ghurpur area. In the accident, 19 year old Sarthak Singh, who was riding the bike, died tragically while another youth got injured. The victim of the accident Sarthak was the only son of Ranvijay Singh, a senior journalist of the prestigious newspaper. There is chaos in the family due to his death. The condition of Vansh Singh who was injured in the accident is critical. The wife of Lal Ranvijay Singh, a resident of Rasoolabad in Shivkuti police station area, had passed away many years ago. There was an elderly mother, daughter Kajal and younger son Sarthak in the house. Sarthak had gone to Yamunapar with his friend Vansh Singh, 20, to attend an event. From there both were returning on bullet bike. Suddenly an animal appeared on the road near Umri Bundawa village of Ghurpur police station area. While trying to avoid him, his bullet went out of control and hit the divider. Sarthak died in the accident. Sarthak was cremated at Rasulabad Ghat. During this, Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani, Congress and SP leaders and a large number of journalists, business leaders, players, trainers and officials were present. City West Traders Federation President Akhilesh Singh and General Secretary Dhananjay Singh have expressed grief over the demise of journalist's son Sarthak. He held a condolence meeting at the office where tributes were paid to the departed soul.

## POCO's MRP Campaign Delivers Unbeatable Smartphone

Varanasi: POCO India, the fastest growing consumer technology brand, is all set to light up the Flipkart Big Billion Days with its exciting MRP campaign. Bringing a twist to the conventional 'MRP', POCO has launched its own 'Mad Retail Price'. This innovative initiative redefines the concept of retail pricing by offering customers mad deals that make premium technology remarkably affordable.

# TURF WAR PLAGUES PRAYAGRAJ SCHOOL

Prayagraj: Boys High School and College (BHS), one of Allahabad's oldest and most prominent educational institutions, boasts of producing luminaries such as former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Supreme Court Judge Markandey Katju, and actor Amitabh Bachchan is caught in a fierce tug of war. On one side is Bishop Morris Edgar Dan of the Lucknow Diocese, and on the other is Principal DA Luke, who doubts the Dan's locus standi in school operations. Tension had been building up after Morris recently took over as Bishop. Principal DA Luke is adamant that Morris Edgar Dan had nothing to do with BHS and was attempting to preserve an institution to which he had dedicated valuable three decades of his life. "The Bishop was out to destabilise me by creating rumours. This has created a lot of confusion among the community members too, but I will not allow anyone to damage the nearly 200-year-old institution, he said.

Boys High School Principal David Andrew Luke (DA Luke), son of late R.A. Luke, has shot off a letter to the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to clear false allegations against him in case involving his alleged M.A. Marksheet Roll No. 361222/2007 and to cancel a fraudulent complaint filed by Morris Edgar Dan at Police Station Civil Lines, Prayagraj.

In his letter to the chief minister, he claimed that Morris Edgar Dan prepared

marksheet Roll No. 361222/2007 of M.A. Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj, University of Kanpur, in the applicant's name, and that the University of Kanpur falsely certified that this marksheet was not of David Andrew Luke's. Dan appointed himself Chairman using a falsified letter in collusion with the Assistant Registrar, resulting in the High Court staying Writ Petition No. 12640/2024.

In addition to this, the applicant presented the First Information Report of the movement of Rs 3 crore 84 lakh at the Civil Lines police station, whose crime number is 315/2023, and the applicant's protest application is now being considered by the CJM court. Because of the aforesaid presentation, Morris Edgar Dan prepared a forged marksheet, which was fraudulently authenticated, and an application was made to write a fake initial information report, which was published in the press after distorting all of the records. In this respect, the petitioner provided an oral statement to Inspector in Charge, Civil Lines, and Outpost Incharge Deepak Kumar.

The aforementioned marksheet, submitted by Morris Edgar Dan and bearing IGRS No.-40017524041487, does not belong to the applicant, nor is he linked to it. The applicant did not obtain an M.A. from Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kanpur in 2007. The aforementioned mark sheet was falsely fabricated by Morris Edgar Dan with the goal

of taking over the school and ruining the applicant's reputation. David Andrew Luke, son of late R.A. Luke, filed a first information report with the Civil Lines police station against Morris Edgar Dan for defrauding and destroying the applicant's reputation.

He has urged that the Chief Minister to direct the Police Commissioner Prayagraj and the Inspector in Charge of Civil Lines to file the applicant's first information report.

He stated that the M.A. marksheet questioned by Morris Edgar Dan, roll number 361222, year 2007, is not



his, and he has nothing to do with it. Morris Edgar Dan and his gang produced the marksheet to ruin the reputation of the BHS principal. In this regard, he has requested the Chief Minister and Director General of Police to file a First Information Report on the creation of fake mark sheets.

Morris Edgar Dan and his team withdrew Rs. 3,84,00,000 from Axis Bank, which was the amount returned to the school by income tax department. In the aforementioned instance, Dan went to jail and was released after reaching a compromise, but did not refund Rs. 3,84,00,000. Against this, Luke filed a

case crime number 315/2023 at Police Station Civil Line Prayagraj, as well as a case in court, which is still pending. In order to avoid having to repay the abovementioned money, Dan scanned marksheet fraudulently. And incorrectly copied appointment letter forms, among other things, are ruining the institution's almost 200-year-old reputation.

The school's administration system is still a question. Since 2015, the Bishop of the Church of North India has not been the lawful chairman, and Morris Edgar Dan has illegally declared



himself chairman, whose writ suit No. 12640/2024 has been stayed by an order. He is not the school's chairman or involved in any way. The appointment of Morris Edgar Dan is also being opposed by Bishop John Augustine who is still legally the Chairman of Allahabad High School Society.

Morris Edgar Dan is embezzling crores of rupees not only from BHS but also from other schools through fraudulent invoices. No principal can resist them out of fear of losing their job. Luke has filed an application with the Chief Minister to stop the use of fraudulent mark sheets

when filing the First Information Report. As a result, it is recommended that the previously published news be modified in order to present the actual facts to society.

The so-called Bishop Morris Edgar Dan filed a bogus case against the applicant based on forgeries. In this regard, a dispute over the school's management, approximately a dozen petitions are pending before the High Court, preventing the so-called Bishop from declaring himself as Chairman of the school, and the applicant has previously filed fraud charges against him. A complaint of eviction was launched, and since 2015, the so-called former Bishop has been attempting to designate himself Chairman of the school/institution (The Allahabad High School Society) using falsified documents and no legal authority.

Even before this, the so-called Bishop and his gang filed numerous false complaints against the applicant based on forged documents, prompting the Registrar Firm Societies and Chits Prayagraj and Minority Commission to issue a show cause notice to the applicant, which was postponed by the High Court's order. When the aforementioned individuals were unable to take action against the applicant, they created a counterfeit application form as well as a phony appointment letter and mark sheet for the applicant, which had previously been created by the so-called Bishop Morris Edgar Dan and his gang. The afore-

mentioned individuals made the false appointment. Just glancing at the letter, it looks to be forged.

The people in question want to take over the school by whatever means necessary, which is why they fabricated this bogus assertion. These persons filed this complaint only with the goal of exerting pressure on the applicant and taking over the school, which is utterly untrue and deceptive, and is based on fake documents created by the aforementioned people. The applicant's appointment and all educational certifications are real and proper, as have been done many times in the past by senior authorities affiliated with the education department. They have complete authority to perform the inquiry and determined that all of the applicant's educational certifications are accurate and correct.

As a result, the applicant's appointment letters from Bishop Morris Edgar Dan and his gang are absolutely false. It is very required in the interest of justice to record the applicant's statement in response to the complaint and to file a case against the aforementioned individuals for submitting fake paperwork.

"The community members, meanwhile, are embarrassed by the ongoing mudslinging. This is unfortunate. In the interest of the institution and the community, the dispute should be resolved as soon as possible," said principal of another school on the condition of anonymity.

## BJP's leadership is for development of all: Narendra Kashyap

Yogi govt making UP the best state: Rakesh Sachan

Prayagraj: Under the leadership of Yogi and Modi, an amount of Rs 2475 crore was sanctioned for the payment of fees of 26 lakh boys and girls of backward society. An amount of Rs. 200 crores was approved for marriage grant. With an amount of Rs. 35 crores, an effort was made to connect the students with employment by giving them O-label education. With an amount of Rs. 103 crores, hostel facilities were made available to the students. 55 percent backward. Various government schemes have been implemented for the welfare of the society. The government is running various schemes to uplift the lives of 41 lakh disabled people. Under the leadership of Yogi ji, 25 lakh investors from 47 countries cooperated in strengthening the economy of Uttar Pradesh. Today, the state has the highest number of expressways. Worked to benefit from schemes like Prime Minister Samman Nidhi, Ujjwala Yojana, Prime Minister Housing Scheme, electricity system, roads etc. There were 700 riots in the previous government, today un-

der the leadership of Yogi ji there was no riot. Today people are living in a fear-free environment. The leadership of BJP is determined for the development and upliftment of every section of the society. Narendra Kashyap, Minister of State for Independent Charge, said the above things in his address as the chief guest at the Pichda



Morcha conference organized by Bharatiya Janata Party Gangapur Prayagraj at RD Singh College, Mahua Sahso. Before the Samvadhan, he visited the exhibition set up in the program and provided fruits to pregnant women, food grains to newborn babies and tricycles to disabled children.

From the point of view of Phulpur Assembly by-election, Minister in-charge Rakesh Sachan, Cabinet Minister of Uttar Pradesh Government said that under the leadership of BJP, every

class is respected, Yogi government is working towards creating a fear-free, mafia-free environment, making Uttar Pradesh the best state. Working towards making it. District President Backward Class Morcha Vijay Patel conducted the conference. MP Phulpur Praveen Patel, Legislative Council Member Surendra Chaudhary, former

MP Keshari Devi Patel, Regional Vice President and Phulpur Chairman Amarnath Yadav, District President Mrs. Kavita Patel, District Spokesperson Rajesh Kesarwani, Regional President Backward Class Front

Ashwini Patel, media in-charge Brijesh Kumar Tripathi, former MLA Prabhashankar Pandey, MLA Phaphamau Guru Prasad Maurya, assembly in-charge Suresh Dwivedi, Phulpur block chief Vipendra Patel, Arunendra Yadav, Rakesh Singh, former district president Amarnath Tiwari, outgoing district president Ashwini Kumar Dwivedi, Jayaprakash Dwivedi, Suresh Tiwari, Anirudh Singh Patel, Ram Palat Patel, Kamlesh Mishra etc.

## Review meet held for safe and hassle-free Maha Kumbh Mela

Prayagraj: In view of the safe and hassle-free organization of Mahakumbh Mela-2024-25, a strong and systematic action plan should be developed for crowd control, traffic and movement and police force allocation/arrangement in the Mahakumbh Mela area, soft skill training, fair. A review meeting was held on 20-09-2024 in Triveni Auditorium, Reserve Police Lines Prayagraj regarding preliminary security arrangements in the area and "Initial and External Movement Initial Security Plan" of railway stations. In which:- 1- Regarding the traffic plan of Jhansi and Naini

Side Ring Road, implementation of no-vehicle zone in the fair and city area during the normal days of the fair, action plan of shuttle bus movement, e-rickshaw movement plan. 2- Regarding allocation/arrangement of police force for Maha Kumbh Mela, GRP Prayagraj. 3- Topics of indoor and outdoor training were identified in which I- Indoor training - General introduction of Kumbh Mela, traffic plan, pontoon bridge plan, water traffic plan, fire fighting, Planning, CCTV surveillance, radio communication, disaster management, crowd control/management, crime and cyber crime control. II- Outdoor Training- Topics like visiting major routes of Kumbh Mela area, diversion points, bathing ghats, PT, Yoga etc. will be included. Regarding innovation, law enforcement studies and fair management research, study and application by IIT Kanpur.

4- Regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Incident Reporting, Wrong side movement, Automatic Vehicle Number Plate Recognition, Parking Management, Traffic Management. 5- Regarding

the internal and external movement security plan of the railway junction/stations of Prayagraj. 6- Preliminary security plan and contingency scheme for Maha Kumbh Mela/Commissionerate Prayagraj area and SOP 7 regarding relief and rescue work at the time of any disaster (Fire/Stampede/Terrorist Attack) - Equipment for water police, radio police, fire fighting and traffic police. Regarding the status of supply. 8- Regarding verification of holding area, status of marking of parking area, separate routes for the arrival and return of devotees and taking them to pre-determined



holding area in case of increase in crowd. Reviewed. In the review seminar, Additional Director General of Police Prayagraj Zone, Commissioner of Police Prayagraj, Inspector General of Police Prayagraj Zone, Additional Commissioner of Police Prayagraj, Senior Superintendent of Police Fair, Superintendent of Police Railway, Deputy Commissioner of Police Crime (Assistant Nodal Officer Kumbh Mela), Deputy Commissioner of Police Yamunanagar/City/Traffic./Headquarters, Additional Police Deputy Commissioner Traffic, Additional State Radio Prayagraj, Chief Fire Officer Prayagraj and other police officers participated.

## Letter submitted to ex-MP for justice to farmers suffering from corruption and bribery of lekhpal

Prayagraj: The aggrieved farmers, troubled by the corruption, bribery and brokerage of the accountants, under the leadership of State Advisor Rahul Zamindar, together gave a memorandum to former Rajya Sabha MP Revati Raman Singh and Revati Raman Singh immediately talked to the higher officials and criticized the attitude of the accountants. Appealed for reforms and Prayagraj MP Kunwar Ujjwal Raman Singh ji took cognizance of the matter and made it clear that the farmers of Prayagraj should not consider themselves alone. Prayagraj MP Ujjwal



Raman is with you at every step and you are with the farmers in the movement against accountants. In this series, Divisional President Prayagraj Bablu Dubey met the Divisional Commissioner Prayagraj and handed over a memorandum of the problems of Pratappur district to the Divisional Commissioner Prayagraj. In this series, District President Prayagraj Shani Shukla ji welcomed the newly appointed District Officer Prayagraj Ravindra Kumar Martand. Presented clothes and informed about corruption of accountants.



## Editorial

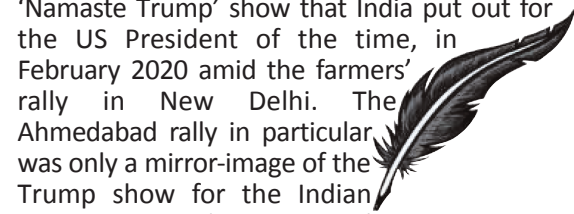
### France offers a welcome breather for India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with chief guest French President Emmanuel Macron during the 75th Republic Day parade, at the Kartavya Path, PTI Between them, US President Joe Biden and rival Republican Party's Nikki Haley seem bent on pushing India closer to France for a balanced relationship in the western world that has all the ingredients of strategic stability, both in the bilateral and multilateral contexts. That is if one were to leave out India's Russia relations, which many believed were rocky but became sort of rock steady all over again owing to the Ukraine War, where the long American arm was seen all over the place.

Yes, Nikki Haley, 51, is not even Biden's likely rival in the US presidential polls in November. She did not mean to question, challenge or rebuke India, either. Instead, by claiming that India was moving closer to Russia than the US, implying that the Biden presidency did not inspire confidence not only in New Delhi, but also in Tokyo and Seoul, Canberra and Wellington, Halley was only targeting the incumbent back home. But her choice of India, and not any of America's NATO allies, for example and her choice of words, gave the impression that she was trying to convince a certain section of Republican voters that she was all American, and not Indian. It has to be front-runner and former president Donald Trump. Halley is trailing the Republican primaries and polled lower than their kind of NOTA in Nevada, but that does not make sure that Trump's name will be on the ballot. Indications are that at some point, either the Republican Party bosses or American courts could make it embarrassing for Trump's name to be on the ballot. Halley seems hoping for that day and is persisting in the primaries precisely for this reason. Maybe, like a typical Indian-origin woman that she is, Halley is hoping for 'sympathy votes' or 'survivor's votes', first in the primaries and later in the presidential poll. Of course, there is a long way to go this time than any time in the past.

#### Disappointment for India

Biden kept India waiting and eventually turned down the invitation to be the chief guest at the annual Republic Day celebrations. Information about India's invitation having spread after a time (generally it is kept secret until accepted — which again used to be a formality), Biden's avoidably delayed rejection was a disappointment for India. It is not known how the Indian-American supporters of Biden and the Democratic Party feel about it. Not-so-official news sources claimed that Biden's decision owed to the election year commitments on campaigns and other essentials. In his place, another Democratic president, Barack Obama, took a short break from his so-called pressing engagements back home to be present in Mumbai first and Delhi next, where he was the chief guest at the 2015 Republic Day. Of course, in true American form and style, it was not a visit confined to honouring contemporary India's tryst with destiny. Obama did hard-selling business in an election year and took back orders for Boeing, which he said would ensure 20,000 Americans did not lose their jobs. Biden was constrained by domestic perceptions, both inside the Democratic Party and outside. Maybe, Team Modi too thought that having Biden would be a high-profile commencement to the ruling BJP-NDA's campaign for the Lok Sabha polls in the summer. To an extent, it compares with the 'Namaste Trump' show that India put out for the US President of the time, in February 2020 amid the farmers' rally in New Delhi. The Ahmedabad rally in particular was only a mirror-image of the Trump show for the Indian prime minister, 'Howdy Modi' in Houston months earlier in Houston, Texas.



### Haldwani to Bareilly, seven decades of pseudo secularism has come home to roost

Haldwani, a small but bustling town in Uttarakhand, is the gateway to the Himalayas and ascent to tourist spots like Nainital and Bhimtal. Today, it is a far more dramatic dot on Bharat's map. On February 9, the town with an 18.55 percent Muslim population erupted with violence which left two dead and 250 injured. Islamist mobs attacked a demolition squad with accompanying cops and mediapersons when it went to demolish an illegally built mosque and madrassa. The mob hurled petrol bombs and stones, nearly set policemen on fire, and used women and chil-

dren as human shields.

#### Uniform Civil Code Bill tabled in Uttarakhand Assembly: How was the draft prepared?

Drone shots later revealed that the violence was unprovoked and planned. Images showed heaps of stones stored on rooftops. The very next day, 100 km away in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly, another Islamist mob attacked the police with stones after Muslim cleric Tauqueer Raza was detained for giving a 'jail bhara' over the Gyanvapi mosque issue. Raza did not forget to mention the Haldwani mosque demolition as ghee on fire. Earlier in the week, a mob

surrounded a police station in Madhya Pradesh's Damoh after a dispute between a tailor, his customer, and a cleric who intervened. A man in the crowd, Akram Khan, took a loudspeaker and threatened violence. The Left-Islamist ecosystem has been shaken by the Pran Prathista at the Ayodhya Ram Mandir.

The legal challenge to the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi, built after demolishing a part of Kashi Viswanath temple, has created further flutter. The mood of the nation after the Ram temple opening and a fast-crumbing Opposition alliance

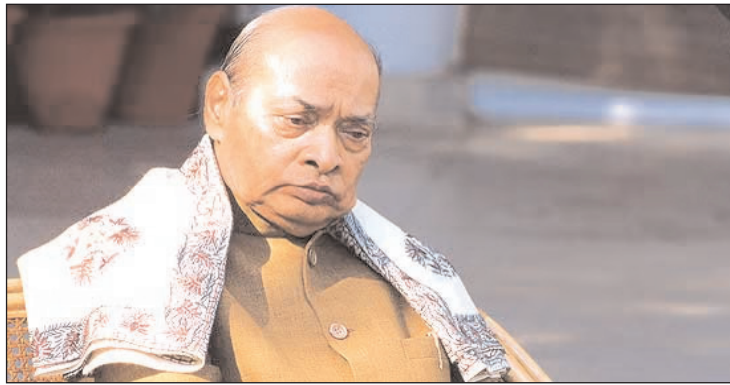
point to another election victory for Narendra Modi.

One takes to the streets, of course, and with wanton violence, tries to overturn court orders or people's verdict. For seven decades since Independence, a perverted secularism actively supported by political parties have signalled to Muslims that they should never peacefully coexist with the majority, must always be in victimhood mode, and heed the law of the land only if it suits them. The community has been told that its power lies in existing as an impoverished and irascible mass.

## Narasimha Rao was a Batman of Indian politics, Bharat urgently needed to acknowledge

Former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, in a true sense of the word, was a Batman of Indian politics. He became Prime Minister at a time when India's chips were badly down. In 1991, the country had to pledge its gold to pull the economy from the brink. He reoriented India's pro-Soviet Union foreign policy to bring it closer to the Western order. He reached out to Israel without leaving the Palestinian cause — an axis on which the Indian foreign policy still revolves around. And all this he delivered with a minority government. Still, Narasimha Rao remains largely forgotten and uncredited — Batman-like. Sanjaya Baru, in his book 1991: How PV Narasimha Rao Made History, emphasised at this phenomenon, with a tinge of sadness, when he recalled how "at an interaction with students at a university near Delhi, in the winter of 2015", he asked the audience "what the year 1991 meant to them". One student readily stood up to say he was born that year — and the entire audience burst into laughter. When Baru insisted on thinking more, there was silence.

PV Narasimha Rao, Charan Singh, MS Swaminathan: Why they deserve Bharat Ratna Later, the same year, Baru addressed "a meeting of the Hyderabad Management Association" and he repeated



the same question. Many were quick to reply this time: The government that year had "introduced new economic policies that opened up the Indian economy", Baru was told. And who was responsible for this? "Manmohan Singh," pat came the reply! Some even credited P Chidambaram and Kamal Nath! Later, in an interaction with this author, Baru expressed his surprise at the height of Indian ignorance: "No one mentioned PV Narasimha Rao. Ironically, this incident took place in Hyderabad, which was Rao's own city."

When I asked Baru why Rao had been forgotten, he cited two reasons. "One, he faced several corruption cases, especially towards the fag end of his rule. But most importantly, the Congress decided to erase the memory of Narasimha Rao, to make the point that no person from outside the family can ever be a successful PM. After all, what did Rao prove? He

proved that someone doesn't need to be related to the Nehru-Gandhi family to be a successful prime minister. By becoming the first PM outside the family to run the country for a full term, he effectively challenged this notion."

It's ironic to see the Congress disowning one of its own prime ministers, especially the one "whose impact on the nation's fortune went way beyond the economy", as Baru wrote in 1991. But then it was an obvious outcome for a non-Gandhi leader in the Congress. It had happened in the past with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and it took place after Narasimha Rao, as was the case with Pranab Mukherjee. Anyone seen to be eclipsing the halo of the Gandhi-Nehru family was systematically targeted to be pushed to the footnotes of the party's — and by extension, the nation's — history. This explains Sonia Gandhi's hostility for Rao, to the extent that the former Prime Minister was denied a well-

deserved memorial in Delhi, even when lesser worthies could find space in the national capital. Author Vinay Sitapati, in Half Lion: How PV Narasimha Rao Transformed India, gives a graphic detail on how the late Prime Minister was denied a rightful place and space in Delhi after his death. "The home minister, Shivraj Patil, suggested to Rao's youngest son, Prabhakara, that 'the body should be cremated in Hyderabad'. But the family preferred Delhi. After all, Rao had last been chief minister of Andhra Pradesh more than thirty years ago, and had since worked as Congress general secretary, Union minister, and finally prime minister — all in Delhi. On hearing this, the usually decorous Shivraj Patil snapped, 'No one will come,'" Sitapati writes. Thereafter, Ghulam Nabi Azad and YS Rajasekhara Reddy reached out to Rao's family — Reddy, being the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, promised a grand memorial for Rao in Hyderabad! Later in the day, prime minister Manmohan Singh entered the room and asked Prabhakara: "What do you want to do with the body?" To this, Rao's son replied, "These people say it should be in Hyderabad... This (Delhi) is his karmabhoomi. You should convince your Cabinet colleagues." Manmohan nodded. Sonia Gandhi was standing near, but

mostly kept quiet. When Sanjaya Baru arrived, Ahmed Patel sought his intervention. Baru's bureaucrat father knew Rao from the 1960s — and he was close to the family. "Sonia's political secretary tapped him on the shoulder. 'You know the family,' Patel said. 'The body should be taken to Hyderabad. Can you convince them?'" Sitapati quotes Prabhakara as saying, "We sensed even then that Sonia-ji did not want Father's funeral in Delhi. She did not want a memorial (in Delhi)... She did not want him (to be seen) as an all-India leader." The next morning, when Rao's body, draped in the national flag, was being taken to the airport, it was planned to stop at 24 Akbar Road, the Congress headquarters. "As the body approached 24 Akbar Road, located adjacent to Sonia Gandhi's residence, the funeral procession slowed. The entrance gate to the compound looked firmly shut. There were several senior Congressmen present, but hardly any cadres had been rustled up. No slogans filled the air, just deathly silence. The carriage stopped on the pavement outside, as Sonia Gandhi and others came out to pay their respects." "It was customary for the bodies of past Congress presidents to be taken inside the party headquarters so that ordinary workers could pay their respects.

### Why India's \$100 bn proposed trade deal with Europe is different

In the pursuit of economic growth, the Maldives seems to have missed a crucial lesson: relying solely on a handful of major players isn't a sustainable strategy. The key to sustainable growth lies in opening up to broader economic participation.

#### India is a case in point

India stands on the brink of sealing a significant trade deal that could have far-reaching implications. Negotiations with Europe are nearing completion, with the potential for India to attract a staggering \$100 billion in investment. This proposed agreement with Europe is noteworthy for several reasons. Unlike conventional trade deals focused on tariff reduction, India is poised to open up its markets in exchange for substantial

investment, a move that could inject significant capital into its economy over the next 15 years. The pact, unlike typical free trade agreements, comes with binding investment guarantees, a rare feature that could set a precedent for future trade negotiations. The investment is slated to originate from a special bloc of European nations known as the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), comprising Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. While negotiations involve this bloc rather than the entire European Union, the agreement could serve as a model for broader regional trade engagements.

The potential investments are earmarked for both new and existing manufacturing projects,

promising to create over a million jobs and bolster India's industrial landscape. Beyond the economic windfall, the deal offers additional perks for India, including enhanced visa provisions for Indian professionals seeking access to the EFTA countries. In return, the EFTA nations seek expanded market access for their goods in India, spanning processed foods, beverages, electrical machinery, engineering products, pharmaceuticals and medical devices. While the deal holds immense promise, its fruition has been a long time coming, with negotiations spanning back to 2008. However, recent reports indicate that key issues have been resolved, paving the way for a potential agreement, pending finalization.

### Anchored in Shivaji's spirit, India's naval operations get a desi touch in international waters

By carrying out back-to-back rescue operations in the past month, the Indian Navy has emerged as the bright spot in the otherwise unstable waters of the Red Sea. The Israel-Hamas war has not only thrown the Middle East into a flux but its effects are now also spilling over to South Asia and the wider expanse of the Indian Ocean Region. The worsening security concerns in the Red Sea due to constant attacks from the Yemen-based Houthis on cargo ships have further been exacerbated with Somali pirates also targeting the ships passing through this region. As the security situation in the Red Sea and also in the Arabian Sea has deteriorated, the Indian Navy has now emerged as the net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region. Indian Navy has always been exemplary in its duty and in particular, has always been proactive in benign causes like Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations. However, with the spill-over effects of the war in the Middle East threatening the security of the Indian Ocean Region, India is asserting its position as the resident power and as the primary stakeholder in the security architecture of the region. India's rescue



operations and in particular the role of the Indian Navy not only correspond to the existing global order. The current security concerns may have pronounced the role of the Indian Navy. But there is also a strong civilisational undertone to India's naval operations. This undertone could be considered from decolonisation and indigenisation perspectives.

The decolonisation narrative has been a major issue in the Indian political discourse for a long time. However, in the past few months, there has been a tangible and accelerated effort towards decolonisation and indigenisation across different spheres. Some important steps in this direction include the use of the name Bharat instead of India. This was the highlight when India hosted the G20 Summit in September 2023 as the placard in front of Prime Minister Narendra Modi displayed the name Bharat. Besides, three

criminal justice laws, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Suraksha Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya Act, recently passed by the Indian parliament also seek to replace the colonial-era Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act. The recent consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is projected as one of the most prominent steps towards decolonisation. Also, the scope of the decolonisation narrative has now expanded. For decades, only the 200-year British rule in India was earmarked as the colonial period in the collective memory of the Indian people. Now the 200-year period is being replaced by a period of about 1,000 years which includes the Islamic invasions in India. This indigenisation process which is becoming visible in the political, legal and cultural domains is gradually gaining emphasis in the security domain as well. Just as the decolonisation debate has been restricted to British rule, the same principle was evident in Indian strategic thought as well for a long time. As one of the relics of British rule, the continental mindset had remained a norm in Indian strategic thought for a long time.



## 2021 post-poll violence: 'Showing as if there is hostile environment in whole Bengal,' SC tells CBI

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Friday pulled up the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) seeking transfer of West Bengal post-poll violence cases on the ground that there is a "hostile environment" in the state courts. The top court rapped the central investigation agency's remark, saying not liking a particular state "does not allow them to cast aspersions on the entire state judiciary". "Mr Raju (additional solicitor general) what kind of grounds are taken in this? That all courts in West Bengal have hostile environment? Blanket averment that courts are illegally granting bail. This is casting aspersions that the entire judiciary is under hostile environment," Justice Abhay



Oka was quoted as saying by. Additional solicitor general SV Raju, representing the CBI, said the application was badly drafted and withdrew it. Several incidents of violence were reported at various places after the announcement of the assembly poll results on May 2, 2021. After the incident, the Union home ministry sought a detailed report from the Bengal government on the "post-election violence targeting opposition political workers in the state" that left 11

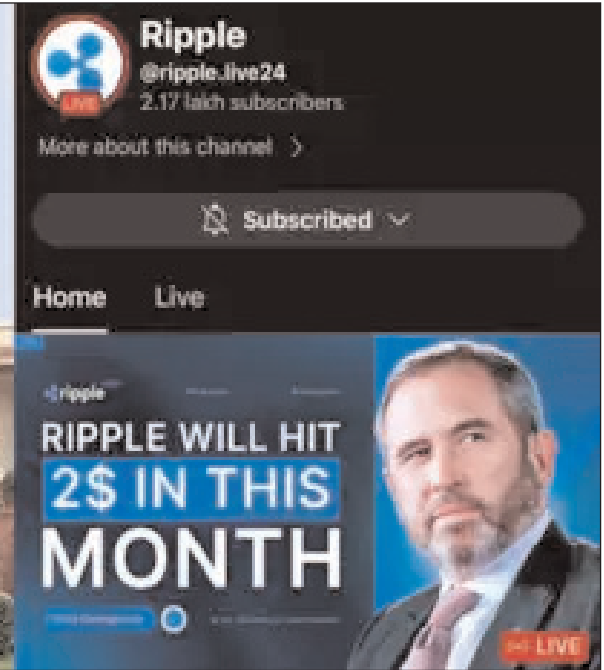
people dead by the evening of the result day. BJP reported six deaths in the alleged backlash, including of a party worker in Kolkata who was lynched soon after he posted videos on Facebook narrating how goons killed his pet dogs, and of an elderly woman in North 24-Parganas trying to save her son from a mob. Trinamool said it lost four workers in the wave of alleged political vendetta even as CM and party chief Mamata Banerjee appealed for peace.

## Supreme Court's YouTube channel hacked, streams videos promoting cryptocurrency

**NEW DELHI:** The official YouTube channel of the Supreme Court of India was hacked on Friday. The channel, which is typically used to live stream hearings of Constitution Bench cases and matters of public interest, is now showing videos promoting XRP, a cryptocurrency developed by the US-based company Ripple Labs. The incident came to light when a blank video titled "Brad Garlinghouse: Ripple Responds To The SEC's \$2 Billion Fine! XRP PRICE PREDICTION" went live on the channel. Brad Garlinghouse is the CEO of Ripple Labs, a company that has been in legal disputes with the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The hackers also seem to have made earlier videos of Supreme Court hearings private. This comes as the SC was scheduled to hear several crucial cases including a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) that seeks a fixed time limit for the



Centre to notify the appointment of judges recommended by the SC Collegium. Another important case on the docket is SpiceJet's plea against a Delhi high court verdict grounding three of its aircraft engines due to payment defaults. Additionally, the Court was set



to hear a plea from the Muslim side contesting an Allahabad high court order, which rejected their challenge on the maintainability of cases filed by Hindu parties related to the Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah dispute. Recently, Supreme Court also live streamed hearing in the

sensitive RG Kar hospital and college rape and murder case. SC started live streaming proceedings of all constitution bench hearings following a path-breaking verdict on the matter in 2018 in a unanimous decision taken by a full court meeting headed by then CJ UU Lalit.

## Fire those responsible: Anna Sebastian Perayil's parents to EY officials after daughter's tragic death

**KOCHI:** The officials of Ernst and Young (EY) visited the home of late Anna Sebastian Perayil in Kangarapady, Kochi. In the meeting held on Wednesday, Sebastian's parents made an appeal to the company to terminate the employees who were

responsible for their daughter's untimely demise. Sibi Joseph, Sebastian's father, said, "Four EY officials had come here, and we reiterated our concerns to them." According to Joseph, the letter penned by his wife was sent as a personal email to the

head of EY India immediately after their daughter's passing. He said neither he nor any other family member had disclosed the letter's content to the public. "The letter was leaked from EY's Pune office, which means there are many people similarly

suffering in the company who want the letter to be out in public," Joseph remarked. Joseph clarified that the letter's purpose was to raise awareness among the company's top executives to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

### Core sector growth drops to 6.3% in May

**In May,** the eight key industries grew 6.3% year-on-year, down from 6.7% in April, mostly due to weaker steel, refinery products, and crude oil output, the commerce ministry. Core sector growth was 5.2% in May 2023. As a sequential measure, core sector output grew 3.7% in May. May output usually rises from April. In the preceding 12 years, the month-on-month growth averaged 6.8%, but this year it was lower. "A combination of factors, including the heat-wave over parts of the country and the phased parliamentary elections.

### Smt Smriti Irani Launches 24/7 Violence Helpline for Women

**Divya Delhi:** Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, Former Union Minister for Women and Child Development, inaugurated the National Commission for Women's 24/7 helpline number 7827170170 today to improve women's safety and advance the Union Government's goals. The helpline supports women afflicted by vio-

lence 24/7 online by referring them to police, hospitals, District Legal Service Authority, psychological treatments, etc. Smt. Irani praised the NCW and the new helpline at a virtual launch. In times of need, this digital helpline assures women that their government and Commission would support them.

### Jharkhand moves contempt plea against Centre in SC for delay in appointing CJ

**NEW DELHI:** In a first, Jharkhand government has moved Supreme Court seeking contempt of court action against the Centre for its "deliberate and wilful" delay in implementing the SC collegium's July 11 resolution recommending appointment of Justice M S Ramachandra Rao as chief justice of the state, reported. In its petition, the Hemant Soren govt

said the state was without a chief justice for two months, since the retirement of Justice B R Sarangi on July 19. It said the SC's five-member collegium led by CJ D Y Chandrachud, anticipating the vacancy, had recommended to the Centre to transfer the Himachal Pradesh HC CJ to Jharkhand HC as its CJ. Can't pick & choose It said despite the pas-

sage of more than two months, the Union govt was deliberately sitting over the SC collegium's recommendation, a situation that displayed the Centre's complete disregard for the highest court's decisions. Jharkhand govt said Centre's deliberate inaction on the collegium resolution was also in violation of Article 216 of the Constitution.

## '3 lakh laddus daily, Rs 500 crore revenue annually': Tirupati's sacred sweet takes a sour turn after ghee adulteration charges

**NEW DELHI:** The 'laddu prasadam' offered at the sacred shrine of Lord Venkateswara in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, renowned for its unique taste, is cherished by devotees across India and beyond. These iconic laddus are meticulously prepared in the temple's kitchen, known as the 'Potu.'



**Distribution** Making of Tirupati laddus The preparation process, called 'dittam', dictates the specific ingredients and their quantities. The recipe has only been altered six times in its history. According to a 2016 TTD report, the laddus have a divine fragrance. Initially, the boondi made from besan and jaggery syrup was created to increase the

prasadam's shelf life. Later, almonds, cashews, and raisins were added to enhance both flavor and nutritional value. **'3 Lakh laddus, Rs 500 crore sales'** Each day, TTD prepares and distributes around 3 lakh laddus at Tirumala, earning approximately Rs 500 crore annually from laddu sales. Each day, TTD prepares and distributes around 3 lakh laddus at Tirumala **History** The offering of Tirupati laddus dates back over 300 years, starting in

1715. In 2014, the Tirupati laddu received GI status, preventing anyone else from selling laddus under that name. **Quality control** A state-of-the-art food testing laboratory ensures the quality of each batch of laddus, which must contain precise amounts of cashew, sugar, and cardamom, and weigh exactly 175 grams. TTD was paying Rs 320 per kg for ghee from the blacklisted contractor, but now procures it at Rs 475 per kg from Karnataka.

## Gurgaon horror: SUV on wrong side kills biker on Golf Course Road, tragic crash caught on camera

**GURGAON:** A 23-year-old man died after his bike had a head-on collision with an SUV being driven on the wrong side on Golf Course Road in DLF 2 early on Sunday morning. The SUV driver was detained and later released on bail. Police said biker Akshat Garg was from Pochanpur in Dwarka. The SUV driver, Kuldeep Kumar Thakur (25), is a resident of Ghitorni and the co-founder of a PR company. According to police, Garg and his friend Pradyuman Kumar (22) left Dwarka early on Sunday morning for a ride on separate bikes. The duo first went to DLF Downtown, following which they planned to meet a group of riders at Ambience Mall. Kumar said Garg had taken all precautions and was wearing a helmet and other safety gear. Kumar was following him on another motorcycle on Golf Course Road when the accident happened near Belvedere Towers around 5.25am. A Mahindra XUV 300 car, driven by Thakur, suddenly appeared and Garg's bike collided head-on with it, Kumar said. Thakur was driving the car in the wrong direction on the one-way lane, he added. "I was around 100ft behind Garg and witnessed the accident. I rushed to him. While some passersby caught hold of the SUV driver, others called up the police and an ambulance. I was with Akshat trying to remove his helmet and waiting for the ambulance. But by the time it arrived, he had stopped breathing," Kumar said. Kumar alleged that Thakur was driving on the wrong side of the road at a high speed, leading to the death of his friend. "The SUV also had a sticker of a BJP candidate. Police didn't accept footage of the accident recorded by my GoPro camera, which I had installed on my helmet as evidence.

## 'Stripped, tied my legs, threw me into room': Army captain's fiancée shares 'torture' story

**BHUBANESWAR:** An Army officer's fiancée who was allegedly tortured by cops at Bhubaneswar's Bharatpur police station on Sept 15, recounted her horrifying ordeal after being released from jail. The 32-year-old restaurateur-cum-lawyer broke down and alleged that the inspector-in-charge (IIC) Dinakrushna Mishra and four other personnel, who were suspended



ed on Wednesday, stripped her and kicked her. "The IIC's barbarism crossed all limits. He made inappropriate gestures at me," said the victim, who was arrested by police on charges of attacking a

lady police officer. The five policemen have denied all charges and are now facing a probe by the crime branch. The victim said police framed her in the false case and arrested her to save their own skin.

The Orissa high court granted her bail on Wednesday. According to the woman, she and her fiancé were returning home after shutting her restaurant late at night on Sept 15 when they were waylaid and assaulted by hooligans. Woman seeks arrest of IIC, other cops They immediately went to Bharatpur police station to file a complaint, but instead of receiving help, they were treated like criminals.

## When 'future stars' Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli scored 'identical' hundreds against Australia in 2008

**NEW DELHI:** Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, two of India's greatest modern-day cricketers, began their international careers around the same time, and both had humble beginnings before rising to global stardom. Their early career journey together is marked by a mixture of learning, growth, and moments of brilliance. Rohit made his ODI debut in June 2007, just

before the inaugural T20 World Cup in South Africa. He gained attention during that T20 World Cup when he played a crucial knock of 50\* against South Africa in a group match and was part of India's title-winning squad. However, despite early promise, Rohit struggled with consistency in his initial years, often batting in the middle order. Virat made his debut a year later in

2008 after leading India to a U-19 World Cup victory earlier that year. He initially came into the team as a replacement for senior players and showed glimpses of his talent but, like Rohit, took time to establish himself. Kohli's first few years saw him used mostly in the middle order, and his performances were up and down as he adapted to international cricket. The Australian cricket

team toured India in 2008 for the Border Gavaskar Trophy. India won the series 2-0, their biggest margin of victory over Australia in a Test series at the time. The series marked the retirement of Anil Kumble, one of India's greatest bowlers and captain during the first three Tests. It also witnessed the farewell of Sourav Ganguly.



## How first Indian astronaut in 40 years is prepping for space

In the spring of 2025, Indian astronaut group captain Shubhanshu Shukla is set to make history as the pilot of the Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission that will mark India's first human presence on the International Space Station (ISS). The landmark mission, scheduled for launch from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, US, will be India's second government-sponsored human spaceflight in over four decades - Wing Commander (ret'd) Rakesh Sharma had gone to space as part of a Soviet mission in 1984. The Axiom-4 mission is a result of a bilateral initiative between India and US. More than a year ago, PM Narendra Modi, during an official state visit to US, had announced that an Indian astronaut will travel to ISS. Subsequently, Isro signed a space flight agreement with Axiom Space, an American human spaceflight services



provider and infrastructure developer. Shukla and his backup - fellow Indian astronaut, group captain Prashanth Nair - are both IAF test pilots and have joined an international crew for this mission. Its commander Peggy Whitson shared exclusive details about Shukla's role, the mission and more with an email. "As the Ax-4 pilot, Shukla will assist me in conducting essential spacecraft operations, such as navigation and docking procedures," Whitson said. "Training will prepare him to handle emergencies and perform critical system checks. Additionally, Shukla will support scientific research by setting up and managing micro-

gravity experiments. This role involves extensive training in both the technical and operational aspects of spacecraft, ensuring he is well-prepared to contribute to the mission's goals and overall success." In a recent Instagram live programme, Isro chairman S Somanath said that the Indian astronaut will conduct five experiments on ISS as part of the mission. The mission will also help India prepare for its Gaganyaan programme - Isro's first crewed mission - by providing valuable experience in space-flight operations and international cooperation. Whitson added that Axiom Space has developed thorough training programmes for astronauts.

## Mamata blames ally Soren for flooding, closes border

**KOLKATA/BURDWAN/R ANCHI:** Bengal's battle with floods triggered a face-off with Jharkhand Thursday after CM Mamata Banerjee ordered the sealing of the inter-state border, accusing Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) of swamping 11 south Bengal districts with 5 lakh cusecs of water in three days despite her appeals to the PSU and counterpart and INDIA bloc ally Hemant Soren. Mamata declared her government was "severing all ties" with DVC, which operates in both states, for "flooding Bengal to save Jharkhand". "It's a hasty and unreasonable move by Bengal," JMM general secretary Supriyo Bhattacharya said. "We will block all goods trucks carrying foodgrain and other commodities to Bengal. Water levels in Jharkhand's reservoirs were nearing the danger mark due to heavy rain. In any case, an inter-state committee monitors release of water from overflowing dams." "It is as per norms" DVC biased towards Jharkhand, claims



Mamata Banerjee While Mamata said the border was being closed to pre-empt cars being swept away by surging floodwaters on this side of the border, Soren-led JMM threatened retaliation over Bengal Police barring trucks and other commercial vehicles from Jharkhand beyond Dhanbad-West Burdwan border in Kulti. "I called DVC chairperson (S Suresh Kumar) and spoke to Jharkhand CM Soren, urging them not to release water... This cannot be allowed," the CM said, pointing out that 26 people had died in the floods and 2.5 lakh people displaced. Mamata alleged that DVC hadn't been providing details of how much water was being released from dams in the neighbouring state. Senior officials in several of Bengal's westernmost

districts said police checkpoints had been set up along the border with Jharkhand and all inbound vehicles were being stopped, barring any emergency. Mamata, who visited East Midnapore's Panskura and Howrah's Udaynara on Thursday to survey the flood damage, later held an emergency meeting at the state secretariat with chief secretary Manoj Pant, DGP Rajeev Kumar and other senior officers. "Even Durga Puja pandals are under water," the CM said. "Why should Bengal always suffer? Why will DVC always try to keep Jharkhand safe? I need to protect Bengal," she said. "This flooding is not because of rain. It is because of the absence of any desilting or dredging despite my appeals to PM Narendra Modi."

## CAPSULES

### Is a state law hiking levy binding on central govt?

**NEW DELHI:** States will keenly watch the tussle between Punjab and Centre in Supreme Court at the core of which is a larger question - whether a state legislation increasing the fees charged for the process of foodgrains procurement for central PDS schemes would be binding on Union government. Punjab had increased the levy to 6% of MSP of the total foodgrains procured from the state but Centre agreed to reimburse only 2% levy, uniformly applicable to all states, towards procurement process cost. This state levy, reimbursed by Centre to states, is over and above the cost of foodgrains it pays to states. These foodgrains are distributed free or at subsidised prices to weaker and vulnerable sections of society under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Antyodaya and targeted Public Distribution System. Raising a Centre-state dispute under Article 131 of the Constitution on the Centre's refusal to reimburse 6% levy mandated under state laws, Punjab has taken a stand that "the state holds exclusive power to determine the statutory charges to be levied on procurement of foodgrains on Centre's behalf". Centre refuted the assertion and said, "There is no legal right under any parliamentary law which requires Centre to consider, or act upon such determination of levy by a state... As per the MOU entered by the states and Centre, Union govt is entitled to determine the rates concerning procurement of foodgrains for distribution under central schemes." Punjab govt said it was utilising the two levies of 3% each - market fee and rural development fee - solely for the purpose of rural infrastructure such as improving approach roads, clean drinking water and maintenance of storage facilities, and for promotion of agricultural produce.

## 'Hope we will not have to ... ': AAP demands government accommodation for Arvind Kejriwal

**NEW DELHI:** Aam Aadmi Party on Friday urged the central government to provide official accommodation for Arvind Kejriwal following his resignation as the chief minister of Delhi.

Kejriwal, who stepped down on Tuesday, will no longer hold any government facilities, a move that prompted his party to appeal for his continued housing in the capacity of the AAP National Convener. "AAP demands government accommodation for Arvind Kejriwal as convener of national party. Will write to Centre to grant Kejriwal accommodation, hope we will not have to



fight legal battle for this." AAP MP Raghav Chadha said. Kejriwal's decision to give up all government privileges, including security and his official residence,

was made public shortly after his resignation.

The former chief minister has said that he would vacate his government residence within 15 days and

has expressed his desire to live like a "common man." "Even when Kejriwal first became the chief minister in 2013, he used to travel in an old blue Wagon R, a symbol of his commitment to simplicity," said AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, referring to his decision to give up privileges. Kejriwal stepped down as chief minister on Tuesday, and Atishi subsequently staked her claim to form a new government in the capital. Atishi will become Delhi's third woman chief minister, following Congress' Sheila Dikshit and BJP's Sushma Swaraj.

## 72 in top 100 & all in top 10 AIR pick IIT Bombay

**MUMBAI:** Newcomers to the elite technological club of the country seem to have made a clear choice: 72 of the top 100 JEE (Advanced) rankers have selected the IIT Bombay campus. Another 23 chose IIT Delhi, and two picked IIT Madras. The clamour for computer science at IIT-B among the cream of the lot went up a notch to touch a perfect 10 - all the top 10 all-India rankers in JEE are joining the Powai campus. Twenty-four of the first 25 and 47 of the top 50

followed suit and picked the college over other technology schools at the close of admissions for the 2024-28 batch. Each year, the demand for quality engineering education throws up a disproportionate number of applicants at the computer science department of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay. A look at the admission forms filled by those who qualified in the JEE (Advanced) 2024 shows that one of two put down computer science at IIT-B as one of their

top choices. Data shared by the Indian Institute of Technology Madras shows that of the top 500, 179 chose IIT-B, followed by 109 choosing IIT Delhi, and 69 picking IIT Madras. Last year, 67 of the top 100 got a seat in IIT-B, though computer science at IIT-B was the first choice of 93 of the top 100 rankers. Classes for freshmen have started at the IITs. "I am proud that IIT Bombay remains the preferred destination for most of the top rankers in the JEE (Advanced) examination.

## India extends \$50 million budgetary aid to Maldives for another

**NEW DELHI:** India has extended budgetary support to the Maldives by rolling over a \$50 million Treasury Bill for another year at the Maldivian government's request. The Indian high commission in the Maldives announced this extension on Thursday, facilitated by the State Bank of India (SBI). The SBI has subscribed to the \$50 million government Treasury Bills (T-bills) issued by the Maldives' Ministry of Finance for an additional year, following the maturity of the previous subscription on September 19. This marks the second such rollover by the Indian government this year, with the first occurring in May. The Indian high commission said, "Earlier in May 2024, SBI had similarly subscribed a \$50 mn T-bills under same mechanism, again on the request of the

Government of Maldives. These subscriptions have been made at the special request of the Government of Maldives as emergency financial assistance." The Indian high commission emphasized the significance of the Maldives in India's regional policy, noting, "Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour and an important partner under India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and Vision SAGAR i.e. Security and Growth for All in the Region." India has also extended a special quota for the export of essential commodities to the Maldives for another year. The High Commission said, this "reflects India's continued support to the Government and the people of the Maldives." Maldives' former foreign minister Abdulla Shahid welcomed India's support,

calling India a "time-tested friend" and "unwavering ally." He stated, "Delighted to hear that India has subscribed the \$50 million T-Bills issued by the Government of Maldives for one more year, as emergency financial assistance. India continues to prove time and time again, that it is a time tested friend, and an unwavering ally, despite this government's mismanagement of the economy and its questionable foreign policy.

I thank India for its special consideration extended towards the people of Maldives." Relations between India and the Maldives faced challenges after President Mohamed Muizzu took office, particularly following his demand for the removal of Indian military personnel from the Maldives. This led to a diplomatic row in January.

## FATF report warns 'Left-wing groups seeking to overthrow Indian govt'

**NEW DELHI:** The left-wing extremist groups seeking to overthrow the Indian government, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) warned on Thursday and added that the most significant terrorism threats appear to relate to ISIL or AQ-linked groups active in and around Jammu and Kashmir. FATF in its India's mutual evaluation report said that the terrorist financing risks are generally closely linked with terrorism risks, with flows of funds or provision of other assets constrained to within India or surrounding countries. "India faces a disparate range of terrorism threats, categorised into six different theatres. These can be summarised as theatres associated with ISIL or AQ-linked extremist groups active in and around Jammu and Kashmir, whether directly or



via proxies or affiliates, as well as other separatist movements in the region; other ISIL and AQ cells, their affiliates, or radicalised individuals in India; regional insurgencies in the Northeast and North of India; and left-wing extremist groups seeking to overthrow the government. The most significant terrorism threats appear to relate to ISIL or AQ-linked groups active in and around Jammu and Kashmir," FATF said. Praising India's performance in fighting against the anti-money laundering, the FATF report said that New Delhi has

implemented an anti-money laundering (AML)/counter-terrorist financing (CFT) system that is effective in many respects and particularly good results are being achieved in the areas of money laundering/TF risk understanding; national coordination and cooperation. use of financial intelligence for money laundering, predicate offences and TF investigations; depriving criminals of their assets; preventing misuse of legal structures; the implementation of targeted financial sanctions related to prolifera-

## 80 Mahadalit homes set ablaze in Bihar, 14 held

**NAWADA:** Bihar police arrested 14 men and detained a 15-year-old boy Thursday for allegedly setting 80 houses of a Mahadalit community on fire over a land dispute in Nawada district Wednesday evening, reported. The fire rendered hundreds homeless and killed their poultry and cattle. CM Nitish Kumar condemned the crime and ordered ADG (Law and Order) to oversee the probe.

## Pheran for PM Modi, fairy-tale for farmer

**NEW DELHI:** When PM Narendra Modi addressed a poll rally in Srinagar on Thursday, he wore "pheran", which had a riveting tale of an Anantnag-based farmer gifting him the traditional Kashmiri robe. Irshad Hussain Naikoo, a farmer from Anantnag, recalled how he overcame obstacles to weave a pheran for his "ideal" leader, and the joy he felt when PM Modi wore it at an event in Srinagar. Naikoo dreamt of meeting PM Modi since 2013. Despite his financial hardships, he always wanted to give something special to the PM. In a video message, he said: "I admired Narendra Modi for a long time and wanted to meet him. In 2013, I started saving money to buy him a gift. After a few years, I decided to make a pheran, the traditional Kashmiri dress, for the PM." "I bought a good fabric with the money I had saved. But there was a challenge-I didn't know PM Modi's measurements. Then it came to my mind that my father has a similar build. So, I took my father to the tailor. With his measurements, I explained exactly how I wanted the pheran to be made," he said.



## Joe dramatically raises US tariffs on Chinese EVs

**Delhi:** US President Joe Biden lambasted Beijing for "cheating" as he raised tariffs on Chinese products such as electric vehicles and semiconductors. Beijing strongly opposed the sanctions as Biden sought to appear tough on trade ahead of a rematch with Republican Donald Trump in November's US presidential election. "We're not going to let China flood our market, making it impossible for American automakers to compete fairly," Biden declared in the White House Rose Garden. He said, "We're never going to allow China to unfairly control the market for these cars," before ordering duties. Trump's tariffs have been frequently criticized by Biden. He's been using similar tactics to win over blue-collar voters in swing Rust Belt states. The White House stated EV tariffs will treble to 100% this year and semiconductor duties will rise from 25% to 50% by next year.



File ITR or risk scrutiny

**Delhi:** A taxpayer will be investigated if they do not file an income-tax return after an inquiry notification. This notification under section 142(1) is provided when a taxpayer has not submitted the tax return or to request preliminary information about a detail such as bank interest or long-term capital gains/loss on property sale. This advice is part of the Central Board of Direct Taxes' new comprehensive rules for mandatory I-T return selection for complete inspection. Annual guidelines cover survey, search and seizure, tax evasion, and cases where no I-T return was filed in response to an inquiry notification for the current financial year (selection and thorough inspection). It also includes non-registration or termination of registration under sections 12A/12AB for charity organizations seeking tax benefits. In addition, if the taxpayers' income increased on a recurring issue in an earlier year, the I-T return will be picked up under obligatory inspection standards, subject to monetary restrictions. "The guideline states that all I-T returns filed during FY24 will have the outer time limit for issue of a notice by June 30, 2024." In selective cases, complete scrutiny is performed to ensure the taxpayer has declared income correctly and paid taxes.

## AIIMS to open emergency cath lab



**Delhi:** The All India Institute of Medical Sciences will open a cath lab for emergency patients to provide primary neuro, cardiac, and endovascular procedures in the "golden hour". The emergency department has no specialized Cath Lab. After considering the patient load and the require-

ment for fast actions, especially in emergencies, this strategic option was made. Officials noted the number of functioning Cath Labs falls short of meeting rising demand, resulting in longer wait times for sophisticated brain and cardiac treatments. Lack of a dedicated Cath Lab in the

emergency department delays key interventions, affecting patient outcomes. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic forced business workers to work remotely. To retain staff, employers use office peacocking, affecting work-life balance and trends.

## Free bike rides home for voters

**Delhi:** The Delhi electoral office has partnered with bike aggregator Rapido to offer house drop services to boost Lok Sabha voter turnout. Anyone can arrange a free Rapido bike trip through its mobile app after voting. Voters must travel to the polling station alone. All ages can vote

at the facility. Delhi's top electoral officer P Krishnamurthy said this collaboration will promote voting and reduce transportation constraints.

"We offer free bike rides on election day to make voting easier and encourage folks to vote. Every vote counts, so eligible voters must vote without

obstruction," Krishnamurthy added. The facility will supplement the pick-up and drop-off for disabled and elderly people. The weather department predicts a strong heat wave on May 25, so election officials are planning to boost voter turnout.

## Order mandating SpiceJet to pay Sun Group's Kalanithi Maran 270

**Delhi:** Judge ordered SpiceJet to refund over 1270 crore to Sun Group promoter Kalanithi Maran, but a Division Bench of the Delhi High Court overturned it. SpiceJet and CMD Ajay Singh appealed the single-judge's ruling to a Division Bench of Justices Yashwant Varma and Ravinder Dudeja. Appeals are allowed. The July 31, 2023 order is vacated "By the

Court. The Division Bench denied SpiceJet's request to postpone the single-judge ruling upholding an arbitral tribunal award ordering the airline to reimburse over 270 cases. The issue between Maran and SpiceJet began in January 2015 when Ajay Singh bought SpiceJet from him. Maran reportedly gave Singh his 58.46% airline ownership. According to the

contract, Maran would receive redeemable warrants for his airline promotion investments. Maran was entitled to 18 crore warrants and 26% SpiceJet shares. No convertible warrants or preference shares were issued to Maran, and he received no money. Maran sought roughly 1,323 crore in damages. Arbitration was ordered by the Delhi High Court. The

arbitral tribunal ordered SpiceJet to return Maran 1270 crore in July 2018. The tribunal also ordered the airline to pay 12% interest on warrant payments and 18% on Maran awards if they are late. The tribunal also found no breach of Maran, SpiceJet, and Ajay Singh's share sale and purchase agreement. Thus, Maran's shareholding return and damages claims were denied.

## Influencers and celebrities will be accountable for deceptive ads: SC

**Delhi:** The Supreme Court reminded celebrities, social media influencers, and advertisers that they will share equal responsibility and liability for deceptive and misleading food and health product ads and services. The supreme court ruled "It is the shared responsibility of advertisers and endorsers, including celebrities and influencers, to ensure the accuracy of advertisements." "Public figures, influencers,



celebrities, etc., go a long way in promoting a product, and it is imperative for them to act with responsibility when endorsing any product in advertisements," Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said. It

required marketers to submit self-declaration forms confirming compliance with cable TV and advertising guidelines before airing ads. The directive requires television stations to file these declarations to the Broadcast Seva

Portal before broadcasting commercials. Within four weeks, the relevant ministry must create a print media ad self-declaration portal. Advertisers' self-declarations will not be burdened by bureaucracy, the justices said. The goal is to establish accountability and responsibility in advertising, not to make it difficult for advertisers to promote their products. Influencers must disclose sponsored endorsements, the bench said.

## Government e-commerce platform accepting unicorns



**Delhi:** Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), a UPI-like alternative to e-commerce heavyweights, is onboarding unicorns like MakeMyTrip, Policybazaar, Cars24, and Zerodha to build traction. While ONDC was created to support small businesses like kirana stores and democratize online shopping, the govern-

ment believes large players will give consumers more choice and boost demand in smaller towns and cities. The goal is to assist consumers and businesses without platform fees. "It gained popularity in the last two years. Five lakh sellers—70% small and medium—have joined. ONDC processed 72 million transactions in April

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

## Replace aging ACs with efficient ones under BSES' new strategy



**Delhi:** With the city's temperature reaching 40 degrees Celsius, BSES discoms are offering home customers up to 63% off energy-efficient air conditioners. A 5-star energy-efficient air conditioner can reduce a household's cooling load, which can account for up to 50% of its annual energy

costs, according to BSES. The limited-time AC Replacement Scheme was introduced by BSES Rajdhani Power Limited and BSES Yamuna Power Limited in conjunction with key air conditioner manufacturers. The statement added BSES' operating zones in south, west, east, and

central Delhi will offer the plan for all ACs, including next-generation inverter types. Around 40 "first cum, first served" window and split variants of prominent brands are available. BSES said domestic consumers can exchange up to three air conditioners per contract account num-

ber. BSES spokesperson: "We empower sustainable technologies like LED lighting, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and rooftop solar net metering. The AC plan will cut annual and monthly electricity expenditures and help us work toward a greener future.

## Retailers to hire in tier 2, 3 cities in 2024

**Delhi:** Retail stores will dominate 2024 employment demand as brands that took space in 2023 open. Milan-based Gi Group predicts retail employment demand would rise 18% in 2023 and 15-20% this year. Layoffs, budget restrictions, and selective hiring are forcing e-commerce startups to tighten their hiring. Active logistics positions declined 13.89% in Q3 FY24 amid peak season fulfillment. According to the report, 52% of shops want to hire recent graduates this year, while 38% want experienced experts. Retailers will keep opening stores. We know of many organizations that are still increasing. 162 candidates are running in the May 25 Lok Sabha elections in Delhi. 162 contestants are vying for seven seats in the capital's Lok Sabha elections. North East Delhi is the district with the most candidates, fielding 28 people. However, with just 17 candidates.



## Tech-savvy 'handlers' manage exam chaos from paper leak to student training

Delhi: Port cargo, the police dog squad, political campaigns, and even spy rings are no longer the only jobs for a "handler". The NEET-UG paper leak conspiracy investigators know how "handlers" function in the shadowy nationwide test business based in Bihar and Jharkhand. "The nine handlers arrested in the NEET-UG case so far - six in Jharkhand and three in Bihar are tech-savvy individuals who played a crucial role in orchestrating the leak of question papers, training examinees who paid for these to memorise the answers, and even escorting them to their respective centres," a top cop said. The six suspects from Jharkhand's Deoghar lived in rented housing as laborers. The task was to provide leaked papers while retaining secrecy and identity. "Once a particular exam got over, they would get to work on identifying the chinks in the system for the next one," he claimed. These handlers sought pretextual connections with coaching centers, schools, and colleges to grow their clientele. They sought out exam officials to bribe for useful information. On the morning of the NEET-UG exam, Bihar Police raided a safe house on a tip-off and found evidence of these



handlers herding roughly 30 applicants into Ram Krishna Nagar on Patna's outskirts. "Examinees memorized leaked question papers all night. Personal automobiles were used to bring them to their exam centers, with all necessary safety precautions." Officer noted. Around 2010, online entrance exam form submission replaced mail-in applications nationwide. Fraudsters and dishonest authorities exploited old system weaknesses. "Before online forms, exam centers assigned roll numbers based on application envelope receipt. A Bihar-based IPS officer said criminals sent many application forms in one envelope using codes like 'bogies' and 'engine' to allude to candidates and their proxies. "This strategy ensured that all these candidates were allocated roll numbers for the same examination centre and hall, facilitating cheating."

## 29 squares of the city are under the surveillance of CCTV cameras

Karnal: Deputy Commissioner Uttam Singh said that the ICCC project is working as an important link to control the traffic system of the city. Under this project, the traffic system is being monitored through CCTV cameras on every intersection and main road of the city. An important aspect is that every moment's activity is also being observed through CCTV at 29 major squares of the city.

On Tuesday, Deputy Commissioner Uttam Singh conducted a surprise inspection of the ICCC Centre located in Sector-12. During this inspection, he took complete information related to the city's traffic monitoring from the concerned officials. During this, a common telephone number has also been set up for mutual coordination between the police and ICCC officials. During this inspection, the Deputy Commissioner has also given necessary guidelines to remove some short-



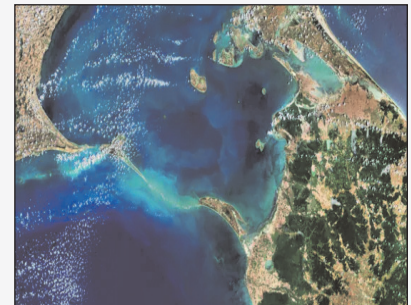
comings. The Deputy Commissioner saw the function of various components involved in this project on the video wall installed in the ICCC Centre. He showed great interest in watching the live video of how the cameras and traffic lights installed at the squares and intersections are working. ICCC Chief Manager Gaurav Tiwari gave information about each component to the Deputy Commissioner. He told that this project is one of the important projects of Smart City, which is related to the city's traffic system and its control. This project has 6 field components. These include VMD. That is, there are

36 variable message display boards, of which 31 have been installed so far and 27 have been made operational. He said that CCTV installation has been done at 29 squares and intersections, while public address system has been installed at 128 junctions. Similarly, emergency call boxes have been installed at 32 out of 35 places and 2 environmental centers have been set up. Apart from this, automatic traffic control system has been completed at 28 places. 2 ATCS intersections, including Sector-12 T-point and Shaheed Madan Lal Dhingra Chowk, have been made live.

## CAPSULES

### European Space Agency shares high-resolution 'Ram Setu' image

Between Rameswaram Island on India's southeast coast and Mannar Island on Sri Lanka's northwest coast, the Ram Setu runs 48 kilometers. The Ram Setu, or Adam's Bridge, a network of shoals connecting India and Sri Lanka, was recently photographed by the European



Space Agency in great detail. Copernicus Sentinel-2 satellites captured the image. Satellites with an innovative wide-swath high-resolution multispectral imager with 13 spectral bands offer a unique view of land and vegetation. Between Rameswaram Island on India's southeast coast and Mannar Island on Sri Lanka's northwest coast, the Ram Setu runs 48 kilometers. It divides the Indian Ocean's Gulf of Mannar from the Bay of Bengal's Palk Strait. One bridge end is on Mannar Island.

The 130-square-kilometer island is connected to mainland Sri Lanka by a road and railway bridge at its southern end. Pamban Island (Rameswaram Island) is the bridge's other end. The 2-km Pamban Bridge connects India to the island. Pamban on the western tip and Rameswaram 10 kilometers east are the island's principal settlements.

## MEA is reducing passport police verification time

Delhi: External affairs minister S Jaishankar said that the ministry is working with state and Union territory police forces to speed up passport applicant police verification to strengthen the passport delivery ecosystem. On Passport Seva Divas, Jaishankar said his ministry is committed to ensuring that passports facilitate international trade and investment and improve worldwide mobility to boost the country's growth. The government opened 440 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras to improve passport services. This complements the 93 Passport Seva Kendras, 533 passport processing centers, and 37 regional passport offices nationwide.



The ministry integrated passport issuance systems in 187 Indian missions abroad. Jaishankar said the government is working with States/UTs police to reduce police verification time to facilitate passport delivery. He added that 9,000 police stations in 25 states and Union territories have implemented the "mPassport Police App,"

which streamlines police verification. "The Passport Seva System has also been integrated successfully with DigiLocker to facilitate paperless documentation," he said. Jaishankar told the Lok Sabha in December 2023 that police verification takes 14 days nationwide. He claimed states and Union territories that have implemented the

mPassport Police App have reduced police verification time to less than five days. A standard passport, without police verification, takes seven to 10 days to issue, whereas a Tatkaal passport takes one to three days, Jaishankar said. "Police verification of applicants' particulars plays an important role in timely passport dispatch," he stated. In his message, Jaishankar said the government is committed to ensuring that passports facilitate international trade and investment, tourism, global mobility, education and skills development, diplomatic ties, security and regulation, and legal identity.

## A warning against bogus syllabuses and sample question papers is released by CBSE

Delhi: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) issued a warning alert informing parents and students to be wary of false information pertaining to the curriculum, study guides, and practice exams for the 2024-25 school year. The Board has issued a warning to pupils about the dangers of falling for online scams that spread false information. We've noticed that some websites and online portals are disseminating stale information and unre-

able updates about curriculum, sample question papers, CBSE resources, and activities. The alert said, "These links and news erroneously assert to offer up-to-date information for the session 2024-25. "In the interest of the public, we wish to emphasize that information from unauthorized sources can be misleading and may cause unnecessary confusion among schools, students, parents, and other stakeholders," it continued. Due to significant discrepancies

between theory and practical scores in a few courses, CBSE has recently instructed schools to assess practical exams appropriately.

In a notification, the CBSE said that, based on data from prior years' results, it had used sophisticated AI techniques to identify significant disparities between theory and practical grades in specific courses among 50% or more students in about 500 CBSE-affiliated schools.

## 48% of 1,563 grace-marked candidates skip NEET-UG retest

Delhi: The National Testing Agency (NTA) reported that only 813 or 52% of the 1,563 candidates who were initially awarded grace marks in the National Eligibility Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) before they were withdrawn last week took a retest. Affected students who



did not retake were allowed to keep their scores without grace marks. Two candidates from Chandigarh did not take the exam, but 219 from 602 in Chhattisgarh, one from Gujarat, 287 from 494 in Haryana, and 234 from 464 in Meghalaya took the retest. NTA released the data after the exam was held at seven centers in five states and one union territory. The 1,563 students' retest was held days after the Centre scrapped their grace marks, taking the first step toward solving India's premier medical entrance exam's paper leak crisis, which

threatens hundreds of thousands of children's futures. Candidates received grace marks for time lost on the May 5 exam. The Centre informed the Supreme Court that 1,563 students' scorecards will be withdrawn and they could take a new exam or keep their scores without grace marks. Thousands of students have protested this year's medical exam, and opposition parties have called for its scrapping and a Supreme Court-monitored probe into paper leaks. Last week, Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan denied paper.

## In sweeping election-year move, Biden offers citizenship to American spouses

Delhi: In an election year move that contrasts with Republican competitor Donald Trump's promise for mass deportations, President Joe Biden unveiled a broad endeavor to provide hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants married to U.S. citizens a path to citizenship. At a White House event, Biden attacked Trump for splitting migrant families at the U.S.-Mexico border and calling illegal immigrants "poisoning the blood of our country." He's speaking these things out loud, which is hard to believe. Totally absurd, "Biden said. "I'm not into border or immigration politics. I want to fix things." The new Biden program will be open to an estimated 500,000 wives who have lived in the U.S. for at least 10 years as of June 17, officials announced. The program will also include 50,000 U.S.-citi-



zen children under 21. Biden, a Democrat seeking a second term in the Nov. 5 election, promised to reverse Trump's stringent immigration policies. In response to unprecedented migrant arrests at the U.S.-Mexico border, Biden has intensified his approach. The president stopped most migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border from requesting asylum earlier this month, echoing a Trump-era asylum restriction and drawing outrage from immigration advocates and Democrats. Biden's planned legalization program for spouses of U.S. citizens might bolster his campaign narrative that he supports a

more humanitarian immigration system and contrast him with Trump, who has long opposed both legal and illegal immigration. "The Statue of Liberty is not some relic of American history," he remarked. "It still stands for who we are." The scheme may be challenged in court and ended by a future administration. Texas Governor Greg Abbott, a Republican who has sued Biden over immigration policies, called the new effort "blatantly illegal" and "pandering for votes."

The U.S. allows married immigrants who entered legally on visas to become citizens.

## The government will purchase 156 light combat helicopters from HAL for 50k-cr

Delhi: The defence ministry has let Bengaluru-based Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) bid for 156 Prachand light combat helicopters (LCH) to strengthen the Indian Army and Air Force, officials said. According to anonymous authorities, the estimated cost of the new helicopters, 90 for the army and 66 for the IAF, is 50,000 crore. This will increase India's self-reliance. Two months earlier, the ministry let HAL bid for 97 light combat aircraft (LCA Mk-1A) to help the IAF overcome a fighter squadrons shortage. The new fighter planes will cost 67,000 crore approximately. HAL has produced 15 limited series Prachand helicopters for the IAF (10) and army (5), and soon series production will commence. Officials stated HAL will fulfill the 156 helicopter order in five to six years after signing the contract. The series production LCH will have more than 55% indigenous content, up from 45%. The LCH can demolish enemy air defenses, target slow-moving and remotely piloted aircraft, destroy high-altitude bunkers, conduct counter-insurgency operations in jungle and urban areas, and support ground forces. The government's affirmative indigenisation lists limit the import of weapons, equipment, and ammunition. For five years to promote defence self-reliance, including these helicopters.

The defence ministry banned 98 weapons and systems, including futuristic infantry combat vehicles, ship-borne unmanned aerial systems, medium-range precision kill systems, ammunition, radars, sensors, and fighter jet, maritime surveillance plane, warship, helicopter, and tank equipment, last year.